PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND
FIFTY-FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SESSION 2005–06

COMPRISING PERIOD
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30 January 2006

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 30 January 2006

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Olympic Park

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): The masterplan for the Olympic Park was largely developed in the second half of 2003 by the EDAW consortium and outline planning permissions were secured in autumn 2004. The candidate file submitted to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in November 2004 and subsequently presented to the Evaluation Commission in February 2005 presented the concept of a compact games with the Olympic Park at its heart.

Since winning the right to stage the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games on 6 July 2005, the masterplan has been reviewed, as part of the normal development process for a major project. This review has resulted in changes that will deliver a more compact Olympic Park, while meeting the technical specifications of the IOC. In summary, the revised masterplan will:

Free up some land that pgeviously had been required for the Olympic Park

Avoid the relocation of about 100 businesses, over 70 homes and a place of worship, and safeguard over 1200 jobs

Reduce overall programme and delivery risk

Enhance operational security, needed after the terrorist attacks on 7 July 2005

Be delivered with a potential cost reduction over current estimates of between

£250 million and £350 million.

A detailed review has been undertaken of the Olympic Village and the core Olympic and Paralympic requirements to improve deliverability, efficiency of design, utilisation, reduce risk and costs and smooth the way for best legacy use.

The revised plan therefore proposes realigning the village to locate approximately 80 per cent. of it on the Stratford rail lands immediately to the north of the channel tunnel rail link (CTRL).

The proposed building envelope and mix of uses complies with Stratford City's existing planning permissions and will provide a village of a similar high standard to that proposed in the original masterplan.

This move will enable an earlier start on the village, allowing building work on almost half of it to begin before power lines have been placed underground.

The revised plan is intended to offer improved security through

The relocation of the IBC and MFC within the Olympic Park security cordon, bringing those facilities closer to the centre of the Olympic Park and away from major roads and unsecured car parks

Integrated security measures for Stratford City and the Olympic Games should enable the concurrent construction of the projects to progress more efficiently

A more compact Athletes Village should improve the efficiency of the security operation.

Further work on refining and developing the security aspects of the revised plan is in hand.

Details of the revisions to the masterplan are set out in maps to be placed in the Library of the House.

The overall cost reductions for land, remediation, relocation and demolition are £152 million of which £142 million relates to the LDA and £10 million for demolition relates to the ODA as analysed below:

		£ million
Land assembly, relocation and remediation		
LDA	Fish Island car parking (Relocation of majority of 53 businesses, 72 homes avoided and 621 jobs safeguarded)	66
LDA	IBC/MPC relocation (Relocation of 42 businesses and 642 jobs expected to be safeguarded)	76
Demolition		
ODA	Fish Island car parking	4
ODA	IBC/MPC relocation	6
		152

In addition reductions in other ODA costs of between £100 million and £200 million, compared to the current estimated cost for the original masterplan are estimated to be achieved. These savings will mainly be achieved through:

Reduced costs for the construction of the IBC/MPC

the relocation of car parking from Fish Island, with 2,000 vehicle spaces being provided in Stratford City multi-storey parking and a smaller temporary multi storey car park on the Pudding Mill site replacing the need for a large multi-storey car park at Fish Island.

The actual savings will be dependent upon the outcome of the commercial deal to be negotiated with Stratford City and further value engineering that will be undertaken as part of the detailed design work.

DEFENCE

Far East Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees (FEPOW Scheme)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): In my statement on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1119-21, following my appearance at the Public Administration Select Committee oral evidence session on the operation of the FEPOW scheme, I told the House that I had commissioned a review into the extent to which inconsistent eligibility criteria had been used for deciding claims before and after the introduction of the birth-link criterion; this work is well-advanced. In addition, I said that a separate, independent investigation would be conducted into how the use of inconsistent criteria had arisen and why it had not been exposed earlier. I said that this work would be undertaken by a retired senior official from outside of the Departments involved. I am pleased to announce that Mr. David Watkins, a retired senior civil

servant formerly in the Northern Ireland Office who is well qualified for the task, has agreed to undertake the investigation. His role will be to consider:

how the original inconsistencies arose, identifying any specific shortcomings in the development and implementation of policy;

how, subsequently, the Departments involved failed to identify that there had been inconsistencies, despite the need to explain the Government's position in Parliament, in the courts and to the Parliamentary Ombudsman; and

whether there are any lessons to be learned for the future from such shortcomings as are identified in the development of the scheme and in its administration.

Mr. Watkins has begun his investigation and I have indicated my concern that, while it must be thorough, it should be completed as quickly as practicable.

I will make a further statement to Parliament when I have received Mr. Watkins' final report.

Army Basing (Germany)

The Secretary of State for Defence (John Reid): My predecessor announced to the House on 16 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 1795, that under the future Army structures, we intend to re-role an Armoured Brigade to a Mechanised Brigade and a Mechanised Brigade to a Light Brigade.

I am now in a position to confirm that 4th Armoured Brigade will re-role to a mechanised brigade in 2006 and will move from its current base in Osnabruck garrison in Germany to Catterick in 2008–09. A number of other minor adjustments will also be made. I have notified the German Government of our plans. 19 Brigade will re-role to a Light Brigade and will subsequently relocate away from Catterick to Scotland and Northern Ireland, although decisions on the final location of individual units have yet to be taken. We hope to be in a position to announce this later in the year. The net effect will be a reduction of our forces in Germany by roughly 2,200 personnel.

While there may be further modest adjustments to our force levels in Germany in the coming years where this makes sense, I would envisage sizeable forces remaining there for the long-term, where they will continue to enjoy excellent relations with the local population and contribute to our strong bilateral relationship with the German Government.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC)

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Douglas Alexander): The General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) will be held on 30 January in Brussels. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I will represent the UK.

The agenda items are as follows:

GENERAL AFFAIRS

Annual Operational Programme of the Council for 2006/ Annual Work Programme of the Commission

Austrian Foreign Minister, Ursula Plassnik, will give a short presentation on the Annual Operational Programme of the Council 2006. The document forms the final part of the 2004–06 multi-annual strategic programme. There is clear continuity with the Luxembourg/UK programme for 2005 and the Government are supportive of it.

President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso will also present the Commission's Legislative and Work Programme 2006 (CLWP), published in October 2005. The CLWP follows from the Commission's Strategic Objectives 2005–09 and focuses on the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy—placing jobs, growth and better regulation at the centre of its programme. The Government support these aims.

Lisbon Strategy: Commission Annual Progress Report

The Commission will formally present its first Lisbon Annual Progress Report, assessing Member States' National Reform Programmes against "jobs and growth" objectives and highlighting priorities for further action. The Government will want to give clear support to the continued focus on jobs and growth.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

World Trade Organisation/Doha Development Agenda (WTO/DDA)

EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson will brief the Council on progress in the WTO Round. This follows an informal EU Trade Ministers dinner on 29 Jan and meetings of key WTO Ministers in the margins of the World Economic Forum in Davos (25–29 Jan). We expect a short discussion without Conclusions.

Relations with the Western Balkans

Commissioner for Enlargement Olli Rehn will present the Western Balkans Communication, which will form the basis of discussion at the Salzburg EU-Western Balkans Ministerial. The Council will also discuss Kosovo, in light of President Rugova's death on 21 January. The Council is expected to agree Conclusions on Bosnia, welcoming constitutional reform and Lord Ashdown's successor, and Montenegro, expressing support for Solana's Personal Representative, Ambassador Lajcak, as well as a statement on President Rugova's death. Conclusions are also expected to underline the continuing importance of full co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) by both Serbia and Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Government welcome the EU-Western Balkans Ministerial as a chance to re-endorse the Thessaloniki messages of 2003 and focus on some hearts and minds initiatives to support the political process.

Latin America: Presentation of Commission Communication

Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner will present the Commission Communication "A stronger Partnership between the EU and Latin America". The Council is expected to agree Conclusions on this at the February GAERC. The Communication sets out a strategy for strengthening the relationship between the EU and Latin America, in terms that the Government broadly welcome.

Afghanistan

The Council is expected to have a short discussion about the London Conference on Afghanistan on 31 January–1 February. This provides an opportunity for Afghanistan to seek, and to receive, international support and

endorsement for the next five years. The Afghanistan Compact represents an excellent framework for activity going forward. The Council is expected to agree Conclusions confirming the EU's long term support for the Government and people of Afghanistan, welcoming the London Conference on Afghanistan and in particular the launch of the Afghanistan Compact. We also expect the Council to endorse "Recommendations for enhancing EU engagement with Afghanistan" and the Presidency's statement to be given at the London Conference.

Belarus

The Council will discuss the deterioration in human rights and democracy and the forthcoming presidential elections in Belarus. The Government remain concerned about the legitimacy of the 2004 referendum allowing the current President to stand for more than two terms and strongly supported November's GAERC Conclusions calling for free and fair elections. We welcome the invitation extended to OSCE/ODIHR to monitor the election process, and are keen that it should be able to function effectively throughout the election period. The Council is expected to agree Conclusions calling on Belarus to improve its record on human rights and democracy and expressing the EU's willingness to engage when the situation improves.

Middle East Peace Process (MEPP)

We expect Council discussion to focus on the outcome of the 25 January Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections, the changing political landscape in Israel in the run up to the 28 March elections and the implications for the MEPP. The Council is expected to agree Conclusions, which take into account the political situation in the Palestinian Authority and Israel.

Iran

The Council is expected to have a full discussion of handling of the forthcoming 2–3 February emergency International Atomic Energy Agency Board meeting, following Iran's decision to restart enrichment related activities, and likely next steps on the nuclear issue. The Council is expected to agree Conclusions.

Iraq

We expect that discussion will centre on the recent Iraqi election results and future EU-Iraq engagement. The Government will wish to stress the importance of EU JUSTLEX, support for the Constitutional Review, maintaining a political dialogue under the EU-Iraq Joint Political Declaration and progress towards the launch of negotiations on a Trade and Co-operation Agreement. The Council is expected to agree Conclusions.

Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

The Presidency will seek agreement on the participation of senior representatives of Burma / Myanmar at upcoming ASEM meetings held in the EU. The Government support the ASEM process as a means of engaging with Asian states on a range of issues that matter to us. The Government will want to ensure that any agreement provides for a full and substantive discussion of the human rights situation in Burma/ Myanmar at ASEM ministerial meetings.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Employment and Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. James Plaskitt): The Employment and Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Informal Council was held on 19 to 21 January in Villach, Austria.

My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry the Member for Bradford, South (Gerry Sutcliffe) and I attended the working session for the UK.

The Austrian presidency posed two topics for discussion on Friday 20 January. The morning session discussed "Flexicurity—flexibility through security". The afternoon session discussed "The social dimension of the revised Lisbon strategy and the streamlining of social policy processes".

My hon. Friend represented the UK during the morning discussion of "Flexicurity". This session explored new ways of balancing flexibility and social and employment security in Europe.

Member states took examples from their national reform programmes to illustrate the balance they had struck between flexibility and security. For the UK, my hon. Friend suggested that legislative measures were for the national level and the EU could add value by sharing experience and good practice and by promoting better regulation principles.

The Commissioner noted that "Flexicurity" would be addressed in the Commission Green Paper on "Labour Law", due in the first half of the year.

Overall, Ministers agreed that there is no 'one size fits all model for flexicurity', but disagreed whether legislative action should be taken at the EU level.

The afternoon session asked Ministers to focus on the presidency question about the social dimension of the strategy for growth and jobs and the desired role and outputs for streamlined open method of co-ordination of social policies.

For the UK, I called for practical discussion about real policies rather than theoretical debate of principles. I suggested that the aim should be to integrate social policy making within an overall reform strategy where it could contribute to the delivery of employment aims.

There was a consensus that a visible social dimension to the Lisbon strategy must be maintained and that streamlining open method of co-ordination would help.

The presidency then proposed that Employment Ministers should feed these messages into the spring European Council.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 31 January 2006

TREASURY

ECOFIN: 24 January 2006

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gordon Brown): At its meeting of 24 January 2006 the Economic and Financial Affairs Council took note of a presentation from the current Austrian and future Finnish presidencies on a work programme for ECOFIN for 2006.

The Council adopted opinions on the stability and convergence programmes for Finland, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Slovakia and Sweden and adopted a decision under article 104(6) and a recommendation under article 104(7) of the EC Treaty with regard to the UK.

The Council discussed procedures for following up matters relating to the forthcoming Commission annual progress report on the Lisbon Strategy in the run-up to the spring European Council.

The Council adopted conclusions on an Economic Policy Committee report regarding the quality of public finances in the EU.

The Austrian presidency concluded that, subject to confirmation by the Czech Republic, Poland and Cyprus, political agreement could be reached on an extension of the arrangements for reduced rates of VAT for labour intensive services until 2010. The presidency subsequently announced on 30 January that the Czech Republic and Cyprus had agreed the proposal. Discussions are ongoing between the presidency and Poland.

The Council held an exchange of views on issues related to energy markets.

My right hon. Friend the Paymaster General, represented the UK.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Judicial Appointments

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Baroness Ashton of Upholland, has made the following written ministerial statement.

"The Judicial Appointments Annual Report, covering the period 1 April 2004 to 30 September 2005, is published today, 31 January. This year the report continues to focus on developments and achievements within the judicial appointments process and the work undertaken ahead of the new Judicial Appointments Commission. We have placed the full statistical tables, which give the results of the various competitions held within the period of the report and their supporting narrative, on the departmental website at: www.dca.gov.uk. The report also shows that:

Some 549 appointments were made during 2004-05 from around 3,500 applications.

Appointments, including lay appointments, of minority ethnic candidates accounted for 12 per cent. of those made over the 18 month period.

Women accounted for 37 per cent. of appointments.

Since 1 April 2005 women have made up 46 per cent. and minority ethnic groups 17 per cent. of all appointments.

The report also outlines improvements made to the judicial appointments process, including the introduction of competence based selection for all judicial appointments and the pilots of assessment centre-based recruitment for Recorder and Employment Tribunal appointments.

Copies of the report will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses and is also available on the Department's website at: www.dca.gov.uk".

DEFENCE

Met Office

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): I am pleased to announce to Parliament my decision on the future of the Met Office forecast production network.

The Met Office has a responsibility to provide value for money to the taxpayer, to deliver the UK's public weather service in the most efficient and effective manner and to provide the best possible service to all its customers. A thorough review and analysis of the Met Office's production network has been carried out. This included an extensive consultation exercise which took place between July and November 2005 involving customers, parliamentarians, trades unions, staff and other interested parties.

I am grateful to the many individuals and groups who took part in this consultation. It generated a great deal of useful feedback. Indeed, based on a number of the constructive comments received, the Met Office was able to produce an additional option for consultation, as a result of which I agreed an extension to the consultation period.

Having carefully weighed the various issues and arguments, I have decided that the best solution for the future of the Met Office and its customers is to centralise more forecast production at the Met Office HQ in Exeter, while retaining production capability in Aberdeen and a reduced regional network focusing primarily on service delivery. Forecast advisers within the regional network will take a proactive role with customers to identify regional weather impacts, and deliver the Met Office's open road, marine and public weather services.

I am confident that this decision will deliver significant benefits to the Met Office, the UK taxpayer and all the Met Office's customers.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Higher Education (Student Finance)

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Ruth Kelly): The Department is today publishing the report of the end to end review of the arrangements for the delivery of financial support to higher education students, and its collection from borrowers, in England. The start of the review was announced on 7 June. Copies of the report are being placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The Department welcomes the report. Its initial response is set out below.

The principles underpinning the report are that student finance delivery arrangements must meet demand from customers for clear information about their entitlement to support; faster decisions once applications have been made; timely payments upon starting a course; and accurate repayments when these come to be made. They must also meet taxpayers' expectations that value for money is being achieved. While much has been achieved in recent years, the report makes clear that significant further improvements in performance are required. The Department agrees with this analysis and with the challenging new objectives and targets the report recommends.

The report makes 44 specific recommendations. The Department accepts these in principle, subject to the further detailed work on costs and practicalities which some will require. In particular the Department supports the report's vision of a future in which a large majority of students will apply for financial support online, and the changes which will be needed to achieve this. It welcomes the report's identification of changes which will increase repayments, and it will respond actively to the report's call for DfES leadership to ensure accessible, accurate and consistent information, advice and guidance at national and local level.

The report also sets out options for a new delivery structure. In the case of assessments and payment, delivery will need to reflect the move to online applications. It will also need to improve the current variability of customer service, and to achieve efficiencies. For these reasons the Department is attracted to the option of a centrally-provided service for which a single organisation would be responsible, working with others to ensure we meet the needs of individuals requiring local assistance. However, this needs to be discussed with local authority representatives given the impact on their staff.

The report offers three options for the national organisation: an NDPB, a private sector contractor chosen through procurement, and a new relationship with the Student Loans Company. In considering these the Department will focus not only on delivery capability and value for money, but also on which option is most likely to produce the significant cultural shift which the report rightly calls for if the service is to become truly customer-focused. The Department will consider the options in the report for the collections process.

The Department will now discuss the report with key stakeholders and will make a detailed response in the spring.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Single Payment Scheme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Jim Knight): On 19 January 2005 the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) announced that payments under the new CAP Single Payment Scheme (SPS) were expected to commence in February 2006, well within the EU regulatory window of 1 December 2005 to 30 June 2006. Over the past year, staff at the RPA have worked exceedingly hard to ensure that this expectation was turned into a reality.

At the EFRA Select Committee hearing on 11 January my noble Friend Lord Bach made it clear that payments would begin, in line with the RPA's forecast, before the end of February and that an announcement would be made by the end of this month on whether they would be full or partial payments. Having considered the latest progress reports on the processing of farmers' claims I am pleased to confirm today that the RPA will now proceed to make full payments. The contingency system to make partial payments will not, therefore, be invoked.

The RPA will now proceed to definitively establish entitlements on 14 February, details of which will be communicated to individual farmers within two weeks of that date. This will allow for the trading of entitlements to commence in preparation for the 2006 scheme.

Where 2005 SPS applications have been fully validated, payments will start before the end of February, with the bulk being made in March. In the minority of cases where queries remain unresolved, the validation process will continue beyond March, but farmers may be assured that the RPA will make every effort to complete the task in the shortest possible timeframe.

I hope this statement will provide some reassurance to the farming industry about the progress of the scheme. I want to acknowledge the co-operation and patience of everyone who has made a claim.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Pingat Jasa Malaysia

The Minister for Trade (Ian Pearson): The Pingat Jasa Malaysia (PJM) is a commemorative medal which the Government of Malaysia would like to award to eligible British citizens, for their service in Malaya or Malaysia between 31 August 1957 and 12 August 1966.

The Committee on the Grant of Honours, Decorations and Medals (the official Committee which advises Her Majesty the Queen on matters of honours policy) has recommended that an exception to two of the long-established rules governing the accepting and wearing of foreign (including Commonwealth) awards be made, to enable the Malaysian Government to present the PJM. Her Majesty the Queen has been graciously pleased to approve this recommendation.

This exception to the rules means that all of the many thousands of eligible former members of the armed forces/veterans, and others, may receive the PJM. This will be in addition to the British General Service Medal

(with appropriate Malaya/Borneo clasp) that many veterans will have been eligible to receive for their service in Malaya/Borneo.

Permission to wear the PJM will not, however, formally be given. It is long standing Government policy that non-British medals will not be approved for events or service:

that took place more than five years before initial consideration, or in connection with events that took place in the distant past (e.g. commemorative medals);

if the recipient has received a British award for the same service.

However, Her Majesty's Government welcome, and believe it is important to recognise, the generous gesture by the King and Government of Malaysia, and their wish to acknowledge the service given by veterans and others in the years immediately after Malaysian independence. The exception recommended reflects this and our strong and important relationship with Malaysia.

The Committee on the Grant of Honours, Decorations and Medals reviewed the five-year and double medalling rules, and considered that, while there were sound reasons why they should be retained, there will be occasions when specific circumstances require exceptions to the rules to be recommended. When such exceptions are contemplated, the Committee will consider each request on a case by case basis, taking into account any special circumstances at the time. The fact that a similar request has been approved in the past will not mean that permission will be granted in future cases.

Applications for the PJM, and its subsequent distribution will essentially be a matter for the Malaysian authorities, in collaboration with the relevant British Government Departments. Large numbers may be involved. It will take some time for the applications to be processed and for the medal to be distributed. The Malaysian High Commission and the relevant British Government agencies will work together to determine eligible applicants. Veterans' organisations and service and regimental associations will also be involved.

Prospects for the European Union in 2006

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Douglas Alexander): This afternoon I intend to make an oral statement to the House to launch the latest in the Government's series of White Papers on the European Union, "Prospects for the European Union in 2006 and retrospective of the UK's Presidency of the EU, 1 July to 31 December 2005". The White Paper will be available in the Vote Office from 11.00 am.

This White Paper is one of a series on prospects for the EU initiated by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary in 2004. White Papers were issued in April and September 2004 and in February and June 2005. These White Papers are intended to stimulate the closer and deeper involvement of Members of both Houses in EU affairs.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Police Grant Reports (England and Wales)

The Minister for Policing, Security and Community Safety (Hazel Blears): I have today placed in the Library a copy of the Police Grant Report (England and Wales) 2006–07 (HC 845). The report sets out my determination for 2006–07 of the aggregate amount of grants that I propose to pay under section 46(2) of the Police Act 1996, and the amount to be paid to each police authority and to the Greater London Authority for the Metropolitan Police Authority.

I have also placed in the Library copies of the Police Grant Report (England and Wales) 2004–05 (Amending Report 2005–06) (HC 847) and the Police Grant Report (England and Wales) 2005–06 (Amending Report 2005–06). (HC 846) to take account of changes to Office for National Statistics population data and pensions changes.

General police grant allocations which include Home Office Police Grant and Revenue Support Grant for each police authority for 2006–07 are set out in Table 1. Amended allocations for 2004–05 and 2005–06 are set out in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 1: Police grant allocations by English & Welsh police authority 2006–07

Police Authority	*2005–06 Adjusted Amended Allocation[2] £m*	*2006–07 Formula Grant Allocation[1] £m*	*Change on 2005–06 Adjusted Amended Allocation %*	*2004–05 Amending Report Receipts/ Payments £m*	*2005–06 Amending Report Receipt/ Payments £m*	*2006–07 Allocation Net of Amending Report Receipts/ Payments £m*	*Change on 2005–06 Adjusted Amended Allocation*
			English Shire authorities				
Avon & Somerset	156.5	161.8	3.4%	0.0	-0.1	161.7	3.3%
Bedfordshire	61.6	64.0	3.9%	-0.2	-0.2	63.6	3.3%
Cambridgeshire	71.5	73.8	3.2%	0.2	0.0	73.9	3.4%
Cheshire	107.5	110.8	3.1%	0.2	0.2	111.2	3.5%
Cleveland	87.1	89.8	3.1%	0.2	0.1	90.0	3.4%
Cumbria	59.4	61.8	3.9%	-0.2	-0.2	61.3	3.1%
Derbyshire	98.8	102.0	3.3%	0.0	0.3	102.3	3.6%
Devon & Cornwall	166.2	171.4	3.1%	0.0	0.0	171.4	3.1%
Dorset	58.2	60.0	3.1%	0.0	0.0	60.0	3.1%
Durham	80.5	84.0	4.3%	-0.5	-0.5	83.1	3.1%
Essex	157.7	162.6	3.1%	0.0	0.0	162.6	3.1%
Gloucestershire	52.9	54.5	3.1%	0.0	0.0	54.5	3.1%
Hampshire	184.7	190.4	3.1%	0.0	0.0	190.4	3.1%
Hertfordshire	106.9	110.4	3.2%	0.0	0.0	110.4	3.2%
Humberside	114.2	117.8	3.1%	0.2	0.2	118.3	3.5%
Kent	170.9	176.2	3.1%	0.0	0.0	176.2	3.1%
Lancashire	181.4	187.0	3.1%	0.4	0.2	187.6	3.4%
Leicestershire	103.7	107.5	3.7%	-0.3	-0.2	107.0	3.2%
Lincolnshire	56.5	58.3	3.2%	0.0	0.0	58.3	3.2%

Police Authority	2005-06 Adjusted Amended Allocation[2] £m	2006-07 Formula Grant Allocation[1] £m	Change on 2005-06 Adjusted Amended Allocation %	2004-05 Amending Report Receipts/ Payments £m	2005-06 Amending Report Receipt/ Payments £m	2006-07 Allocation Net of Amending Report Receipts/ Payments £m	Change on 2005-06 Adjusted Amended Allocation %
Norfolk	77.3	80.5	4.2%	-0.5	-0.3	79.7	3.1%
North Yorkshire	68.4	70.5	3.1%	0.0	0.0	70.5	3.1%
Northamptonshire	67.2	69.2	3.1%	0.1	0.0	69.4	3.3%
Nottinghamshire	122.8	127.8	4.0%	-0.6	-0.4	126.8	3.3%
Staffordshire	106.9	110.3	3.1%	0.0	0.0	110.3	3.1%
Suffolk	63.3	65.2	3.1%	0.0	0.0	65.2	3.1%
Surrey	90.8	93.6	3.1%	0.0	0.0	93.6	3.1%
Sussex	151.4	156.1	3.1%	0.0	0.0	156.1	3.1%
Thames Valley	211.1	217.9	3.2%	0.0	0.0	217.9	3.2%
Warwickshire	48.1	49.7	3.2%	0.0	0.0	49.6	3.2%
West Mercia	108.6	112.0	3.1%	0.0	0.0	112.0	3.1%
Wiltshire	57.9	59.9	3.4%	-0.1	-0.1	59.7	3.1%
Shires Total	3,250.0	3,356.6	3.3%	-1.1	-0.9	3,354.6	3.2%
			English Metropolitan authorities				
Greater Manchester	404.4	417.4	3.2%	0.8	0.3	418.4	3.5%
Merseyside	237.5	245.0	3.1%	0.5	0.5	246.1	3.6%
Northumbria	222.8	229.7	3.1%	0.5	0.2	230.3	3.4%
South Yorkshire	179.8	187.5	4.3%	-1.0	-1.1	185.4	3.1%
West Midlands	419.1	433.6	3.4%	0.8	0.0	434.3	3.6%
West Yorkshire	296.6	306.2	3.2%	0.6	0.2	307.0	3.5%
Mets Total	1,760.3	1,819.4	3.4%	2.2	0.1	1,821.6	3.5%
			London authorities				
GLA – Police	1,763.6	1,818.3	3.1%	4.3	1.0	1,823.5	3.4%
City of London[3]	19.5	21.8	N/A	-0.1	0.0	21.6	N/A
London Total	1,783.1	1,840.1	N/A	4.1	1.0	1,845.2	N/A
English Total	6,793.3	7,016.1	3.3%	5.2	0.1	7,021.4	3.4%
			Welsh authorities				
Dyfed-Powys[4]	48.5	50.0	3.1%	0.0	0.0	50.1	3.2%
Gwent[4]	73.1	75.9	4.0%	-0.3	-0.3	75.3	3.1%
North Wales[4]	71.0	73.7	3.8%	-0.2	-0.2	73.2	3.1%
South Wales[4]	161.0	166.1	3.2%	0.1	0.1	166.3	3.3%
Welsh total	353.5	365.7	3.5%	-0.4	-0.5	364.9	3.2%
TOTAL	7,146.9	7,381.8	3.3%	-4.8	-0.3	7,386.3	3.3%

Notes

1. Rounded to the nearest £100,000. Grant as calculated under the Local Government Finance Report (England) and Local Government Finance (Police) Report (Wales). This includes the Metropolitan Police special payment, and the effects of floors and scaling.

2. Allocations made under the Amending Report 2005–06 are adjusted for the transfer of pensions and security funding.

3. Figures for the City of London relate to Home Office Grant only as calculated in the Police Grant Report (England and Wales). Revenue Support Grant is allocated to the Common Council of the City of London as a whole in respect of all its functions. The City is grouped with education authorities for the purposes of floors.

4. Welsh figures include Home Office floor funding.

Table 2: Amended allocations for each police authority against original allocations for 2004–05

Police Authority	2004-05 Original Allocation[1] £m	2004-05 Amended Allocation[1] £m	Change between original and amended 2004-05 £m	%
		English Shire authorities		
Avon & Somerset	162.2	162.2	0.0	0.0%
Bedfordshire	62.1	61.9	-0.2	-0.3%
Cambridgeshire	73.4	73.6	0.2	0.2%
Cheshire	107.2	107.5	0.2	0.2%
Cleveland	86.8	87.0	0.2	0.2%
Cumbria	59.6	59.4	-0.2	-0.4%
Derbyshire	101.2	101.2	0.0	0.0%
Devon & Cornwall	166.7	166.7	0.0	0.0%
Dorset	63.6	63.6	0.0	0.0%
Durham	84.2	83.7	-0.5	-0.5%
Essex	160.9	160.9	0.0	0.0%
Gloucestershire	58.9	58.9	0.0	0.0%
Hampshire	190.5	190.5	0.0	0.0%
Hertfordshire	104.8	104.8	0.0	0.0%
Humberside	114.6	114.8	0.2	0.2%
Kent	182.6	182.6	0.0	0.0%
Lancashire	182.9	183.2	0.4	0.2%
Leicestershire	102.0	101.7	-0.3	-0.3%
Lincolnshire	60.6	60.6	0.0	0.0%
Norfolk	82.2	81.7	-0.5	-0.6%
North Yorkshire	72.7	72.7	0.0	0.0%
Northamptonshire	64.3	64.4	0.1	0.2%
Nottinghamshire	127.6	127.0	-0.6	-0.4%

Police Authority	2004-05 Original Allocation[1] £m	2004-05 Amended Allocation[1] £m	Change between original and amended 2004-05 £m	
Staffordshire	109.2	109.2	0.0	0.0%
Suffolk	66.0	66.0	0.0	0.0%
Surrey	88.2	88.2	0.0	0.0%
Sussex	158.1	158.1	0.0	0.0%
Thames Valley	212.6	212.6	0.0	0.0%
Warwickshire	49.8	49.8	0.0	0.0%
West Mercia	107.7	107.7	0.0	0.0%
Wiltshire	60.6	60.5	-0.1	-0.2%
		English Metropolitan authorities		
Greater Manchester	393.2	394.0	0.8	0.2%
Merseyside	248.4	248.9	0.5	0.2%
Northumbria	221.4	221.8	0.5	0.2%
South Yorkshire	178.0	176.9	-1.0	-0.6%
West Midlands	399.3	400.1	0.8	0.2%
West Yorkshire	298.9	299.5	0.6	0.2%
		London authorities		
GLA Police	1,822.0	1,826.2	4.3	0.2%
City of London[2]	32.7	32.6	-0.1	-0.4%
English Total	6,917.7	6,922.9	5.2	0.1%
		Welsh authorities		
Dyfed-Powys[3]	50.9	50.9	0.0	0.0%
Gwent[3]	71.8	71.5	-0.3	-0.4%
North Wales[3]	74.8	74.6	-0.2	-0.3%
South Wales[3]	168.2	168.3	0.1	0.0%
Welsh total	365.8	365.3	-0.4	-0.1%
TOTAL	7,283.5	7,288.3	4.8	0.1%

Notes:

1. Rounded to the nearest £100,000. Grant as calculated under the Local Government Finance Report (England) and Local Government Finance Report (Wales). This includes the Metropolitan Police special payment, and the effects of floors and scaling.

2. Home Office Police Grant only.

3. Allocation figures include Home Office floor payments for Dyfed-Powys, Gwent, North Wales and South Wales.

Table 3: Amended allocations for each police authority against original allocations for 2005-06

Police Authority	2005-06 Original Allocation[1] £m	2005-06 Amended Allocation[1] £m	Change between original and amended 2005-06 £m	
		English Shire authorities		
Avon & Somerset	170.0	169.9	-0.1	-0.1%
Bedfordshire	65.1	65.0	-0.2	-0.2%
Cambridgeshire	77.9	77.9	0.0	0.0%
Cheshire	111.3	111.5	0.2	0.2%
Cleveland	90.9	90.9	0.1	0.1%
Cumbria	62.1	61.9	-0.2	-0.4%
Derbyshire	105.0	105.2	0.3	0.3%
Devon & Cornwall	173.0	173.0	0.0	0.0%
Dorset	66.0	66.0	0.0	0.0%
Durham	87.8	87.3	-0.5	-0.5%
Essex[2]	167.0	167.0	0.0	0.0%
Gloucestershire	61.1	61.1	0.0	0.0%
Hampshire	197.7	197.7	0.0	0.0%
Hertfordshire	108.8	108.8	0.0	0.0%
Humberside	118.9	119.1	0.2	0.2%
Kent	189.5	189.5	0.0	0.0%
Lancashire	190.8	191.0	0.2	0.1%
Leicestershire	107.7	107.5	-0.2	-0.2%
Lincolnshire	63.4	63.3	0.0	0.0%
Norfolk	85.9	85.6	-0.3	-0.4%
North Yorkshire	75.4	75.4	0.0	0.0%
Northamptonshire	67.8	67.8	0.0	0.0%
Nottinghamshire	133.3	133.0	-0.4	-0.3%
Staffordshire	113.3	113.3	0.0	0.0%
Suffolk	68.5	68.5	0.0	0.0%
Surrey	91.5	91.5	0.0	0.0%
Sussex	164.0	164.0	0.0	0.0%
Thames Valley	220.6	220.6	0.0	0.0%
Warwickshire	51.8	51.8	0.0	0.0%
West Mercia	111.8	111.8	0.0	0.0%
Wiltshire	62.9	62.8	-0.1	-0.2%
		English Metropolitan authorities		
Greater Manchester	412.5	412.8	0.3	0.1%
Merseyside	257.7	258.3	0.5	0.2%
Northumbria	232.2	232.3	0.2	0.1%

Police Authority	2005-06 Original Allocation[1] £m	2005-06 Amended Allocation[1] £m	Change between original and amended 2005-06 £m	%
South Yorkshire	185.7	184.6	-1.1	-0.6%
West Midlands	426.5	426.5	0.9	0.0%
West Yorkshire	313.6	313.8	0.2	0.1%
London authorities				
GLA Police	1,927.8	1,928.8	1.0	0.1%
City of London[2]	35.7	35.7	0.0	0.0%
English Total	7,252.3	7,252.4	0.1	0.0%
Welsh authorities				
Dyfed-Powys[3]	52.2	52.3	0.0	0.0%
Gwent[3]	74.1	73.8	-0.3	-0.4%
North Wales[3]	78.3	78.0	-0.2	-0.3%
South Wales[3]	174.5	174.6	0.1	0.0%
Welsh total	379.1	378.7	-0.5	-0.1%
TOTAL	7,631.4	7,631.1	-0.3	0.0%

Notes:

1. Rounded to the nearest £100,000. Grant as calculated under the Local Government Finance Report (England) and Local Government Finance Report (Wales). This includes the Metropolitan Police special payment, and the effects of floors and scaling.

2. Home Office Police Grant only.

3. Allocation figures include Home Office floor payments for Dyfed-Powys, Gwent, North Wales and South Wales.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): The Afghan and UK Governments are signing a 10-year development partnership arrangement at an international conference on Afghanistan in London on 31 January and 1 February 2006. At the conference the Afghan Government will launch the Afghanistan Compact (a framework for the international community's engagement in Afghanistan over the next five years) and its interim national development strategy.

The purpose of the development partnership arrangement is to reaffirm the UK Government's long-term commitment to the Afghan Government's development plans, and set out the nature of this arrangement. Afghanistan has achieved good progress since the fall of the Taliban in 2001 under a Government committed to reducing poverty. But as a new democracy, emerging from conflict and constrained by weak capacity, low revenue and a dominant narcotics industry, Afghanistan risks regressing without long-term commitment from the international community. We hope a 10-year DPA will help build the Afghan Government's confidence and further strengthen its commitment to reducing poverty.

The DPA covers only UK commitments on international development assistance provided through the Department for International Development (DFID). The DPA also transparently sets out Afghan Government commitments needed for DFID to continue with substantial long-term development support. These include commitments on reducing poverty and the Millennium Development Goals; respecting human rights and other relevant international obligations; and strengthening financial management and accountability, which reduces the risk of funds being misused through weak administration or corruption. The DPA specifies what each Government will commit to, and what happens if the Afghan Government are in breach of a commitment. These commitments should help to strengthen the Afghan Government's planning and budgeting through more effective delivery and use of aid, resulting in greater impact on poverty. Through the DPA, the UK Government are outlining an indicative financial commitment of £330 million from DFID for 2006-09, as part of a larger UK spend in Afghanistan expected at around £500 million in total over a period of three years. DFID is committing to give the Afghan Government aid figures on a three-year rolling basis in future years to increase funding predictability; and to channel at least 50 per cent. of its funding through the Government's budget, in order to strengthen state capacity and institutions.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Ilex Urban Regeneration Company Ltd.

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. David Hanson): Along with Lord Rooker, I have deposited copies of the Annual Report and Financial Statements of Ilex URC Ltd. for the year ended 31 March 2005 incorporating the auditor's report in the Libraries of both Houses.

Compensation Agency

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. David Hanson): The Government have received a report from the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland on the Compensation Agency in Northern Ireland. The report has been published today.

The Government welcome this report, which recognises the important service provided by the Compensation Agency. It comments favourably on the work being done in creating the balance between a strong performance culture and the needs of staff in a changing environment.

Copies of the Chief Inspector's Report have been placed in the Library.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

UK Civil Plutonium and Uranium

The Minister for Energy (Malcolm Wicks): The Department will be placing the figures for the United Kingdom's stocks of civil plutonium and uranium as at 31 December 2004 in the Libraries of both Houses. In accordance with our commitment under the "Guidelines for the Management of Plutonium," we have also sent the

figures to the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), who will circulate them to member states. The figures will be available on the Department's and the IAEA's websites.

The figures show that stocks of unirradiated plutonium in the UK totalled 102.7 tonnes at the end of 2004. Changes from the corresponding figures for 2003 are a consequence of continuing reprocessing operations (e.g. as reflected in the increased quantity of "unirradiated separated plutonium in product stores at reprocessing plants"). The decrease in the civil depleted, natural and low enriched uranium figures reflects the change in requirements for these materials at fuel fabrication plants and reactors.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 1 February 2006

HOME DEPARTMENT

Justice and Home Affairs Council

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): The Austrian Justice and Home Affairs Informal Council was held on 12–14 January in Vienna. I represented the UK along with my noble Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs, Baroness Ashton of Upholland.

The Austrian presidency opened the Council by introducing the discussion on asylum and immigration. They drew attention to their ideas in relation to regional co-operation; rapid intervention teams; charter flights; and information exchange.

The Commission stressed the work they are currently undertaking and, in particular, their intention to produce, by the end of January, a communication on practical co-operation. In advance of that the Commission have issued an information note setting out the ideas likely to be contained in the proposal. The intention is for these to be discussed in more detail at the February Justice and Home Affairs Council.

Key ideas included information on countries of origin and the Commission's ideas for a European information system. In the medium term the aim would be to establish a common European database on countries of origin with information pooled by member states. In the short term, it would be useful to consider a common form for the collection of information and agree a common format for this. The Commission's communication would contain ideas on how to respond to particular pressures on specific member states. These proposals would include amendments to the European Refugee Fund/ARGO funding programmes to establish a fund for emergency situations. The Commission communication would also propose the creation of rapid reaction/emergency teams capable of providing such things as emergency medical assistance and interpretation. Training would be an essential component. Finally, the Commission's communication was likely to look at the procedures for examining applications for refugee status, with a view to harmonising processing procedures across the EU. This would be a key element in the longer-term move towards a common European asylum system (CEAS).

In subsequent discussion, most member states were broadly supportive of the ideas set out in the presidency paper and the Commission's analysis.

I stressed that strong EU action on immigration/asylum was essential. The solutions were, in principle, simple and included a need for:

strong borders;

a clear relationship with third countries; and

a clear system for managing and processing asylum applications.

These principles are easy to lay down but in practice difficult to achieve. I therefore stressed the need for the EU to focus on achieving practical outcomes.

Antonio Gutteres, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) gave his organisation's full support to regional protection programmes, both at a political level and on the ground. The migration and asylum nexus was the key policy issue in looking at the large-scale flows of population. The key question was to ensure that those genuinely in need of asylum got the right treatment. Gutteres stressed it would be important, however, to tackle the root causes in a global and comprehensive way. That would involve looking at broader issues such as conflict resolution; institutional good governance; trade; debt relief; and common migration management. Regional protection programmes needed to be part of that overall process and not something done in isolation. The EU needed to provide strong political initiatives in taking forward this work in partnership with UNHCR.

In summary the presidency noted broad support for its ideas and for the ideas put forward by the Commission. It was clear that a comprehensive programme would need to be developed and that work on many of these issues would need to be taken forward in close co-operation and co-ordination with UNHCR.

On criminal law, Ministers discussed the future of the draft framework decision on procedural safeguards for defendants in criminal proceedings and the impact of the recent European Court of Justice Judgement (Case 176/03) on environmental crime. Ministers agreed that the extent to which criminal law measures should come within the first pillar needed to be considered in greater detail and the Commission agreed to reconsider its proposals to "fast-track" the movement of third pillar measures to first pillar legal bases. All member states agreed that the JHA Council should have an important role in ensuring consistency in the way in which the Court's ruling was applied in relation to subjects falling outside the third pillar.

In the afternoon the discussion moved on to Europol. Presentations were made before the Council by Gijs de Vries (EU Counter Terrorism co-ordinator), Max-Peter Ratzel (Europol) and Mike Kennedy (Eurojust) highlighting the progress that has been made but also the need for further improvements.

The presentations led to a debate on how Europol could be developed further, ensuring that law enforcement authorities of the member states derive maximum benefit from its progress. It was clear that greater flexibility was needed in handling the work of the management board and it was necessary to ensure that the Director of Europol had the proper tools to lead and guide the organisation. At present, the bureaucratic processes involved made it difficult to respond flexibly to changing priorities and to revise the staff regulations.

The Commission called for greater information flows to both Eurojust and Europol—especially now that both bodies are internationally recognised. The majority of member states agreed on the need to create a more flexible Europol, better able to respond to the demands of member states and to the needs of the day and with more flexible internal management. The point

was also made that competence lay principally with the member states' own bodies and that it was therefore necessary to look at the development of Europol in that context. Europol should not duplicate work properly undertaken at a national level and should not be given any greater operational powers it had a co-ordinating and analytical role.

In this context, member states also discussed how better to improve co-operation and co-ordination and whether there was a need for the creation of a committee on internal security as envisaged by the constitutional treaty. A number of member states warned against anticipating the treaty and emphasised the need to use existing bodies more effectively.

The presidency, in its summing up, noted general agreement on the need for greater co-operation, e.g. in the fields of analysis and information exchange. In relation to Europol, it needed to be more involved in joint operations but not to lead these operations. It needed more flexibility and adaptability and to build on what had already been developed. Member states needed to ratify the Europol protocols and there was a general view that no new structures were needed but that the EU needed to make better use of its existing arrangements. In particular, the EU needed to identify key areas and topics such as the Western Balkans; Afghan drugs; and the Mediterranean Africa and ought to develop priority road-maps for each of those areas. Member states welcomed the presidency commitment in this area; supported the country and topic priorities and on the need to take regions and issues together for best effect.

On the Justice and Home Affairs external relations strategy the presidency stated that it intended to make concrete progress on the basis of the strategy agreed under the UK presidency, and will be working closely with future presidencies and other member states in relation to key geographic areas such as the Western Balkans.

In the Commission's analysis, priority needed to be given to neighbouring regions and the strategy ought not to be confined simply to security issues. Attention was drawn to the idea of action plans focusing on particular policy issues such a drug trafficking; cybercrime; human trafficking and illegal migration. They recognised, too, the need to work closely with the UN and other international organisations. A number of member states commented on the clear priorities in the strategy thanks to the work done under the UK presidency. Work now needed to be developed in a balanced way and with sufficient resources. Member states welcomed the notion of action oriented papers and there was broad acceptance that the existing EU frameworks and agreements were sufficient to take forward the strategy. Relevant operational agencies such as FRONTEX, Europol and Eurojust should be involved in taking that work forward. A number of member states mentioned other geographical areas which should receive attention in addition to the Western Balkans.

In conclusion, the presidency noted the need to get down to practical steps, in partnership with other bodies and to ensure a co-ordinated and consistent approach. European neighbourhood policy countries; the Western Balkans and the Southern Mediterranean were all important and the presidency noted in particular the Euromed meeting that it had planned. An EU-Africa meeting would be taken forward under the next presidency. Work with countries such as Russia was also highly important.

In concluding the Council, the presidency looked in particular at the way in which civil law matters were dealt with in the current institutional structures. They asked member states whether they felt adequately informed about Justice and Home Affairs related issues that are dealt with in other Council formations.

Member states supported the analysis set out in the presidency paper. Baroness Ashton noted that the Civil Law Committee was set up on the initiative of the last Austrian presidency in 1998 and that one of its purposes was to ensure that justice matters which arose in other Council formations could be considered by civil law experts. Baroness Ashton also noted that this had met with some success but that the presidency was right that the system could be improved.

Summing up, the presidency noted that member states broadly shared its analysis; that the Civil Law Committee should play a greater role and that both Coreper and the JHA Council should receive information on all subjects touching on civil law in other councils.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Independent Monitoring Commission (Eighth Report)

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Peter Hain): I have received the eighth report of the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC). This report has been made under articles 4 and 7 of the international agreement that established the Commission and it reports on levels of paramilitary activity in Northern Ireland. I have considered the content of the report and I am today bringing it before Parliament. I have placed copies in the Library of the House.

The IMC has confirmed that PIRA paramilitary activity has ceased since 28 July.

The Independent International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD) today confirmed its position on the decommissioning of PIRA arms.

In its report, the IMC say that "We are of the firm view that the present Provisional IRA (PIRA) leadership has taken the strategic decision to end the armed campaign and pursue the political course which it has publicly articulated.

We see a number of definite signs of the organisation moving in the direction indicated in the statement" of 28 July 2005.

Compared to where PIRA stood only a few years ago, there has been a sea-change.

This is a positive report which shows that the IRA is moving in the right direction and is closing down: no murders, no recruitment and no bank robberies.

Of course the report does not paint a picture of perfection and the Government did not expect it to.

While the report shows that there have been significant changes in IRA criminal activity with some criminal operations being closed down, any on-going criminal activity is unacceptable and the Police Service of Northern Ireland and Assets Recovery Agency will continue to bear down on it.

In addition, the IMC draws attention to the activities by loyalists. The Commissioners acknowledge the work of the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP) and the Ulster Political Research Group (UPRG) to move things in a better direction and in efforts to influence the Ulster Defence Association (UDA).

Loyalist paramilitary activity and criminality as described in this report must come to an end.

The IMC concludes that the financial sanctions against Sinn Fein and the PUP should not continue.

More can and should be done to speed up the process of bringing loyalist paramilitary activity and criminality to an end and remaining PIRA activities should cease.

The Government believe that after this report of significant progress by the IRA, there is every basis for proceeding with political discussions on re-establishing the Assembly. Once again, I am grateful to the Commission for their submission of this report and for its careful analysis.

TRANSPORT

Felixstowe South (Port Reconfiguration)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Derek Twigg): I am today issuing a decision on the proposals submitted by Hutchison Ports for reconfiguration of Felixstowe South, "The Landguard Terminal" as a deep-sea container port terminal. The inspector's report of the public inquiry held into the proposals is also being published today.

My decision and the reasons for it are set out in my Department's decision letter. After carefully considering the inspector's report and taking into account all relevant considerations, I have decided to authorise the port development, in line with the inspector's recommendation.

My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has accepted the inspector's recommendation in favour of those parts of the reconfiguration proposals which fall to him to determine and has today issued a decision granting planning permission.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Disabled People's Housing (Common Parts Review)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mrs. Anne McGuire): The Review Group on Common Parts was set up, during the passage of the Disability Discrimination Bill, which gained Royal Assent in April 2005, because of concerns expressed by Members of the other place that some disabled people could become confined to their homes if the common parts of the premises could not be adapted to meet their needs.

The Review Group was asked to investigate the need and evidence for change in relation to alterations to the common parts of let residential premises and to make recommendations to me and the Minister for Housing and Planning, Yvette Cooper.

The Review Group has considered a wide range of evidence including: a review of landlord and tenant and housing legislation, information on the experience of disabled people, research concerning the attitudes of tenants, lessees and landlords to adjustments to common parts and a range of surveys and statistical reports.

It has come to the conclusion that while there is evidence of good practice by some landlords, there is also evidence of unmet need for adjustments to common parts to assist disabled people. Therefore, it has concluded that a problem does exist and has made a series of detailed recommendations in its report, entitled "A review of the current position in relation to adjustments to the common parts of let residential premises, and recommendation for change", 23 December 2005. The Government are now considering the detail of the report and its recommendations. The report has been placed in the Library.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 2 February 2006

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Prisoners' Voting Rights

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): My right hon. and noble Friend the Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor has made the following written ministerial statement.

"The recent judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of Hirst, concerning prisoners' voting rights has raised a number of difficult and complex issues which need careful consideration. The ECtHR indicated that there should be proper debate about those issues and I have therefore concluded that the best way forward would be to embark on full public consultation in which all the options can be examined and which will give everyone the opportunity to have their say. A consultation document is therefore in preparation and I hope it will be available for discussion in a few weeks time. Thereafter there will be a period for those with an interest to make their views known, which will help to inform the development of future policy."

DEFENCE

RAF Canberra T4

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): On 2 September 2004 a RAF Canberra T4 aircraft of 39 Squadron crashed at RAF Marham during a training sortie, resulting in the deaths of the two pilots, and serious injuries to the navigator.

The RAF Board of Inquiry has now reported, and the findings have been given to the next of kin of the deceased aircrew.

I have today placed the redacted Board of Inquiry (parts 1–5) in the Library of the House.

Logistics Modernisation

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Following my oral announcement to the House on 8 November 2005 on proposals for the future of the five business units of the Defence Aviation Repair Agency (DARA), the Trade Union consultation period is over, and I have made my final decision. This decision concerns the future of DARA's business units at St. Athan in South Wales, Almondbank in Perth—Scotland, Sealand in north Wales and the two units at Fleetlands in Hampshire.

I have noted the House of Commons Defence Committee Report into Delivering Front Line Capability to the RAF. I will provide a full response to the Committee in due course but it is my judgment that further delay in announcing the way forward will prolong a period of uncertainty for the DARA workforce, will incur additional costs, and will adversely affect current work to examine options for DARA.

I have decided to implement my preferred options as explained in the consultation document. This will mean that:

DARA's fast jet business at St. Athan will close by April 2007.

DARA's engine maintenance business at Fleetlands in Hampshire will close by April 2007.

DARA's helicopter repair and associated component businesses at Fleetlands in Hampshire, and Almondbank in Scotland, together with DARA's VC10 work at St. Athan, will be taken to the market to test whether sale might deliver improved effectiveness and value for money for our armed forces and a better long-term future for the workforce.

DARA's electronics business, based in Sealand North Wales, will be retained within MOD ownership, while we optimise the Department's future avionics support arrangements.

At the time of my announcement last November I made clear that we would work closely with the regional assembly in Wales, and we will of course engage with the other regional bodies, to mitigate the consequences of these necessary decisions and to provide appropriate outplacement services to help those affected.

I pay tribute to the excellent service DARA employees have provided to our armed forces. I am particularly mindful of the impact this announcement will have for individuals, especially, and for south Wales in general. We will help those affected to find alternative employment wherever possible and we will make every effort to use natural labour turnover, redeployment and voluntary redundancy to mitigate the loss. Using all of the above means we will seek to keep compulsory redundancies to a minimum but a significant number may be expected.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Gypsies and Travellers

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Yvette Cooper): I am announcing today new guidance on enforcement and planning for site provision to address the problem of Gypsy and Traveller sites in inappropriate locations. This guidance sets out to address the shortage of authorised sites, and strengthen enforcement against the problem sites that can cause real distress for local communities.

The Government are also developing new measures to strengthen planning enforcement. This includes examining ways to strengthen temporary stop notices, where alternative sites are available, and establishing a new Task Group on enforcement involving the police and local government.

Three quarters of Gypsy and Traveller caravans are on authorised sites. But there are too many problem sites which can cause real distress for local communities. That is why we need stronger enforcement alongside more action from local authorities to identify alternative sites. Stronger enforcement and more alternative sites go hand in hand if we are to find a long term solution to the problems some communities face.

The Government are setting up a new Task Group, drawing together central and local government, the police and other agencies to address the wide variations

in the use of enforcement powers and champion best practice. The Task Group will examine the difficulties some local agencies face in effective enforcement.

The Government will also consult the group on proposals to strengthen temporary stop notices where alternative sites are available. The group will act as expert advisers to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and the Home Office, on further measures to strengthen enforcement, where there is alternative site provision.

The new circular we are publishing today, "Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites", provides that local authorities will need to identify appropriate land for Gypsy and Traveller sites through the planning system, to deal with the growing shortage of sites and prevent unauthorised sites in problem locations.

There has been a growing shortage of authorised sites since the duty on local authorities was repealed in 1994. Local authorities will have to assess the need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in their area. Guidance on carrying out accommodation assessments is also published today.

Also published today is new ODPM-Home Office guidance for local councillors on enforcement against unauthorised encampments—where Gypsies and Travellers camp on land they do not own. This is the first in a new series aimed at addressing the wide variations in the use of powers by local authorities and police forces across England, and enabling councillors to hold local agencies to account.

Further guidance will be published later this year, covering enforcement against unauthorised development—where Gypsies and Travellers develop their own land without planning permission—as well as antisocial behaviour, such as verbal abuse and late-night noise, and environmental problems, such as fly tipping. Together, they will give police and local authorities clear instructions on how to use the range of powers available to them.

Copies of these documents will be available to download from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at www.odpm.gsi.gov.uk/gypsysites and will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Identity Fraud

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Andy Burnham): Today I am announcing an updated estimate of the cost of identity fraud to the UK economy.

In 2002, the Cabinet Office undertook a study into the nature and extent of identity fraud and estimated that the total cost of identity fraud to the UK was £1.3 billion. It has, until now, been the most recent and current research on the problem. In the absence of consistent recording practices across the wide range of organisations affected by identity fraud, the Cabinet Office study had to make use of information which in some cases had been collected for different purposes but was nevertheless the best that could be obtained in the circumstances.

The Home Office Identity Fraud Steering Committee (IFSC) has completed a one-off exercise to update the Cabinet Office estimate for the purpose of establishing trends in the cost of identity fraud over the past three years. The new figure has been produced using the same methodology as the 2002 Cabinet Office Study, but with more up-to-date figures where these are available. As with the previous study, it represents a best estimate of the scale of the problem.

The latest estimate is that identity fraud costs the UK economy over £1.7 billion. The table, which I have placed in the House Library and which will also be published on the IFSC and Home Office websites, sets out a detailed breakdown of the component parts of the new figure.

Because of the limitations of the method used previously to estimate the cost of identity fraud, the IFSC has agreed and implemented a new method to gather data on a more consistent basis to produce future estimates. We hope to have results from these new arrangements by early next year.

Figures from CIFAS—the UK's Fraud Prevention Service—show that there were more than 135,000 incidents of identity fraud in 2005, which is an increase of over 500 per cent since 1999.

The introduction of a secure national identity cards scheme using biometric information will make a step change in protecting people from identity fraud. By linking a person's identity to biometric data which are unique to that person, a criminal claiming to be another person can be detected. The combination of a secure national identity register and a robust means of verifying identity will be an important safeguard for individuals, public services and the private sector against identity fraud.

Meanwhile, the Government are working actively with partners in the private sector and law enforcement to combat the growing threat of identity fraud. The Home Office, in collaboration with other Government Departments and private sector organisations, such as the Department for Work and Pensions, HM Revenue and Customs, APACS—the UK payments association, CIFAS—The UK's Fraud Prevention Service and the British Bankers' Association, set up the IFSC in 2003 to lead a cross public/private sector work programme to tackle identity theft and identity fraud. The programme co-ordinates existing activity in the public and private sectors and identifies new projects and initiatives to reduce identity crime. Work is ongoing to implement measures against identity fraud that can be put in place in advance of an identity cards scheme.

All police forces in England and Wales have now established single points of contact with their colleagues in the Crown Prosecution Service and other Government Departments and agencies, including HM Revenue and Customs, to improve the investigation and prosecution of identity crime.

We are raising public awareness of identity fraud and how people can protect themselves from this type of crime. This includes the IFSC identity theft

website www.identitytheft.org.uk which has had over 170,000 hits, and the identity theft leaflet, which I launched last year. Since its launch, the leaflet has been co-branded and distributed by a number of organisations including the National Neighbourhood Watch Association and Barclays.

The Home Office, UK Passport Service (UKPS) and DVLA worked closely with APACS, the Finance and Leasing Association and CIFAS—the UK's Fraud Prevention Service to support their project to produce Identity Fraud—The UK Manual. The manual includes examples of known security features from UK passports and driving licences and provides guidance to financial organisations to help spot forgeries.

UKPS has deployed a database of lost and stolen passports that is being shared with border authorities and police worldwide to help prevent identity fraud. UKPS is also trialling the validation of passports against the passport database when they are presented as evidence of identity when opening bank accounts. This helps to identify forged and lost and stolen passports which are being used fraudulently. In a two-month pilot involving five companies, 71 suspicious instances of passport use were detected, for example where the details on the passport differed from that held on the database or the passport had been reported lost or stolen.

We changed the law in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 to align the penalty associated with fraudulently obtaining a driving licence with that for fraudulently obtaining a passport and made these offences arrestable. The maximum penalty for both documents is now two years' imprisonment. The Identity Cards Bill, which is currently before Parliament, strengthens the law on the possession and use of false identity documents which are often used by criminals to open false bank accounts.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Strategy for Sustainable Construction Report

The Minister for Industry and the Regions (Alun Michael): I am today launching a consultation process on the Government's draft "Strategy for Sustainable Construction Report 2006". The strategy is an update of the existing "Building a Better Quality of Life" produced by the then DETR, and focuses on the principle of sustainable development to which the Government as a whole are signed up.

The purpose of updating the strategy is to provide a framework to guide future progress within the construction industry. I expect the review to be complete and published by summer 2006 and I shall inform the House of the outcome.

TRANSPORT

Brighton Main Line Route

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Derek Twigg): Today the Department for Transport has published the Route Utilisation Strategy for the Brighton main line. This Strategy has been designed to improve the journey experience for the majority of the users of this busy and important route by delivering improved punctuality and more seats at peak times. This will be achieved through a re-timetabling exercise that will exploit the capability of the network to its fullest extent. I have placed a copy of the strategy in the House Library.

Route Utilisation Strategies take a strategic look at the rail network and its timetable. They outline plans to improve timetables to ensure the best use is made of the current rail network and to ensure that services meet current and future demands. This particular strategy was the last to be initiated by the Strategic Rail Authority. Strategies for other parts of the network are being developed by Network Rail.

The strategy published today confirms proposals for Brighton main line services up to 2012. It builds on the work undertaken by the SRA and takes account of the responses it received to its consultation. In particular it takes account of concerns raised by BAA and airline companies about the Gatwick Express service.

The concept of a fast, frequent service between Gatwick and Victoria will remain, although it will be necessary for those trains to serve additional stations. This will still constitute a high-quality service geared towards airline travellers, and in addition most Sussex coast trains will also serve the airport.

Further proposals will bring benefits to passengers elsewhere on the route. Punctuality and journey times will be improved by simplifying train movements, and crowding will be eased through the introduction of longer trains and additional stops at the busiest stations.

One of the proposed improvements has already been introduced; a direct Brighton to Ashford service now links coastal towns with the Brighton main line and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link.

Commercial negotiations with the relevant train operators, to facilitate the proposed changes, have already begun. Network Rail will lead on the implementation of the specific timetable proposals.

Thirty two thousand commuters use the Brighton main line each day. This strategy will build on improvements already made—including the introduction of over 700 new carriages in the last three years—through the provision of an additional 1,280 seats in each of the busiest commuting hours. I am confident that together these changes will deliver real improvements for all rail travellers whether they are travelling for work or for leisure.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 6 February 2006

TREASURY

Double Taxation Convention (United Kingdom and Japan)

The Paymaster General (Dawn Primarolo): A new Double Taxation Convention with Japan was signed on 2 February 2006. After signature, the text of the Convention was deposited in the Libraries of both Houses and made available on HM Revenue and Customs' website. The text of the Convention will be scheduled to a draft Order in Council and laid before the House of Commons in due course.

DEFENCE

Marine Services

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Marine services embrace a wide range of waterborne and associated support activities, both in and out of port, at Portsmouth, Devonport and on the Clyde, as well as maintenance of UK and overseas moorings and navigation buoys and support to a range of military operations and training. Under the current arrangements, in port services are provided by Serco Denholm Ltd., under Government-owned contractor-operated arrangements, while out of port services are undertaken by the Royal Maritime Auxiliary Service (RMAS).

Since 2002, the Ministry of Defence has been working to find a long-term service provider, and following an industry briefing day in May 2003 and a subsequent prequalification questionnaire exercise, four bidders were short listed, although two subsequently withdrew. The two remaining bidders, Serco Denholm and the Starfish Consortium (the latter comprising Babcock Naval Services (Clyde), Devonport Management Ltd. (Plymouth), Fleet Support Ltd. (Portsmouth) and Smit International (Scotland) Ltd.), were invited to submit two proposals offering a complete service: One of these proposals reflected a partnering arrangement with the RMAS, whereby staff remain in the MOD; the second proposal entailed TUPE transfer as appropriate.

Detailed bid evaluations, using predetermined criteria, have now been completed and Serco Denholm's proposal to provide the complete service, including taking ownership of MOD marine service assets, has been selected as the preferred bidder. Subject to successful final negotiations with the company, a contract will be awarded later this year with service commencement (vesting day) some three months after. While Serco Denholm's proposal may yet be modified as a result of the final negotiations, the ensuing arrangement should be easier to manage than the current ones, be more flexible and will offer the greater potential for continuous improvements.

A key implication of Serco Denholm's proposal results in the transfer of the RMAS workforce to the company on vesting day under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) Regulations. New pension arrangements will also be introduced that are broadly comparable to those currently enjoyed under the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme.

A further key aspect for MOD will be the closure of Her Majesty's mooring depot at Pembroke Dock, which currently employs 38 MOD staff, within 12 months of vesting day. However, Serco Denholm has developed plans with the Milford Haven Port Authority, the Welsh Development Agency and Pembrokeshire County Council to encourage inward investment and support building and infrastructure projects. This will provide alternative opportunities outside the MOD to sustain and improve job creation, in turn underpinning future jobs.

The changes in the way the service will be provided will result in a number of post reductions, although; Pembroke Dock aside, it is too early to determine the exact numbers, or be specific on how different locations will be affected. As far as possible, reductions will be achieved through either natural wastage or voluntary means although the need for some compulsory redundancies cannot be ruled out at this stage.

Throughout the tendering process the Department has engaged with the relevant trade unions. Informal dialogue will continue during the negotiation phase and the formal TUPE consultation process will commence following award of contract.

Anti-Structures Munition

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): I am pleased to announce the award of the contract for the demonstration and manufacture of the Anti-Structures Munition to Dynamit Nobel Defence. The contract is valued at £40 million and includes provision of combat weapons, training systems and contractor logistic support for the first five years.

The Anti-Structures Munition will provide our armed forces with a new capability. It will enable infantry to defeat hardened structures such as buildings or bunkers—reducing casualties to our forces while minimising collateral damage.

It is essential that we provide our armed forces with the tools they need to get the job done as safely, precisely and quickly as possible. This munition will help do just that.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

General Affairs and External Relations Council

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Douglas Alexander): My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, Sir John Grant (UK Permanent Representative to the EU) and I represented the UK at the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) in Brussels on 30 January 2006.

The agenda items were covered as follows:

Work Programme for 2006

The Council held a short public debate on the Annual Operational Programme (AOP) of the Council for 2006. The debate highlighted the priority areas as the Constitutional Treaty, the Inter-Institutional Agreement on the financial perspective, growth and jobs, Western Balkans, crisis and disaster management (both internal and external), human rights, climate change, JHA, transparency, and external relations.

The Council also took note of the European Commission's Legislative and Work Programme for 2006, presented by Commissioner Wallstrom who highlighted in particular growth and jobs, research and education, worker mobility and gender equality.

Lisbon Strategy: Commission Annual Progress Report

European Commission President Barroso presented the Commission's annual progress report on implementation of the economic reform strategy set out at Lisbon in 2000. He highlighted the positive progress so far and close partnership between Member States and the Commission. He said the National Reform Programmes contained a wide range of ideas and delivery was now the priority. But there was also a need for further co-ordinated action in some areas and therefore the Commission's report set out four priority areas for immediate action: investment in knowledge and innovation; unlocking business potential, particularly of SMEs; responding to globalisation and demographic change; and a more efficient and integrated EU energy policy. President Barroso concluded by emphasising the need for increased visibility of national action to influence public opinion positively. The Presidency summed up the four themes for the Lisbon agenda as "partnership, complementarity, visibility, and a focus on priorities". The Council took note of the presentation.

World Trade Organisation/Doha Development Agenda

The Council was briefed by Commissioner Mandelson on the latest developments in the current round of trade negotiations under the World Trade Organisation's Doha Development Round following meetings of key WTO members in the margins of the World Economic Forum in Davos (25–29 January). There was broad support for the Commission's position both in the Council and at an informal meeting of EU trade ministers on 29 January.

Western Balkans

High Representative Solana briefed the Council on the situation in Kosovo following the death of President Rugova. He noted President Rugova's successor, both as President and head of the negotiating team to the Kosovo status process, had not yet been identified. He also briefed on the activities of his personal representative in Montenegro, where no agreement had yet been reached between Government and opposition parties on the conduct of the proposed independence referendum.

The Commission introduced their recent Communication, proposing a number of practical ways in which the region's EU perspective could be made more tangible to citizens: notably through stimulating trade and investment, and by EU visa facilitation. Member States welcomed the Communication and looked forward to discussing the region's future in more depth at the EU-Western Balkans Ministerial Meeting to be held in the margins of the Foreign Ministers' informal meeting (Gymnich) in March.

The Council adopted Conclusions, covering the Commission's Communication, Kosovo, Bosnia, Montenegro and ICTY co-operation.

Latin America

Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner gave a short presentation of the Commission Communication on Latin America. Member States welcomed the Communication and looked forward to the EU-Latin America/Caribbean Summit in Vienna in May.

Afghanistan

The Council agreed Conclusions which reaffirm the EU's long term support for Afghan-led reconstruction, welcome the 31 Jan–1 Feb London Conference and the launch of the Afghanistan Compact, and commit to increased support for economic and social development, counter narcotics, and reform of the justice and security sectors. In a brief intervention, Dutch Foreign Minister Bot welcomed the Conclusions stating his desire that the Council discuss Afghanistan at greater length some time in the future.

Belarus

In a short discussion High Representative Solana and Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner gave readouts of their separate bilateral meetings with Mr Alexander Milinkevich (united opposition candidate in the forthcoming Belarus Presidential elections who was visiting Brussels). The meetings had been warm and constructive.

Several Member States intervened emphasising the importance of support for Belarusian civil society, international election observers operating unimpeded, monitoring the plight of political prisoners in Belarus, and reducing visa fees for Belarusians as a way of promoting people to people contact. They also highlighted the role of the OSCE in monitoring the election, and the scope for further co-operation with the US.

The Council adopted short Conclusions which call on the Belarusian authorities to ensure that the elections are conducted in accordance with international standards; welcome the Belarusian authorities' invitation to OSCE/ODIHR to monitor the election and note the willingness of EU Member States to contribute to that mission; but state the EU's readiness to take restrictive measures against individuals responsible for a failure to uphold international standards.

Middle East Peace Process

The Council discussed the Hamas election victory over lunch. High Representative Solana summarised the situation stressing that he understood that it was unlikely that a new government would be in place for at least three months but the Palestinian Authority (PA) was now bankrupt. Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner agreed the PA was in financial crisis. Several Member States intervened highlighting the need to keep lines of communication open but to make clear EU demands, namely that Hamas renounce violence. The Council adopted Conclusions which make clear that the EU's

readiness to continue funding is clearly dependent on a Palestinian government committed to a peaceful and negotiated solution of the conflict.

Iran

In a short discussion French Foreign Minister Mr Douste-Blazy and the Foreign Secretary briefed the Council on the E3/EU process ahead of the 2–3 February emergency International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors meeting.

Iraq

The Council agreed positive Conclusions welcoming the announcements of the election results, paying tribute to the impressive turnout of voters and encouraging the swift formation of an inclusive government.

Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

The Council, over lunch, considered the forthcoming meetings to be held in Europe in 2006 under the ASEM process on the basis of the EU Common Position on Burma, which is due for renewal in April.

AOB—Nepal

Dutch Foreign Minister Bot drew the Council's attention to recent developments in Nepal and in particular over human rights violations. In a statement on 27 January, the EU expressed its deep concern over the situation in the country, where political forces seem to be moving towards an ever more severe confrontation and polarisation, thus increasing the risk of deepening political crisis.

AOB—Ivory Coast

Dutch Foreign Minister Bot drew the Council's attention to the deteriorating situation in Ivory Coast and stressed the importance of the international community's engagement to encourage a return to the peace process.

AOB—Middle East: Reactions to cartoons in a Danish newspaper

Danish Foreign Minister Moller raised over lunch the issue of reactions in the Middle East following the publication in September 2005 of cartoons portraying the prophet Mohammed in an independent Danish newspaper. The Council adopted a statement strongly rejecting any threats by militant factions against EU citizens. The Presidency also underlined the importance of both freedom of expression, as a fundamental freedom, and respect for religious beliefs.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Fundraising (Self-Regulation)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): I am today setting out the principles on which the Government will base their assessment of the success of the self-regulation of voluntary sector fundraising. This follows consultation with the fundraising sector last year and the announcement from the Institute of Fundraising last week of the appointments of a chair and director for the scheme following open competition.

Self-regulation of fundraising was a recommendation of the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit. The Strategy Unit reviewed the charitable and wider not-for-profit sector and in 2002 published its report "Private Action, Public Benefit" which made a number of recommendations. We accepted this recommendation and have made provision in the Charities Bill for statutory regulation should self-regulation fail.

The main aim of the self-regulation scheme is to maintain and build on the high levels of public trust and confidence in the voluntary sector's fundraising activities. The scheme will help the sector guard against future threats to these high levels of public confidence. It will promote best practice and enable the sector to respond to criticism.

The Institute of Fundraising has led the development of the proposals for self-regulation, with significant support from the sector. However, the Regulation of Fundraising Scheme (RFS) will be run independently of the Institute. The scheme, which will be voluntary, will be open to all charities and fundraising organisations throughout the UK. It is expected to be up and running and open for membership this summer. The Government support self-regulation of fundraising, and (along with the Scottish Executive) are providing funding to enable the scheme to establish itself. In the longer term, the scheme is expected to become self-funding through membership subscriptions.

We have not set out specific long-term targets for the RFS, as these could be inflexible and restrictive. Instead we have focused on what the Government expect the scheme to deliver, and how that could be measured when the Government are considering the scheme's success. External factors would need to be taken into account, and over time we would also expect the fundraising scheme to develop its own performance monitoring and reporting. Respondents to last year's consultation were broadly supportive of this approach.

The expectations which the Government have for the RFS, and which will be considered in any assessment of its success, are as follows:

The scheme will need to attract high levels of voluntary participation across the sector, although it is appreciated that it will take time to build up levels of participation. Participation should reflect the diversity of voluntary sector fundraising;

The scheme and its participants must provide a clear public promise of what should be expected from fundraisers who are participants in the scheme, and from the scheme itself. The codes of practice underpinning the scheme should go beyond requiring compliance with the law, and should set a high standard of good practice;

The scheme and its participants should actively encourage awareness among non-members and the public of the scheme's existence, and good fundraising practice;

The scheme should promote openness, transparency and accountability in fundraising practice;

The control of the scheme must be independent and impartial. Its governing body must include consumer representatives and those with fundraising experience;

Compliance with the scheme must be monitored proportionately. But there should not be complete reliance on self-certification;

There must be fair and effective sanctions for non-compliance which are proportionate to the nature and extent of any non-compliance. The initial focus should be on improving performance;

The scheme must have a clear and effective complaints handling process which is easily accessible to the public and which provides fair redress.

The scheme must be clear about its remit and should work effectively with other regulators, particularly where issues are outside its remit.

The scheme must be accountable through the publication of an annual report which details the scheme's performance. The scheme should also develop its own meaningful performance indicators following consultation with stakeholders.

The scheme should identify emerging trends in fundraising practice, and the public's perception of it, and be sufficiently flexible to quickly adapt and evolve codes of practice where necessary.

Regulation should be proportionate and the scheme should keep to a minimum any regulatory burden to participants.

We will review the development of the scheme on an annual basis, and agree specific targets, while the scheme is supported by Government funding. However we want to give the scheme sufficient time to become established and prove its effectiveness, before we judge its success. We therefore propose that a formal review of the success of self-regulation take place as part of the review of the impact of the Charities Bill which is due within five years of enactment and will report to Parliament.

If self-regulation were to fail, any proposals under the reserve power for statutory regulation of fundraising would require consultation and would be subject to the affirmative resolution of Parliament. A similar reserve power exists in Scotland, in the Charities and Trustee Investment Act 2005. Charity law and regulation is a devolved matter, and in Scotland it would be for the Scottish Executive to decide whether or not to pursue statutory regulation there. However, we will work closely with the Scottish Executive in monitoring the progress of the self-regulation scheme, and reviewing its success.

A summary of responses to the consultation has been deposited in the Library and is available on the Home Office website at:

www.communities.homeoffice.gov.uk/activecomms/charity-law-and-reg.

I am grateful to everyone who has helped to develop the proposals for self-regulation, and those who responded to the consultation on the criteria for assessing its success. Further details of the self-regulation scheme are available from the Institute of Fundraising at: www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk.

Police Force Restructuring

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): I should like to make a statement to report progress on the review of police force structures which I announced in September 2005.

My vision is a police service which is close, responsive and accountable to the communities it serves, supported by larger forces with the capacity and specialist expertise to protect the public from wider threats such as serious and organised crime and terrorism.

My overriding concern, and that of those responsible for leading the police service across the country, is to ensure that the police service is capable of preventing and responding to crime and disorder at every level: local neighbourhood; borough or local authority; force; nationally; and internationally. Although there has been much progress at all levels, especially at the local level where we have made a clear commitment to roll out neighbourhood policing across the country by 2008, it is vital that we close the gap in policing serious crime and major incidents identified by HMIC last year.

I am grateful for the submissions received from police force areas on or before 23 December. These submissions put forward a range of options for improving police capacity to tackle serious crime and major incidents, and at the same time delivering and sustaining neighbourhood policing. It is striking that all involved are clear that the current structures are not capable of delivering effective policing to meet 21st Century challenges.

HMIC has considered each of the options put forward in those submissions against a range of criteria. Last week they gave me the first of their assessments—that is, the protective services assessments which assess options on the basis of the delivery of effective policing. I am also being provided with additional assessments based on affordability, organisational resilience and impact on the CJS partner agencies. As I have said throughout, the decisions which I make will be clearly based on those professional assessments.

I can tell the House that the protective services assessments undertaken thus far have set out clearly, for each region, which options are of greatest benefit from the policing perspective. These are the options which will go forward for further consideration.

There are four areas where the clear conclusion of the protective services assessment is that there is only one acceptable option. These are the North East, North West, West Midlands and Wales. I am therefore today meeting with representatives from forces and police authorities in those areas to invite them to engage closely with me to consider taking forward the option for policing which I believe will be of greatest benefit to their communities. Final decisions on how we proceed in these areas will of course be based on the full consideration of the implications for organisational resilience, affordability, precepting and the impact on the wider CJS.

I am also writing to the Chief Officers and Police Authorities in the other five regions to explain the process and timescales for further discussions on the position in their regions. In the next few weeks I intend to meet with those Chief Constables and Police Authority Chairs to discuss the subsequent assessments and if possible to agree a way forward. At the same time, we will address the concerns which have been raised by police authorities regarding issues of finance and governance.

The proposals involving London will be dealt with at a later date, once reviews of fraud and transport policing have reported.

I shall make further reports to the House about the detailed plans for all areas as options for each are refined.

Options proposed at this stage as suitable for progression:

West Midlands

Merger of Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Mercia and West Midlands

North East

Merger of Cleveland, Durham and Northumbria

North West

Greater Manchester Police standalone

Merger of Cheshire and Merseyside

Merger of Cumbria and Lancashire

Wales

Merger of Dyfed-Powys, Gwent, North Wales and South Wales.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

BNFL (Sale of Westinghouse)

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Alan Johnson): BNFL is today signing a purchase and sale agreement with Toshiba to sell its US subsidiary Westinghouse for the sum of $5.4 billion. This is an excellent outcome for the UK taxpayer who stands to benefit from a return of around four times BNFL's original investment in the business.

I am confident that as part of a global business, Westinghouse will be better placed to capitalise upon the prospects for international nuclear new build projects. The Government would have been reluctant for the taxpayer to take on the commercial risks of such international projects. Toshiba conversely is able to make the necessary investment and will be able to create synergies that are not available under the current ownership to take advantage of growing opportunities.

BNFL and Toshiba will now apply for the necessary regulatory and other clearances with a view to completing the transaction within six months.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 7 February 2006

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Higher Education (Deregulation of Governance)

The Minister for Higher Education and Lifelong Learning (Bill Rammell): I have today written to heads of all English higher education institutions explaining how the Government is taking forward our commitment outlined in paragraph 7.10 of the 2003 White Paper "The Future of Higher Education". Copies of my letter have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

Chapter 7 of the White Paper focused on freeing up higher education institutions from bureaucracy and questioned how far regulation of universities through the Privy Council was necessary. Currently, the legal position is that all changes to institutions' Charters and Statutes or Instruments and Articles of Government have to be approved by the Privy Council and can delay institutional changes. The White Paper concluded that the Privy Council did not need to approve minor changes in the way universities go about their business. Subsequently, we have been working to decide what should count as a "minor change".

My letter explains how our proposals for de-regulation of governance arrangements will mean that in future only core issues of public interest will be monitored by the Privy Council.

The approach to drawing up key areas of public interest that still need protecting has been agreed by the Department, the Privy Council Office and our stakeholder bodies—Universities UK, the Standing Conference of Principals, the Association of Heads of University Administration, the Committee of University Chairmen, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, the Higher Education Funding Council for England and the devolved administrations.

The Department has identified the key areas where there is a continuing "public interest" in university governance. These include degree awarding powers and university title, powers and objects, academic freedom and governance structures, particularly the functions and constitution of the governing body. Non-key areas include provisions on membership, internal structures and detailed roles and constitution bodies such as the Senate and Court.

My letter explains that while the Government cannot require institutions to liberalise their governance arrangements, we very much hope that they will bring forward proposals that will relieve them of the obligation of having all amendments to their governance arrangements agreed by the Privy Council.

This is just one of the steps we are taking to demonstrate the Government are serious about reducing unnecessary bureaucracy to the absolute minimum compatible with effective regulation and quality assurance, not just in higher education, but more broadly across education and the economy as a whole. Light touch, risk-based and proportionate regulation is essential for the success of any sector in our 21st century economy and this is especially vital for higher education, to help ensure our universities remain world class.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): I represented the United Kingdom at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council meeting in Brussels on 23 January 2006.

The Chairman of the Council began by setting out the Austrian presidency work programme for the next six months. It includes progressing the WTO negotiations, work on rural development financing, avian influenza, sustainable development and renewable energy, genetically modified crops, and the European Fisheries Fund.

The Energy Commissioner and the Agriculture Commissioner jointly presented their Biomass Action Plan. The Energy Commissioner stressed the need to address the changes in the EU's energy situation caused by the increased price of oil and gas and the recent gas crisis in Russia and the Ukraine. The Agriculture Commissioner stressed the importance of the biomass plan being demand driven. I welcomed the action plan's integrated approach and its focus on energy for heating.

The Agriculture Commissioner presented a proposal to update and simplify the EU legislation governing organic farming and the labelling and sale of organic products. She also presented her proposals on changes to the rules for protected geographical indications and traditional specialties for agriculture products.

The Council agreed a request from Cyprus for approval to pay a national state aid to cover long-standing agricultural debts. The UK abstained.

The Council took note of the presentation by the Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection of the Community Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals for the period 2006–10. The plan is intended as an overarching strategy paper containing a number of options for future legislation and focused on five main themes: simplifying and updating existing animal welfare legislation; promoting research and alternative approaches to animal testing; introducing standardised animal welfare indicators; improving communication of welfare issues to animal handlers and the general public; and, supporting international activities for the protection of animals.

Under any other business: the Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection updated the Council on the outbreak of avian influenza and on the outcome of the recent International Pledging Conference on Avian Influenza in Beijing.

Germany supported by Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium and France drew attention to need for emergency measures for stabilising the EU market in order to cope with a likely sugar surplus of at least 2 million tonnes in the 2006 07 marketing year which would make the transition to the newly reformed Sugar regime problematic.

Italy supported by Greece, Cyprus, Poland, France, Spain, Malta and Hungary called for emergency market measures to support the poultry sector following a drop in sales caused by the recent outbreaks of avian influenza.

Over lunch the Agriculture Commissioner updated the Council on the outcome of the WTO agricultural negotiations in Hong Kong and outlined the next steps aimed at securing the adoption of modalities in the WTO negotiations by the end of April.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Nuclear Materials Balance

The Minister for Energy (Malcolm Wicks): The Department of Trade and Industry is today publishing, on behalf of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, British Nuclear Fuels plc and Urenco (Capenhurst) Ltd., details of "material unaccounted for" (MUF) arising from the use of plutonium and or uranium in civil nuclear programmes during 2004 05. The figures, which are available on the DTI website at www.dti.gov.uk/non-proliferation/ukso/nuclear_materials_balance.htm aggregate the various operations at each site and follow the practice introduced in 1977. Copies of the report are also being placed in the Libraries of the House.

All of the figures are within internationally accepted standards published by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for expected measurement uncertainty associated with nuclear materials accountancy. The 2004 05 figures conform to the pattern over previous years and give no rise to concern over either the safety or the security of the operation of the plants.

The Nuclear Materials Balance in future years will also be published on the DTI website.

TRANSPORT

Urban Congestion Target

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): The Public Service Agreement target published in July last year is based on the congestion targets in the Local Transport Plans (LTPs) of the 10 largest urban areas (London, Greater Manchester, West Midlands, Tyne and Wear, Merseyside, Greater Bristol, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, Leicester and Nottingham). Local congestion targets were to be included in the Local Transport Plans which will be published in March.

In December a problem was discovered with some of the data being used to set the congestion targets. Corrected data will not be available in time to set targets in March. The March Local Transport Plans will contain congestion tackling strategies, but the targets consistent with those strategies will now be set by July at the same time as the Public Service Agreement.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Disability Discrimination Act (Definition of Disability)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mrs. Anne McGuire): I am today submitting to Parliament, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the draft revised "Guidance on matters to be taken into account when determining questions relating to the definition of disability" (hereafter referred to as the "Guidance").

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), as amended, prohibits discrimination against disabled people in a range of circumstances, including in employment and occupation, education, transport, and the provision of goods, facilities and services. Only those people who are defined as disabled in accordance with section 1 of the Act, and associated schedules and regulations, are entitled to the protection that the Act provides. Under section 3 of the Act, the Secretary of State has the power to issue guidance on matters to be taken into account in determining whether a person is a disabled person for the purposes of the Act.

The Guidance does not impose any legal obligations of itself, nor is it an authoritative statement of the law. However, section 3(3) of the Act requires that an adjudicating body (such as a court or tribunal) which is determining whether a person is a disabled person for the purposes of the Act, must take into account any aspect of the guidance which appears to it to be relevant.

The original Guidance was published in 1996 (when the Act first came into force), and has not been amended since. As a result of various legislative changes since 1996, including the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (which provides automatic coverage for people with HIV, cancer and MS from the point of diagnosis, and removes the requirement for a mental illness to be "clinically well-recognised"), the Guidance now needs to be updated. It also needs to take account of developments in case law to reflect key court and tribunal cases, which have helped to improve understanding of how the definition works in practice. Finally, it needs to take account of commitments that the Government gave during the passage of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 through Parliament that it would consider how the Guidance might be revised in order to make clear how people with a mental impairment can be covered by the Act.

With these aims in mind, the Guidance has been redrafted. The revised text was subject to a consultation exercise, aimed at the primary users of the Guidance, but also including organisations representing disabled people, business and employee interests, and the legal and medical professions. The consultation document was also made available to the public through the Stationery Office and via the internet. The consultation took place between 5 September and 31 October 2005

and we have carefully considered the comments received. As a consequence, a number of amendments have been made to the draft to clarify the Guidance and the illustrative examples that it contains. An evaluation report on the consultation exercise has been produced and I have arranged for copies to be placed in the Library of both Houses.

In accordance with section 3(6) of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, I am today laying a copy of the draft revised Guidance before both Houses. Subject to Parliamentary approval, the Secretary of State aims to bring this revised Guidance into force on 20 April 2006.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 8 February 2006

DEFENCE

Military Afloat Reach and Sustainability (Mars) Programme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): As set out in the Defence Industrial Strategy, the Military Afloat Reach and Sustainability (MARS) programme is a significant planned investment in a new integrated approach to afloat support, combined with investment in life extensions for retained platforms. MARS will form an essential part of the UK's Versatile Maritime Force, providing a suite of vessels to supply UK and allied vessels with fuel, food, ordnance and other support they need to sustain operations. MARS will also introduce a new capability, providing joint sea-based logistics for those operations where host nation support is absent or limited or where we would wish to reduce our footprint ashore. The programme is currently in the assessment phase.

HEALTH

NHS Direct

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Mr. Liam Byrne): The Minister of State, Department of Health (Lord Warner) has made the following written ministerial statement today.

"The annual accounts of NHS Direct 2004-05 and any accompanying comptroller and auditor general report has today been laid before Parliament pursuant to section 98(1C) of the National Health Service Act 1977.

Copies have been placed in the Library.

TRANSPORT

Thameslink Station, St. Pancras

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): I have agreed to the proposal to fit out the new Thameslink station at King's Cross St. Pancras. Work is already underway and the station will be ready for passenger use at the end of 2007.

The new state of the art station will provide an excellent interchange between Thameslink services and national and international services when Eurostar services switch operation to from Waterloo International to St. Pancras. It will also improve passenger access to those wishing to use the Olympic Javelin services to access Stratford during the London Olympics in 2012.

As part of the recent Channel Tunnel Rail Link blockade works a station box has already been constructed underneath the new St. Pancras station. The new station will be a great improvement over the existing King's Cross Thameslink station at Pentonville Road, which has restricted access to the platforms and often suffers from congestion due to its narrow platforms and limited access between the platforms and the rest of the station. The new station, provisionally called St. Pancras Thameslink, will also be fully compliant with DDA requirements.

The fit-out of the new station is an independent project and is not dependent on powers being granted to the Thameslink 2000 project, and consequently can be delivered in advance of this.

The planned cost of fitting out the station and transferring services is £63.5 million at 2003 prices. It will be implemented by London Continental Railways, who are currently completing Stage 2 of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 9 February 2006

CABINET OFFICE

Government Whips Office

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Jim Murphy): My right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister has made the following Machinery of Government change with immediate effect. The offices of the House of Commons and House of Lords Chief Whips will transfer from the Cabinet Office to the Privy Council Office. There will be no change in function or location of the Whips' Offices. The change comes about as part of a review being conducted by Sir Gus O'Donnell, the Cabinet Secretary, into the role and functions of the Cabinet Office.

Spring Supplementary Estimate 2005–06

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Jim Murphy): Subject to Parliamentary approval of any necessary supplementary estimate, the Cabinet Office DEL will be decreased by £3,150,000 from £226,144,000 to £222,994,000. The administration costs limits will be decreased by £3,570,000 from £199,401,000 to £195,831,000.

Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table.

			New DEL	
£'000	*Change*	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource	-3,150	222,994	0	222,994
Capital	-1,687	23,313	0	23,313
Depreciation*	0	-37,338	0	-37,338
Total	-4,837	208,969	0	208,969

*Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from Machinery of Government (MoG) transfer of the Government Social Research Unit to HM Treasury and the Whips Offices (Lords and Commons) to the Privy Council Office. The resource implications are £2,097,000 and £914,000 respectively. Other outward transfers include the baseline for the Parliamentary Counsel Office to other Government Departments. Inward transfers include £389,0000 from the Department of Trade and Industry to fund the Equalities Review, £335,000 from various Government Departments to fund protective security measures relating to State and Government assets in central London and End Year Flexibility draw down of £7,900,000.

The change in the capital element of the DEL arises from the transfer of £20,000 capital as part of the MoG transfer to the Privy Council Office and £1,110,000 as part of the MoG transfer of Government Car and Despatch Agency to the Department for Transport. There is also a transfer of £557,000 to Her Majesty's Government Communications Centre for the provision of a new building and infrastructure at Hanslope Park.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Lord Carter's Review of Legal Aid Procurement

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Bridget Prentice): My right hon. and noble Friend the Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor, Lord Falconer of Thoroton, has made the following written ministerial statement today.

"Since 5 July 2005 Lord Carter of Coles has led a review of legal aid procurement.

Today Lord Carter published his interim report—"Procurement of Criminal Defence Services: A Market Based Approach to Reform".

I am very grateful to Lord Carter for the excellent progress he has made. I am also grateful for the continuing support and active engagement with the Carter team which both the Bar Council and Law Society have given. I am looking forward to Lord Carter's final report containing a worked through and fully costed implementation plan for delivering a procurement system that achieves maximum value for money and control over spending while ensuring quality and the fairness of the justice system".

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 13 February 2006

TREASURY

ECOFIN 14 February

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gordon Brown): Items on the agenda are as follows:

Stability and Growth Pact

ECOFIN will adopt Council Opinions on the Stability Programmes of Belgium, Luxembourg and Austria and the Convergence Programmes of Estonia, Latvia and Slovenia;

Lisbon Agenda

Council will discuss the Commission Annual Progress Report on the Lisbon Agenda and will hold a first debate on the ECOFIN Key Issues Paper for Spring European Council;

European Investment Bank Contribution to Growth and Employment

ECOFIN will discuss the role the European Investment Bank can play in promoting jobs and growth;

Ageing Report

ECOFIN will consider a Report from the Economic Policy Committee on the impact of ageing populations on public spending;

Appointment to the European Central Bank Executive Board

Council will consider the appointment of a successor to Otmar Issing to the European Central Bank Executive Board;

Vienna VAT Fraud Conference

ECOFIN will be de-briefed on a Conference held on 6–7 February to discuss VAT fraud issues.

Security and Counter-Terrorism

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gordon Brown): A secure, safe and strong Britain requires concerted action against global terrorism with all the means at our disposal: military, security, intelligence, economic and culture. To this end coordinating the way we address international terrorism will be a central feature of the coming Spending Review.

Just as there should be no safe haven for those who perpetrate terrorism, so there should be no hiding place for those who finance terrorism.

The Government will bring forward new measures to enhance the prevention, identification and disruption of terrorist financing.

First, in order to strengthen the prevention of terrorist financing, the Government will:

review how best to strengthen the safeguards to protect the charitable sector from terrorist abuse and protect donor confidence in so doing; and

publish proposals to strengthen safeguards for Money Service Businesses—and thereby protect the integrity of global remittances.

Secondly, in order to identify terrorist networks and strengthen the operation of counter-terrorist finance measures, the Government are approving the publication today of new guidance by the Joint Money Laundering Steering Group providing strategic advice to banks and financial institutions on targeting suspicious transactions; and will establish a new dedicated forum to bring them together with Government counter-terrorism agencies to formalise information sharing and take action when specific threats arrive.

Thirdly, in order to disrupt terrorist networks when they come to light, the Treasury will strengthen asset-freezing mechanisms to make them more proactive and pre-emptive. This will include a greater joint working between the Treasury and other Departments and agencies, both in respect of targeting and enforcement.

The Government will also seek to hold the Presidency of the Financial Action Task Force—to provide a platform to promote strong implementation of terrorist finance measures worldwide.

It is also fitting that we honour the contribution of those who fought in past conflicts.

In order to support the fundraising for the Armed Forces Memorial in Staffordshire, with the approval of Her Majesty the Queen, the Government will make available £1.5 million from the proceeds of a coin to mark the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar towards the funding of this memorial.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

London Conference on Afghanistan

The Minister for the Middle East (Dr. Kim Howells): I wish to inform the House that my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, His Excellency Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, opened the London conference on Afghanistan on 31 January. My right hon. Friends the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the Secretary of State for Defence, the Secretary of State for International Development and I represented the UK at different sessions. The conference was attended by over 60 delegations.

The London conference successfully created the framework for the next phase of development in Afghanistan. It demonstrated the commitment of the Afghan Government and the international community

to deepen their partnership, as we work together to build a peaceful, prosperous and democratic Afghanistan. The launch of the "Afghanistan Compact" (a copy of which I have placed in the Library), and discussion of the interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy and of the revised National Drug Control Strategy, all contributed to a renewed sense of purpose and direction.

Many delegations made new financial pledges at the conference, making available over $10.5 billion for the implementation of Afghan Government priorities over the next five years. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister told the conference that for its part the UK would spend £500 million in assistance for Afghanistan over the next three years.

The conference recognised the interconnected nature of the challenges ahead, with progress on security, governance and development being mutually reinforcing. It recognised the cross-cutting nature and scale of the narcotics problem and the threat that this posed to Afghanistan's reconstruction. Delegates welcomed the newly updated National Drugs Control Strategy. On security issues, it was noted that Afghanistan continues to welcome assistance from international forces and supports the expansion of the NATO-led ISAF. On governance, there was broad support for sensitive handling of transitional justice issues and acknowledgement of the valuable role played by NGOs in Afghanistan's reconstruction. The conference welcomed the Afghan Government's plans for economic and social development by focusing on private sector development, investment in key infrastructural sectors such as power, water and roads, and by building human capacity. There was also useful discussion about improving aid effectiveness.

I am pleased that representatives of the Afghan National Assembly and of Afghanistan's Civil Society were able to attend the conference. Our partnership is both with the Government and the people of Afghanistan and their elected representatives.

The challenge now is to build on the momentum created by the conference—to implement the Compact so as to bring real improvements to the lives of people in Afghanistan. Early follow-up action will include establishing the new joint co-ordination and monitoring mechanism envisaged in the Compact, to achieve greater coherence of effort between the Afghan Government and the international community, led for the latter by the UN.

I will set out the detail of UK support for the newly updated National Drug Control Strategy in a separate written ministerial statement tomorrow.

HEALTH

Care Services (Regulatory Fees)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Mr. Liam Byrne): In 2002 the Government stated their policy to move gradually to a position where the recurrent costs of regulation are fully recovered from service providers. This remains our policy.

Increased fees for registration and inspection will be charged therefore by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) from April 2006. These are set out in the table. The fees are subject to a 15 per cent. increase over 2005-06 levels, except in relation to boarding schools and further education colleges whose fees already match the full cost of regulation.

In parallel, the Government will address the overall cost of regulation to limit what providers will pay in future. We are also working with the inspectorates, and have been for some time, to ensure regulatory services are provided as cost effectively as possible, and working with public commissioners of care to ensure they understand regulatory costs are a legitimate part of the cost of providing care and need to be reflected in commissioning fees.

Individual letters are being sent to all providers of care services regulated by CSCI to notify them about the increases.

Fees for registration and inspection 2006-07 (2005-06 in brackets)

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Service	*Provider Registration*	*Manager Registration*	*Minor Variation*	*Variation requiring visit*
Care homes	£2,186 (£1,901)	£596 (£518)	£99 (£86)	£1,093 (£950)
Small care homes	£596 (£518)	N/A	£99 (£86)	£596 (£518)
Children's homes	£2,186 (£1,901)	£596 (£518)	£99 (£86)	£1,093 (£950)
Small children's homes	£596 (£518)	N/A	£99 (£86)	£596 (£518)
Residential family centres	£1,822 (£1,584)	£497 (£432)	£83 (£72)	£911 (£792)
Small residential family centres	£497 (£432)	N/A	£83 (£72)	£497 (£432)
Domiciliary care agencies	£1,822 (£1,584)	£497 (£432)	£83 (£72)	£911 (£792)
Small domiciliary care agencies	£497 (£432)	N/A	£83 (£72)	£497 (£432)
Nurses agencies	£1,822 (£1,584)	£497 (£432)	£83 (£72)	£911 (£792)
Small nurses agencies	£497 (£432)	N/A	£83 (£72)	£497 (£432)
Voluntary adoption agencies principal office and branches	£1,518 (£1,320)	N/A	£69 (£60)	£759 (£660)
VAAs with small principal office or branch	£414 (£360)	N/A	£69 (£60)	£414 (£360)
Independent fostering agencies	£2,186 (£1,901)	£596 (£518)	£99 (£86)	£1,093 (£950)
Adoption support agencies and branches	£1,518 (£1,320)	£414 (£360)	£69 (£60)	£759 (£660)
Small adoption support agencies and small branches	£414 (£360)	N/A	£69 (£60)	£414 (£360)
Adult placement schemes	£2,186 (£1,901)	£596 (£518)	£99 (£86)	£1,093 (£950)
Small adult placement schemes	£596 (£518)	N/A	£99 (£86)	£596 (£518)

Fees for registration and inspection 2006-07 (2005-06 in brackets)

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Annual Fees

Service	*Flat rate*	*Approved Place from 4th–29th*	*Approved place over 30th*
Care homes	£297 (£259)	£99 (£86)	£99 (£86)
Small care homes and adult placements carers	£199 (£173)	N/A	N/A
Children's homes	£994 (£864)	£99 (£86)	£99 (£86)
Small children's homes	£994 (£864)	N/A	N/A
Boarding schools & FE	£432 (£432)	£26 (£26)	£13 (£13)
Residential special schools	£795 (£691)	£79 (£69)	£40 (£35)
Residential family centres	£662 (£576)	£83 (£72)	£83 (£72)
Domiciliary care agencies	£1,242 (£1,080)	N/A	N/A
Small domiciliary care agencies	£621 (£540)	N/A	N/A
Nurses agencies	£828 (£720)	N/A	N/A
Small nurses agencies	£414 (£360)	N/A	N/A
Voluntary adoption agencies and branches	£690 (£600)	N/A	N/A
Small voluntary adoption agencies and small branches	£345 (£300)	N/A	N/A
Independent fostering agencies	£1,987 (£1,728)	N/A	N/A
Adoption support agencies and branches	£690 (£600)	N/A	N/A
Small adoption support agencies and small branches	£345 (£300)	N/A	N/A
Adult placement schemes	£1,987 (£1,728)	N/A	N/A
Small adult placement schemes	£994 (£864)	N/A	N/A

HOME DEPARTMENT

Immigration Rules (Child Visitors)

The Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality (Mr. Tony McNulty): I have, as of 12 February, made changes to the immigration rules regarding children coming to the United Kingdom with a visa or entry clearance issued for the purpose of a visit. Some of these are accompanied by adults; many are not accompanied by an adult even though it has in the past been possible to obtain a visa without declaring that this will be the nature of the journey made. These changes will, therefore, provide further safeguards for children when entering the UK as visitors.

We will require that a child seeking to visit the UK in their own right, i.e. unaccompanied, must demonstrate that there are adequate arrangements for their care here and that they identify a person in their home country who is responsible for them.

Where a visa national child is seeking entry to the UK as a visitor in the company of an adult, that adult must be identified, and the child's visa must identify the adult with whom they seek to enter.

At present a child can apply for entry clearance at the same time as other close family members, be granted an entry clearance, and then travel to the UK either alone or in the company of an adult other than one of those who applied for a visa along with them. This can allow children to enter the UK in the company of an adult who is either unrelated or with whom they have little connection. By doing this they can evade the extra scrutiny of the reception and care arrangements awaiting the child in the UK which is given to children who travel unaccompanied. Some instances can be well intentioned but highly irregular, but in others the child is used to facilitate fraud, and can endure serious physical harm. However, the main cause of concern is the subsequent difficulty in tracing these children.

The Rules will now contain additional requirements for visa national children coming to the UK for a visit, be they travelling alone or with an adult. Each child will be issued with a separate entry clearance vignette. When applying for a visa for a child, the parent or guardian will be required to indicate whether the child will travel to the UK alone or with a nominated adult. The child's entry clearance will be endorsed to indicate the adult who will accompany the child. The entry clearance will not be valid for travel other than when accompanied by the identified adult. The visitor rules have been amended to reflect this (at Paragraphs 41-46F of the Immigration Rules).

The changes will create an official and accessible record which is not there at the moment. These measures are aimed at tackling some of the problems associated with unaccompanied minors arriving in the United Kingdom, chief of which is the lack of information about their circumstances in their home country. They will contribute to the ability to act, where necessary, when individual children come to attention after arrival for welfare and other reasons. They will ensure that children who enter the UK in the company of an adult do so in a recorded way, with a specific destination for their future care, and with a record of their parents' details in the place where the entry clearance was issued. The records which this provision will allow us to keep will be a deterrent to abuse, as all of those involved in the child's travel will be traceable.

TRANSPORT

Marine Environmental High Risk Areas

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): I am today announcing 32 locations around the UK coast that have been identified as Marine Environmental High Risk Areas (MEHRAs). The locations of these areas have been identified after taking into account shipping risk, environmental sensitivity and other environmental protection measures already in place at each location and follow recommendations made by the late Lord Donaldson in his report "Safer Ships, Cleaner Seas".

MEHRAs will be an essential aid to passage planning since their primary purpose is to inform ships' masters of areas where they need to exercise even more caution

than usual. This is just part of the information available to mariners to enable them to navigate UK waters safely.

MEHRAs will now be notified by a Marine Guidance Note to mariners who will be expected to exercise an even higher degree of care than usual when passing through them. They will also be marked on Admiralty charts.

Paper copies of the full MEHRAs report are available in the Libraries of both Houses and it is also published at www.dft.gov.uk.

WALES

Departmental Expenditure Limit

The Secretary of State for Wales (Mr. Peter Hain): The Wales departmental expenditure limit will be increased by £244,298,000 from £12,243,494,000 to £12,487,792,000. The increase is a result of:

(a) An EYF allocation of £1,168,000 from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Counter Terrorism.

(b) An allocation of £1,234,000 from the 2005 Pre Budget Report

(c) A take up of £70,329,000 EYF—Near cash

(d) A take up of £61,211,000 EYF—Capital

(e) A take up of £97,000,000 EYF for Non cash—Depreciation and Cost of Capital

(f) Net transfers from other Government Departments to the National Assembly for Wales of £13,356,000.

These transfers are as follows:

(i) £110,000 from DEFRA for Animal Health powers

(ii) £84,000 from DFES for the Open University Fees Waiver Scheme

(iii) £4,533,000 from DFES for Welsh students studying at the Open University

(iv) £3,336,000 from the Department of Health for Out of Area Treatments

(v) £2,132,000 from the Department of Health for Cross Border Patients

(vi) £202,000 from the Department of Health for High Security psychiatric Services

(vii) £14,000 from the Department of Health for Dental SIFT

(viii) £2,476,000 from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for the purchase of Fire and Rescue equipment.

(ix) £681,000 from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for purchase of Fire and Rescue equipment

(x) £8,000 from Northern Ireland for Out of Area Treatments

(xi) £220,000 to the Wales Office

These changes will result in an increase of £227,023,000 in the grant payable to the National Assembly for Wales.

The increase in DEL will be offset by transfers from other Departments and will not therefore add to the planned total of public expenditure.

Provision for the Wales Office is increased by £606,000 as a result of :

A transfer from the Parliamentary Counsel Office of £57,000.

A transfer from the Welsh Assembly Government of £220,000.

Take up of End Year Flexibility of £329,000.

Wales Office spending is contained within single Department of Constitutional Affairs departmental expenditure limit and administration costs limit.

Reconciliation of grant payable to National Assembly for Wales with TME in Wales 2005–06

	2005–06	*Changes*	*Spring Supp position*
Expenditure Classified as DEL	12,242,287	245,176	12,487,463
Expenditure Classified as AME	500,371	53,513	553,884
Total Managed Expenditure	**12,742,658**	**298,689**	**13,041,347**
Less:			
Non Voted expenditure			
LA Credit Approvals	163,354	0	163,354
Other Non-Voted	6,078	0	6,078
Resource Budgeting adjustments			
Timing	40,482	0	40,482
Depreciation	175,020	96,780	271,800
Cost of Capital	421,584	0	421,584
Other	42,005	0	42,005
Total Resource budgeting adjustments	679,091	96,780	775,871
TOTAL NON VOTED TME	**848,523**	**96,780**	**945,303**
TOTAL VOTED TME	**11,894,135**	**201,909**	**12,096,044**
Voted Receipts			
Receipts from the EU	−234,248	0	−234,248
Contributions from the National Insurance Fund	−821,843	78,626	−743,217
Receipts from the Rural Payments Agency	−219,990	−53,512	−273,502
Total	**−1,276,081**	**25,114**	**−1,250,967**
TOTAL ASSEMBLY GRANT	**10,618,054**	**227,023**	**10,845,077**
Wales Office			
Expenditure classified as DEL	**3,913**	**606**	**4,519**

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 14 February 2006

TREASURY

Spring Supplementary Estimate

The Paymaster General (Dawn Primarolo): Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary supplementary estimate, HM Revenue and Customs departmental expenditure limit will be increased by £21,249,000 from £5,033,971,000 to £5,055,220,000 and the administration costs limit will be increased by £3,574,000 from £4,523,288,000 to £4,526,862,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

New DEL

£000s

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource	17,849	4,322,312	355,662	4,677,974
Capital	3,400	374,269	2,977	377,246
Depreciation*	-19,362	-183,499	-	-183,499
Total	1,887	4,513,082	358,639	4,871,721

*Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from the draw down of £20,000,000 non-cash administration costs EYF as set out in the Public Expenditure Outturn White Paper; the draw down of £3,400,000 Resource Departmental Unallocated Provision, subsequently vired into capital; virement from administration costs to programme expenditure of £15,000,000; the balance reflects the net effect of PES transfers from the Cabinet Office of £1,974,000 administration costs in respect of Parliamentary Counsel Office funding; £707,000 programme expenditure to the Department for Transport to cover the cost of a transfer of work; £18,000 programme expenditure to Security and Intelligence Agencies as a contribution towards the purchase of computer-based tools.

The change in the capital element of the DEL arises from virement from administration costs of £3,400,000.

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (John Healey): Subject to Parliamentary approval of any necessary Supplementary Estimate, HM Treasury resource DEL will be increased by £914,000 from £256,064,000 to £256,978,000. The administration budget will be reduced by £5,313,000 from £166,854,000 to £161,541,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

New DEL

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource	914,000	221,592,000	35,386,000	256,978,000
Of which:				
Administration	-5,313,000	161,141,000	400,000	161,541,000
Capital	-1,745,000	5,455,000	-	5,455,000

New DEL

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Depreciation*	8,663,000	-6,518,000	-	-6,518,000
Total	7,832,000	220,529,000	35,386,000	255,915,000

*Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The net change in the resource element of the DEL arises from the Machinery of Government change transferring the Government Social Research Unit from Cabinet Office to HM Treasury, £914,000 for 2005–06.

The following items are DEL neutral:

the draw down of £600,000 administration costs from the Financial Inclusion Fund for expenditure on the promotion of banking services to those on low incomes. £1 million of funding for the FIF was classified as Treasury non-voted DEL administration budget at the start of the year; the other £400,000 remains within non-voted DEL.

Transfer between RfRs 1 and 3, £12,465,000, to fund OGC's work on its wider remit, including delivering the efficiency programme and changes in provisions relating to the residual vacant estate.

Transfer between RfRs 1 and 2, £3,700,000, for increased spend on coinage arising from higher metal prices.

Increase in appropriations-in-aid within all three RfRs (RfR 1 £10,702,000, RfR 2 £500,000, RfR 3 £325,000) with increased expenditure switching from RfR 1 to RfR 2 for coinage spend, see above, and RfR 3 for expenditure relating to OGC's fee earning services.

Movement of OGC Efficiency Challenge Fund allocation from non-voted to voted, £2,422,000. The allocation for the ECF within non-voted DEL for 2005–06 was £7,800,000, and total forecast ECF expenditure for 2005–06 is £8,868,000. The other £6,446,000 of funding is being transferred from RfR 1, as above.

The net reduction of £1,745,000 in the capital element of the DEL arises from:

Transfer of capital spend from Core Treasury (RfR 1) to fund planned expenditure by OGC (RfR 3). The transfer is DEL neutral. In addition, non-operating appropriations in aid are increased by £1,380,000 to cover loan repayments from OGCbuying.solutions to OGC. The increased net provision is to finance OGC's spend on its domestic IT systems and capital improvements to its Norwich office.

A further reduction in core Treasury and DMO capital for provision in the Main Estimate no longer required.

The non-voted resource DEL of £35.4 million in the table above includes banking and gilts registration services provided by the Bank of England and Computershare, plus MEPs' salaries and the Civil List. Latest forecasts indicate that those activities are likely to underspend the provision by around £3.9 million in aggregate. In addition, £400,000 of the original £1 million provision for the Financial Inclusion Fund and £5,378,000 of the original £7.8 million provision for the Efficiency Challenge Fund have not been transferred to voted resource DEL and will not be applied in 2005–06.

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Ivan Lewis): Subject to parliamentary approval of any necessary supplementary estimate, National Savings and Investments DEL will be increased by £2,500,000 from £179,794,000 to, £182,294,000 and the administration costs limits will be increased by

£2,500,000 from £179,794,000 to £182,294,000. Within DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are set out in the following table:

New DEL

(£000s)

	Change	Voted	Non-Voted	Total
Resource	2,500	182,294		182,294
Capital		500		500
Depreciation*		-2,970		-2,970
Total	2,500	179,824		179,824

*Depreciation which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The increase in the DEL relates to resources only and arises from end year flexibility being drawn down. This is in order to allow National Savings and Investments to continue with the successful project investment, and to allow costs arising from more recent forecasts on the Evidence of Identity costs to be financed. More recent National Savings and Investments budgeting assumptions for 2005-06 showed an increase in costs associated with payments to Siemens Business Service (SBS) and other suppliers later in the year. These payments are necessary in order to meet National Savings and Investments financing targets.

There is no change in the capital element of DEL.

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (John Healey): Subject to Parliamentary approval of any necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Office for National Statistics DEL will increase by £178,000 from £170,924,000 to £171,102,000 and the administration budget will increase by £178,000 from £170,374,000 to £170,552,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

New DEL

(£000s)

	Change	Voted	Non-voted	Total
Resource	178	171,102		171,102
Capital		27,570		27,570
Depreciation*		-15,500		-15,500
Total	178	183,172		183,172

*Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from a drawdown of £100,000 from HM Treasury's Evidence Based Policy Fund to fund work on the Wealth and Assets survey and £78,000 Machinery of Government change from GAD for the transfer of certain responsibility for demographic projections.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Electoral Pilots (May 2006)

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): My hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs, Lord Falconer of Thoroton, has made the following written ministerial statement in the other place yesterday.

"The Government is continuing to look at ways to modernise our electoral system and to increase the opportunities that people have to vote. To test the effectiveness and robustness of these innovations and to build public confidence in them, we are continuing to conduct a programme of pilots in 2006 which maintains the momentum that was started in 2000.

With this aim in mind, at the end of October 2005, in conjunction with the Electoral Commission, we issued a prospectus inviting expressions of interest from local authorities seeking to run electoral pilots at the May 2006 local elections.

Today I am pleased to announce that I have accepted 16 applications from local authorities to hold pilots at the May 2006 local elections. The names of the successful local authorities are attached at the end of this statement. A background paper providing further details on the pilots has been placed in the House Library.

The local authorities will pilot innovations including:

trials of changes to the administration of elections proposed in the Electoral Administration Bill, such as changes to the ballot paper to support more secure efficient production of postal votes and the checking of signatures on postal ballots,

voting in alternative locations such as shopping centres and rural locations to allow us to further test how voting in different locations and at different times can enhance access,

electronic counting of ballots which will build on past work and test how this can be refined to ensure confidence and support future use of technology to gain efficiencies in the administration of elections. This will also enable us to identify how technology can support counting in the different voting systems used in local authority and regional elections.

Some of these pilots will assist us in planning the implementation of the proposals in the Electoral Administration Bill, in ensuring the ongoing integrity of electoral mechanisms and in refining and developing the programme of work for ensuring electoral processes fit with the needs of modern lifestyles.

The next step will be for us, working in consultation with the Electoral Commission and the local authorities, to draw up the statutory orders authorising the pilots.

We are grateful to all local authorities that applied to pilot in May 2006 and are keen to continue to engage local authorities in looking at innovative ways to improve the elections process and take advantage of new technologies."

Total: 16

London Borough of Brent

Brentwood Borough Council

Borough of Broxbourne

Epping Forest District Council

London Borough of Harrow

London Borough of Lewisham

Merseyside Authorities (Knowsley, Liverpool, St Helen's and Sefton)

London Borough of Newham

Peterborough City Council

Rushmoor Borough Council

Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council

Stevenage Borough Council

Swindon Borough Council

Stratford-on-Avon District Council

Tyne and Wear Authorities (Gateshead, Newcastle, South Tyneside and Sunderland)

City of Westminster

Spring Supplementary Estimate

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): Subject to Parliamentary approval of any necessary Supplementary Estimate, the

Privy Council Office total DEL will be increased by £2,381,000 from £4,451,000 to £6,832,00 and the administration budget will be increased by £2,381,000 from £4,382,000 to £6,709,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital is set out in the following table:

New DEL

(£000)

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource	2,327	6,709	-	6,709
Capital	54	161	-	161
Depreciation	-	-38	-	-38
Total	2,381	6,832	-	6,832

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from a Machinery of Government change, which transferred the Offices of the House of Commons and House of Lords Chief Whips from the Cabinet Office to the Privy Council Office (£2,097,000), and the take up of end-year flexibility (£230,000).

The change in the capital element of the DEL arises from the transfer of the Offices of the House of Commons and House of Lords Chief Whips from the Cabinet Office (£20,000) and the take up of end-year flexibility (£34,000).

The Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harriet Harman): Subject to Parliamentary approval of any necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Department for Constitutional Affairs, Northern Ireland Court Service and National Archives: Public Records Office and Historical Manuscripts Commission Total Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) will be increased by £38,886,000 from £3,785,906,000 to £3,824,792,000 and the administration budget will be increased by £12,821,000 from £490,081,000 to £502,902,000

Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

New DEL

£'000

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource:	33,282	1,708,144	2,067,905	3,776,049
of which:				
Administration Budget	12,821	502,902	0	502,902
of which:				
Programme	20,461	1,205,242	2,067,905	3,273,147
Capital	8,364	177,531	2,029	179,560
Depreciation*	-2,700	-129,965	-852	-130,817
Total	38,886	1,755,710	2,069,082	3,824,792

* Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of these assets would lead to double counting.

The change in the resource element of the Department for Constitutional Affairs DEL arises from:

RfR1 Resource Change: Admin (total increase of £10,242,000)

Transfers from other Government Departments:

(i) £320,000 additional funding from the Cabinet Office for Parliamentary Counsel Office

(ii) £875,000 increase in resources in relation to the Implementation of the Adoption & Children Act 2002

(iii) £150,000 increase in resources in relation to the 21st Century CJ System.

(iv) £1,230,000 increase in resources in relation to funding for XHIBIT from the Home Office Criminal Justice Information Technology ring fenced funding.

(v) £1,690,000 increase in resources in relation to funding for LIBRA from the Home Office Criminal Justice Information Technology ring fenced funding.

Machinery of Government Transfer:

(vi) £1,035,000 increase in resources from Home Office in relation to Coroner's Reform.

(vii) £1,251,000 increase in resources from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in relation to the Boundary Commission.

(viii) £262,000 increase in resources from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minster in relation to Policy on the conduct of local Government Elections.

(ix) £18,000 increase in resources from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minster in relation to Government Offices.

Take up of End-Year Flexibility (EYF):

(x) £1,350,000 increase in resources for the Single Asylum Fund.

Transfers to other Government Departments:

(xi) £1,240,000 to the Crown Prosecution Service for the Case Progression Tool.

(xii) A reduction of £126,000 to reflect a transfer of budgetary cover to the Department of Trade & Industry for CEHR Funding SR04 & Equalities Review.

(xiii) A reduction of £1,310,000 to reflect a transfer of budgetary cover to the Home Office form the Criminal Justice Information Technology (CJIT) ring fence funding for the Case Progression Tool for the Effective Trial Management Programme (ETMP).

Other

(xiv) £3,200,000 increase as a result of clarification on VAT treatment for agency staff.

Transfers between sections within the Estimates:

(xv) A correction of Public Guardianship Office income (£1,289,000) moved from administration resource to program. This results in an increase in the administration budget of £1,289,000.

(xvi) A transfer of £248,000 from administration to programme to correct a previous transfer to the Crown Prosecution service for Liverpool Justice Centre.

RfR1 Resource Change: Programme (total increase of £11,952,000)

Transfers from other Government Departments:

(xvii) £1,868,000 increase in resources in relation to the Implementation of the Adoption & Children Act 2002.

(xviii) A transfer of £150,000 additional funding for the Enforcement Programme.

(xix) £110,000 increase in resources in relation to the funding for EXISSR1.

Machinery of Government Transfer

(xx) A transfer of £650,000 from the Home Office in relation to Coroner's Reform.

(xxi) £59,000 increase in resources from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in relation to the Boundary Commission.

Take up of End-Year Flexibility (EYF):

(xxii) £39,690,000 additional spending on Single Asylum Fund.

Transfers to other Government Departments:

(xxiii) A transfer of £2,500,000 to the Crown Prosecution Service for the Charging Initiative.

(xxiv) A transfer of £38,000 to the Department of Trade & Industry for CEHR Funding SR04 & Equalities Review.

(xxv) A transfer of £8,000,000 budgetary cover to the Scottish Executive for increased Judiciary Salary liability.

(xxvi) A transfer of £2,600,000 budgetary cover to the Northern Ireland Court Service for increased Judiciary Salary liability.

(xxvii) A transfer of £4,000,000 budgetary cover to the Northern Ireland Court Service in relation to increased Northern Ireland Legal Service Commission costs.

Other changes

(xxviii) £6,000,000 reduction to the CLS for the Clarification on VAT treatment for Asylum Legal Aid Bills.

(xxix) £5,900,000 Increase in Appropriation in Aid for Magistrates Courts fee income.

Transfers between sections within the Estimates:

(xxx) A correction of Public Guardianship Office income (£1,289,000) moved from administration resource to program. This results in a decrease in the programme budget of £1,289,000.

(xxxi) A transfer of £248,000 from administration to programme to correct a previous transfer to the Crown Prosecution service for Liverpool Justice Centre.

RfR3 Resource Change: Administration (total increase of £606,000)

Take up of End-Year Flexibility (EYF):

(xxxii) £329,000 in relation to Additional costs for increased work due to the Government of Wales Bill.

Transfers from other Government Departments:

(xxxiii) £57,000 funding for the Parliamentary Counsel Office.

Movements of provision between sections within RfR3:

(xxxiv) £220,000 increase in relation to Non Cash transfer from Assembly to Wales Office to cover increased impairment charges.

The change in the resource element of the Northern Ireland Court Service DEL arises from:

Resource Change: Admin (total decrease of £1,750,000)

Increase in Appropriations in Aid:

(i) To take up £750,000 additional appropriations in aid to offset project costs incurred by the Northern Ireland Court Service and Northern Ireland Office in respect of the safety camera netting off scheme.

(ii) To take up £1,000,000 additional appropriations in aid to offset a corresponding amount of "other current" expenditure on judicial salaries, non cash costs and lay magistrates fees.

Resource Change: Programme (total increase of £8,509,000)

Transfers from other Government Departments:

(iii) A transfer of non cash funding from the Department of Constitutional Affairs to fund an increased judicial salary liability (£2,600,000).

(iv) A transfer of funding from the Department for Constitutional Affairs to fund additional expenditure on publicly funded legal services (£4,000,000).

Other Increases:

(v) Additional expenditure on judicial salaries, non-cash costs and lay magistrates fees offset by additional appropriations in aid (£1,000,000).

(vi) Additional expenditure by Northern Ireland Court Service and Northern Ireland Office arising from the safety camera netting off scheme (£750,000).

Neutral Changes:

(vii) Increase in non cash costs for cost of capital (£1,064,000) and depreciation (£2,700,000) to release additional grant payable to the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission for expenditure on publicly funded legal services (total of £3,764,000). This is offset in DEL terms by a reduction in the resource consumption of the Legal Services Commission.

Take up of End-Year Flexibility (EYF):

(viii) To take up resource EYF for additional expenditure on publicly funded legal services by the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (£159,000).

The change in the resource element of the National Archives DEL arises from:

The National Archives: Public Record Office and Historical Manuscripts Commission's DEL will be increased by £4,407,000 from £38,616,000 to £43,023,000 and the administration budget will be increased by £3,723,000 from £39,394,000 to £43,117,000.

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises in respect of expenditure on the further development to systems relating to the preservation of records and making these records accessible online. Additionally, to allow The National Archives to develop wider market sales operations, a neutral change is sought to allow for £2.6m of expenditure on events, on wholesale publishing, book purchases and record copying intended for sale through The National Archive's retail sales outlets and wholesale distribution channels. Additional wider market receipts generated by these retail sales of £2.6m offset this expenditure.

The 2005-06 Main Estimate provided £39.4m administration cost budget. The Spring Supplementary Estimate requests an increase in the original provision of £3.7m, making the new limit £43.1m.

The change in the capital element of the Department for Constitutional Affairs DEL arises from:

RfR1 Capital Change (total increase of £6,620,000)

Transfers from other Government Departments:

(i) £500,000 additional provision for Effective Trial Management Programme (ETMP) for the Case Provision Tool.

(ii) £1,500,000 additional provision for the Mental Health Review Tribunal.

(iii) £1,120,000 additional funding for the Case Progression Tool for the Effective Trial Management Programme (ETMP).

(iv) £500,000 to provide additional funding for the North Merseyside Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB).

Take up of End-Year Flexibility (EYF):

(v) £3,000,000 in relation to GLMCA Capital Receipts.

Asset sale

(vi) £2,085,000 capital and £7,263,000 capital receipts (reflecting a £5,178,000 profit on disposal). Only the net book value of £2,085,000 will score against capital DEL.

The change in the capital element of the Northern Ireland Court Service DEL arises from:

Capital Change (total increase of £1,000,000)

Take up of End-Year Flexibility (EYF):

(i) Take up of capital EYF to fund refurbishment of accommodation for the Coroners Service (£1,000,000).

The change in the capital element of the National Archive DEL arises from:

Capital Change (total increase of £684,000)

Take up of End-Year Flexibility (EYF)

£0.684m end year flexibility draw down for the development of electronic service delivery and further development of online services for the National Archive website to further improve access to catalogues and records held.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Spring Supplementary Estimate

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): Subject to parliamentary approval of any supplementary estimate, the Department for Culture Media and Sport's departmental expenditure limit (DEL) will be increased by £22,448,000 from £1,630,269,000 to £1,652,717,000 and the administration cost limit will increase £829,000 from £48,970,000 to £49,799,000. Within the DEL changes the impact on resource and capital are set out in the following table:

New DEL

£000s

	Change	Voted	Non-Voted	Total
Resource DEL	8,248	191,086	1,375,140	1,566,226
Capital DEL	14,200	97,730	87,307	185,036
Depreciation*	0	-5,942	-92,613	-98,555
Total	22,448	282,883	1,369,834	1,652,717

*Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from:

Drawdown of £12,000,000 non cash, non voted end-year flexibility to cover the borrowing of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG).

Transfers from other Government Departments of: £148,000 from Cabinet Office for Parliamentary Counsel and £100,000 from the Department of Trade and Industry for the Women and Equality Unit.

With agreement of HM Treasury the provision of £4,000,000 which had been incorrectly classified as resource DEL has been amended to capital DEL.

The administration cost limit has increased by £829,000 from £48,970,000 to £49,799,000. This is as a result of transfers to and from programme budgets and transfers from the Cabinet Office and the Department of Trade and Industry as detailed above.

The change in the capital element of the DEL arises from:

Take up of end-year flexibility of £4,200,000 of which £3,000,000 is in respect of the listed places of worship project funded by the Capital Modernisation Fund and £1,200,000 is administration to cover refurbishment costs of the Cockspur Street offices.

A transfer of £6,000,000 from ODPM for Olympic-related regeneration projects. A £4,000,000 resource to capital re-classification detailed above.

DEFENCE

Ministry of Defence Votes A 2006–07

The Secretary of State for Defence (John Reid): Ministry of Defence Votes A 2006–07, will be laid before the House on 14 February as HC 869. This outlines the maximum numbers of personnel to be maintained for service in the armed forces for financial year 2006–07.

Copies of these reports will be laid in the Libraries of both Houses.

National Employer Advisory Board

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Don Touhig): Following an open competition which attracted a strong field of applicants, I am pleased to advise the House of the appointment of four new members and the reappointment of one member to the National Employer Advisory Board (NEAB).

The new members are:

Mr David Brown

Dr Elizabeth Haywood

Mr Neil Johnson

Mr Tim Melville-Ross

The reappointment is:

Ms Nicola Carew

They join the other eleven members of the board, which is chaired by the noble Lord Glenarthur, and which continues to provide appropriate support in conjunction with the SaBRE campaign to reservists and their employers. I take this opportunity to thank NEAB for its work which is greatly valued by the Ministry of Defence.

Spring Supplementary Estimate

The Secretary of State for Defence (John Reid): I am pleased to announce that Subject to Parliamentary approval of the necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Ministry of Defence Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL) will be increased by £1,303,494,000 from £31,053,831,000 to £32,357,325,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

New DEL

£000's

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource	770,794	33,330,552	396,792	33,727,344
Capital	259,997	6,797,534	744	6,798,278
Depreciation*	272,703	-8,168,297	-	-8,168,297
Total	1,303,494	31,959,789	397,536	32,357,325

*Depreciation, which forms part of Resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from:

a transfer of £104,000 from the Cabinet Office to the MOD in respect offuture funding arrangements with the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel;

a transfer of £2,100,000 from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to theMOD in respect of an extension to aircraft operations;

a transfer of £167,000,000 from the MOD to the Department of Trade and Industry relating to start up costs for the newly-established Nuclear Decommissioning Authority;

to draw down the Department's Unallocated Provision of £805,000,000 to meet additional requirements for depreciation and provisions;

to increase Non-Budget Expenditure by £267,606,000 to reflect the impact of the revised Treasury discount rate on provisions;

to reduce resource provision by £65,000,000 to reflect a technical agreement in the 2004 Spending Review relating to changes in the handling of cash release of provisions;

an increase in income of £10,000,000 offset by Resource Appropriations in Aid in the same amount, relating to forecast income being above that requested at Main Estimates for the Central TLB;

an increase in RfR 2 Resource of £933,565,000 to reflect the costs of peace keeping in Iraq and Afghanistan;

transfers in of £64,000,000 and £3,200,000 Resource from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to the MOD in respect of the Global Conflict Prevention Pool for Balkans programme costs and the Global rest of the World Conflict Prevention Pool costs;

to recognise a non-budget Grant in Aid payment of £175,000, offset by a corresponding reduction in DEL, to the Royal Hospital Chelsea and the National Army Museum to fund commercial insurance policies.

The change in the capital element of the DEL arises from:

recognition of a Capital DEL reduction of £15,000,000 in RfR1, the advanced purchase of programmed equipment as Urgent Operational Requirements, under RfR2 in 2004-05;

a reduction of capital provision by £55,000,000 to reflect a technical agreement agreed in the 2004 Spending Review relating to changes in the handling of cash release of provisions;

an increase in Capital Appropriations in Aid of £27,857,000 relating to the redemption of preference shares held by the MOD in QinetiQ;

an increase in RfR 2 Capital DEL of £329,997,000 to reflect the costs of peace-keeping in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The changes to Capital and Resource, together with changes in internal budgetary re-allocations and adjustments to working capital, will lead to an increased net cash requirement of £1,889,814,000.

Surface Warship Maintenance and Repair Arrangements

The Secretary of State for Defence (John Reid): I am pleased to announce new, alternative contracting arrangements for surface warship maintenance and repair. These arrangements were signalled as part of the wider Defence Industrial Strategy and today's announcement is an important step towards ensuring that the capability requirements of the Royal Navy can be met now and in the future.

Surface warship upkeep (generally known as refitting) contracts have increasingly been awarded following competition while operational (or fleet) time support is delivered through partnering arrangements under the Warship Support Modernisation Initiative. While these arrangements have delivered clear, value for money benefits to the MOD, recent force level reductions coupled with over capacity in the surface ship repair market prompted a review. The Department, in consultation with industry, undertook a study (the Surface Ship Support Study) to identify the optimum approach for the future maintenance and repair of surface warships (that is aircraft carriers, major amphibious vessels, destroyers, frigates and mine warfare vessels) that would deliver the most efficient, effective and sustainable support policy and offer best value for money to the taxpayer.

The study has concluded that the option best able to meet the needs of both the Department and industry would be the formation of a surface warship support alliance, which would include current providers of surface warship upkeep and fleet time support. We will now enter into detailed dialogue with industry to investigate the feasibility of delivering such support through an alliance. During this exploratory phase, which is planned to last up to two years, competition policy will be suspended, to enable the alliance concept to be developed and tested progressively in a controlled manner. The first package of surface warship upkeep to

be included in the exploratory phase will be that for HMS Liverpool, HMS Iron Duke, HMS Cumberland, HMS Chiddingfold and HMS Penzance: it is currently planned to commence in autumn 2006. At the end of the exploratory phase there will be a review of the alliancing approach.

These new arrangements will promote a sustainable industrial base that retains key operational support and system upgrade capabilities within the UK, and are therefore vital to our ability to maintain and support the Royal Navy. We will be working closely with industry in a spirit of transparency and trust to ensure more effective joint planning for the longer term. The aim will be to improve the delivery of surface ship support, with benefits for the Royal Navy, industry and the taxpayer.

Military Air Radar Services

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): I am pleased to announce that the Ministry of Defence has today signed a contract with National Air Traffic Services (En Route) plc for approximately £725 million to provide an en route air traffic control facility to the Ministry of Defence until 2021. This contract enables military personnel to work alongside National Air Traffic Services (En Route) plc staff to manage air traffic within UK airspace.

The existing contract with National Air Traffic Services (En Route) plc expires in July. I am pleased to confirm that National Air Traffic Services (En Route) plc will continue to provide this facility for the next 15 years.

The signing of this new contract reflects the continued commitment of the Government to an integrated military-civilian approach to en-route air traffic control services. Such an approach, with military personnel working alongside National Air Traffic Services (En Route) plc staff, works to the benefit of all airspace users. This is a world leading concept and offers both operational and cost benefits to Defence.

MARS Programme

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): I am pleased to announce that the following three companies have been chosen to compete for the role of Integrator for the Military Afloat Reach and Sustainability (MARS) programme:

AMEC

KBR

Raytheon Systems Ltd

MARS will form an essential part of the UK's Versatile Maritime Force, providing a suite of vessels to supply UK and allied vessels with fuel, food, ordnance and other support they need to sustain operations. MARS will also introduce a new capability, providing joint sea-based logistics for those operations where Host Nation Support is absent or limited or where we would wish to reduce our footprint ashore.

The MARS vessels, will have some military features, while being technically similar to specialist merchant ships. We therefore want the build of the MARS ships to harness the efficiency of specialist commercial shipbuilding practice. As indicated in the Defence Industrial Strategy, we expect the competition for the shipbuilding element of this project to be wide-ranging. UK yards and other suppliers will be given every opportunity to compete for this shipbuilding work and should see it as both a challenge and an opportunity to demonstrate world-class performance. With the high planned workload on CVF and Type 45, the complex warship design and integration capabilities that we intend to sustain in the UK will remain healthy for some years.

The Integrator's key role will be to use their expertise in engineering project management and supply chain relationships to drive good project management and partnering practice into a delivery team consisting of the MOD, the Integrator, and key suppliers. The selected Integrator will also help MOD identify the shipbuilders and other key suppliers, and develop the right partnering approach to ensure successful delivery of the MARS programme.

The shortlisting of potential Integrators marks a significant step forward for this project. The companies will now work with the Ministry of Defence to provide evidence of their suitability to be the MARS Integrator.

The MARS project, along with the future aircraft carriers, Type 45 destroyers and Astute submarines, forms part of the largest procurement programme of new ships for many years, reinforcing our firm commitment to provide UK Armed Forces with the enhanced naval capabilities needed to face the threats of the 21st Century.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Spring Supplementary Estimate

The Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. John Prescott): Subject to Parliamentary approval of any necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Departmental Expenditure Limits for 2005-06 will change as follows:

(1) The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Main Programmes DEL will be increased by £42,327,000 from £9,468,500,000 to £9,510,827,000 and the administration costs limit will also be increased by £454,000 from £335,358,000 to £335,812,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

New DEL

(£000)

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource	-25,858	4,198,885	1,756,936	5,955,821
Capital	68,185	1,243,527	2,311,479	3,555,006
Depreciation*	-10,783	-23,505	-2,000	-25,505
Total	31,544	5,418,907	4,066,415	9,485,322

*Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL, since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from:

Take up of End Year Flexibility of £8,532,000 for Safer Communities Supported Housing Fund.

Drawdown of £21,234,000 in advance from the European Development Fund PES Pool for the European Regional Development Fund.

a net transfer of £6,797,000 to other Government Departments, comprising:

From Other Government Departments

Administration Costs (Central ODPM)

£524,000 baseline transfer from Cabinet Office for work by Parliamentary Counsel;

Administration Costs (Government Offices)

£210,000 from Department of Trade and Industry to cover work on UK Trade International.

To Other Government Departments

Programme Expenditure

£6,000,000 to the Department for Culture Media and Sport for the balance of the Office's contribution for 2005 06 towards the Olympic preparation infrastructure costs.

Administration Costs (Central ODPM)

£1,513,000 to the Department for Constitutional Affairs comprising of £262,000 for electoral work and £1,251,000 to cover resources for the Boundary Commission arising from the Machinery of Government change in May 2005.

Administration Costs (Government Offices)

£18,000 to the Department for Constitutional Affairs for electoral work arising from the Machinery of Government change in May 2005.

an increase in receipts of £91,429,000 offsetting increases in provision of £570,000 for Research; £500,000 for Planning Inspectorate; £9,000 for New Horizon programme; £40,000 for Green Flags programme; £250,000 for Ex-Housing Revenue Accounts Repayment; £2,681,000 for New Dimension; £96,000 for Firelink; £80,000 for Fire Services; £231,000 for administration costs; £53,000 for expenditure incurred on the Boundary Commission; £3,266,000 for Government Offices; £62,419,000 for non voted English Partnerships from land sales ; £21,234,000 for European Regional Development Fund and a reduction of £800,000 in receipts comprising of £700,000 for Fire Services and £100,000 for non voted Housing Corporation.

a transfer of £60,827,000 from resource to capital comprising £1,500,000 for Growth Areas; £1,200,000 for Thames Gateway; £1,291,000 for Homelessness; £286,000 for Private Housing Renewal; £1,350,000 for non-voted Housing Corporation and £55,200,000 for non voted English Partnerships.

a transfer of £12,000,000 from capital to resource for Large Scale Voluntary Transfers.

a net transfer of £4,473,000 from voted to non voted provision comprising:

From voted to non-voted provision

a transfer of £6,598,000 to Housing Corporation comprising £22,000 from Housing Management Grant and £6,576,000 from Safer Communities Supported Housing Fund;

£1,600,000 to Thurrock Urban Development Corporation for approved projects;

£200,000 to Thames Gateway (London UDC);

£1,000 initial budget to FiReBuy.

To voted from non-voted provision

£135,000 from Thames Gateway South East of England Development Agency;

£1,291,000 from Housing Corporation to Homelessness

£2,500,000 from the Departmental Unallocated Provision to Better Services section .

As a result of the changes to Request for Resources 1, The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's administration provision will be reduced by £797,000 from £337,324,000 to £336,527,000.

The change in the capital element of the DEL arises from:

Drawdown of £22,930,000 in advance from the European Development Fund PES Pool for the European Regional Development Fund.

a transfer of £3,572,000 to other Government Departments comprising of £3,157,000 PES transfer to Wales from New Dimension; £415,000 to Department for Transport for administration capital.

an increase in receipts of £25,580,000 offsetting increases in provision of £2,328,000 for New Dimension (comprising of £1,147,000 from Northern Ireland; £1,033,000 from Scotland and £148,000 from Staffordshire); £22,930,000 for European Regional Fund and £322,000 for the Emergency Fire Service in respect of Green Goddesses.

a transfer of £60,827,000 to capital from resource comprising £1,500,000 for Growth Areas; £1,200,000 for Thames Gateway; £1,291,000 for Homelessness; £286,000 for National Register of Social Housing; £1,350,000 for non-voted Housing Corporation and £55,200,000 for non voted English Partnerships.

a transfer of £12,000,000 to resource from capital for Large Scale Voluntary Transfers

Within the capital element of the DEL there is a net transfer of £21,865,000 from non voted to voted provision comprising :

From voted to non-voted provision

£6,652,000 for Departmental Unallocated Provision;

£600,000 from Growth Areas for capital projects;

£3,925,000 from Thames Gateway for capital projects.

To voted from non-voted provision

£1,800,000 to Thames Gateway;

£31,242,000 from Arms Length Management Organisations comprising £14,242,000 to Housing Market Renewal Fund, £5,000,000 to Growth Areas and £12,000,000 to Large Scale Voluntary Transfers programme.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Local Government DEL will be increased by £2,441,000 from £46,678,171,000 to £46,680,612,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

New DEL

£000

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource	1,941	46,187,097	105,665	46,292,762
Capital	500	379,240	8,610	387,850
Depreciation*			-556	-556
Total	2,441	46,566,337	113,719	46,680,056

*Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL, since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from:

take up of End Year Flexibility of £2,000,000 from Invest to Save Special Grant;

a transfer of £59,000 to the Department for Constitutional Affairs for the balance of the Machinery of Government change for 2005/06.

a transfer of £1,130,000 from voted Best Value Inspection to non voted to provide Valuation Tribunals with funding for early exits.

an increase in receipt of £254,000 fully offset by an increase in provision for Electoral law.

The change in the capital element of the DEL arises from a take up of End Year Flexibility of £500,000 from Invest to Save Special Grant.

Housing Corporation Powers

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Yvette Cooper): The Government will legislate to modernise the Housing Corporation's decision making arrangements as necessary, at the earliest opportunity. This will clarify its ability to delegate decisions from the Board to subcommittees and to officers.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Spring Supplementary Estimate

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Ruth Kelly): Subject to Parliamentary approval of any necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Department for Education and Skills Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) (including the Office for Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools (OFSTED) which has a separate Estimate) will be increased by £264,668,000 from £30,765,762,000 to £31,030,430,000 and the administration costs limits will be increased by £337,000 from £276,418,000 to £276,755,000.

Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are set out in the following table:

DfES	*Resources*				*Capital*			
	Change	*New DEL*	*Of which:*		*Change*	*New DEL*	*Of which*	
			Voted	*Non-voted*			*Voted*	*Non-voted*
	£000	*£000*	*£000*	*£000*	*£000*	*£000*	*£000*	*£000*
RfR1	330,227	25,319,634	7,810,706	17,508,928	-184,777	3,995,571	2,600,271	1,395,300
RfR2	82,767	998,740	998,740	0	58,647	322,814	322,814	0
RfR3	-22,196	173,057	173,057	0	0	14	14	0
Ofsted	0	220,000	220,000	0	0	600	600	0
Sub-total	390,798	26,711,431	9,202,503	17,508,928	-126,130	4,318,999	2,923,699	1,395,300
Depreciation*	10,270	-37,573	-12,247	-25,326	0	0	0	0
Total	401,068	26,673,858	9,190,256	17,483,602	-126,130	4,318,999	2,923,699	1,395,300

* Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL, in the table above, since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

Within the Administration Cost limits changes, the impact is set out in the following table:

DfES	*Original*	*Change*	*Revised*
	£000	*£000*	*£000*
DfES (RfR1)	251,748	337	252,085
OFSTED	24,670	0	24,670
Total	276,418	337	276,755

Resource DEL

The increase in the resource element of the DEL of £390,798,000 arises from a £445,175,000 decrease in the voted element of the resource DEL and an increase of £835,973,000 in the non-voted element of the resource DEL mainly to the Department's Non-Departmental Public Bodies.

Voted Resource DEL

The £445,175,000 decrease in the voted element of the resource DEL arises from:

RFR 1

A £785,273,000 movement to non-voted, to support Schools and Teachers £226,489,000, to support Further Education and Lifelong Learning £427,958,000, to support Higher Education £118,192,000 and to support Children and Families £12,634,000. A movement from Schools capital £148,065,000 for City Academies £125,934,000, for Information Technology in Schools £13,369,000, Music and Ballet Schools £1,502,000 and for the Children and Workforce Development Council £7,260,000. The take up of End Year Flexibility of £29,267,000 for 14-19 Year Old programmes £16,615,000, Schools Standards £3,992,000, City Technology Colleges £3,790,000, Offender education £3,275,000, Foundation Degrees £1,000,000, Departmental Publicity and Research £539,000 and Derby College £56,000. A movement from RFR2 £29,800,000 for Childcare Support. A movement from RFR3 £22,196,000 for Local Area Agreements. A reduction of £56,900,000 of receipts for the Scientific Research Investment Fund. An increase of £3,586,000 in receipts for the Knowledge Transfer Funding for

Universities. Transfers from the Cabinet Office £337,000 for the Parliamentary Council Office, from the Home Office £500,000 for Offender Education. Transfers to the Home Office £1,000,000 for the Leave to Remain Programme, the Department of Constitutional Affairs £2,743,000 for the Children's Adoption Act, to the Department of Health £125,000 for the Bichard Vetting Project and to the National Assembly for Wales £84,000 for students studying at the Open University.

RFR2

A movement to RFR1 voted of £29,800,000 for Childcare Support. The take up of End Year Flexibility £112,567,000 for Sure Start current £74,758,000 and capital £37,809,000 grants.

RFR3

A movement to RFR1 of £22,196,000 for Local Area Agreements.

Administration Cost Limits

The £337,000 increase in the Administration Cost Limit arises from the transfer from the Cabinet Office for the Parliamentary Council's Office.

Non-voted Resource DEL

The £835,973,000 increase in Non-voted resource DEL arises from the movement of £785,273,000 from RFR1 voted resource DEL. The take up of End Year Flexibility £39,588,000 for Higher Education Funding Council for England Science and Research £33,000,000, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority modernisation £6,338,000, Adult Learning Inspectorate administration £250,000. The movement from voted schools capital £50,000,000 for Higher Education Funding Council for England teaching infrastructure. A reduction of £56,900,000 Higher Education Funding Council for England for the Scientific Research Investment Fund and an increase of £3,586,000 for the Knowledge Transfer Funding for Universities. Transfers from the Department of Health £18,979,000 for University Medical Schools £10,500,000, Pensions Indexation £5,669,000, Clinical Academies £2,328,000 and College Social work £482,000. Transfer to the National Assembly for Wales £4,553,000 for students studying at the Open University.

Capital DEL

The decrease in the capital element of the DEL of £126,130,000 arises from a £210,769,000 decrease in the voted element of capital DEL and an increase of £84,639,000 in the non-voted element of capital DEL.

Voted Capital DEL

The £210,769,000 decrease in the voted element of the resource DEL arises from:

RFR1

A £82,640,000 movement to non-voted to support Schools and Teachers £77,867,000, to support Further Education and Lifelong Learning £3,901,000 and support for Higher education £872,000. A movement to voted resource £148,065,000 for City Academies £125,934,000, for Information Technology in Schools £13,369,000, Music and Ballet Schools £1,502,000 and for the Children and Workforce Development Council £7,260,000. A movement to non-voted capital £50,000,000 for Higher Education Funding Council for England teaching infrastructure. The take up of End Year Flexibility of £11,289,000 for Cybrarian capital modernisation £10,450,000 and Secure Accommodation £839,000.

RFR2

The take up of End Year Flexibility of £58,647,000 for Local Authority Capital grants.

Non-voted Capital DEL

The £84,639,000 increase in the non-voted capital DEL arises from the movement of £82,640,000 from voted capital DEL. The take up of End Year Flexibility £1,999,000 for Education Funding Council for England Technology Institutions £982,000, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority capital investment £820,000, Sector Skills Development Agency capital investment £195,000 and Investors in People capital investment £2,000.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Spring Supplementary Estimate

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Jim Knight): Subject to parliamentary approval of any necessary supplementary estimate, the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs DEL will be increased by £187,231,000 from £3,164,819,000 to £3,352,050,000 and the Administration Budget will be increased by £30,311,000 from £342,064,000 to £372,375,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

New DEL

£000s

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource	141,701	2,400,367	772,535	3,172,902
Capital	45,530	253,953	130,277	384,230
Depreciation*	-	-42,771	-162,311	-205,082
Total	184,531	2,611,549	740,501	3,352,050

*Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from (i) take up of £57,000,000 administration resources through end year flexibility; (ii) a switch of £5,000,000 from administration resources to capital; (iii) a transfer from the Cabinet Office of £311,000,000 of administration resources for Parliamentary Counsel costs; (iv) a transfer to the Welsh Assembly of £110,000 of programme resources for policy advice; a transfer from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland of £1,500,000 of programme resources for the National Fallen Stock scheme; (v) transfer from the Department of Health of £60,000,000 for the Over Thirty Months scheme; (vi) take up of £8,000,000 of programme resources through end year flexibility; (vii) take up of £20,000,000 of programme resources from the reserve for Fuel Poverty.

The change in the capital element of the DEL arises from (i) take up of £40,530,000 of capital through end year flexibility; (ii) a switch of £5,000,000 from administration resources to capital.

Waste Strategy for England (Consultation)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): I am today announcing publication of the consultation document on the review of England's Waste Strategy.

The consultation document sets out the progress made since 2000 in meeting the Government's objectives and implementing its policies with respect to waste, and consults on proposals for a revised strategy and the policies for implementing it. The consultation document is supported by a partial Regulatory Impact Assessment and Environmental Report.

We have made considerable advances since the original waste strategy was published in 2000. In particular recycling and composting of household waste has doubled in the last four years; nearly 50 per cent. of packaging waste is being recycled; and less of most types of waste is going to landfill.

But Government cannot be complacent despite these positive trends. There is much more that needs to be done to achieve our aim of reducing the amounts of waste generated and to meet our targets for diverting waste from landfill.

The approach set out in our consultation document has benefited from extensive discussions with stakeholders on the issues and options for the review. It includes a substantial shift in direction, with a broader approach and stronger emphasis on:

Reducing the growth in the amount of waste produced and decoupling its environmental impacts from economic growth, set firmly within our broader context of sustainable consumption and production;

achieving greater progress in the diversion of waste from landfill and reusing, recycling or composting more of what is left or, where this is not possible, using it for energy;

highlighting sustainable management of non-municipal waste, and greater integration between municipal and non-municipal waste;

The consultation document reflects the need to reduce the environmental impact of waste, including reducing the impact on climate change, conserving limited natural resources and reducing risk to health and the environment from potentially harmful substances in waste.

Waste prevention stands at the top of the waste hierarchy, but only limited progress has been made to decouple waste generation from economic growth. The waste strategy review proposes measures aimed at producing less waste by putting greater emphasis on eco-design, including through more agreements with producers and increased engagement in waste prevention of businesses and householders.

For waste that is produced there is a need to recover more resources. The revised strategy aims to facilitate development of a recycling culture by shifting our thinking so that the reuse and recycling of resources is part of our everyday activities whether at home, at work or during leisure. New, more ambitious national recycling and composting targets for household waste—40 per cent. in 2010 and 50 per cent. by 2020—are being proposed, alongside advice and information to the public and more agreements with businesses to take responsibility for their end of life products.

Consultation has shown strong support for better integration between municipal and other waste streams, such as commercial, industrial, construction and demolition waste, which make up most of the waste produced, to gain potential economies of scale. The strategy review proposes new targets for a reduction in the percentage of commercial and industrial waste landfilled, helping small businesses to reduce and recycle their waste and a more joined up approach in managing waste from different sources facilitated by local authorities and regional bodies.

Subject to the outcome of this consultation and continuing policy development, the Government intend to publish a revised waste strategy for England later this year, setting out Government's vision and strategic direction on waste for the next 20 years, as well as the policies and actions which will be necessary to deliver the new strategy.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan: Counter Narcotics

The Minister for the Middle East (Dr. Kim Howells): In his opening remarks to the London Conference on Afghanistan held on 31 January to 1 February, His Excellency Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, described narcotics and terrorism as the two gravest threats facing Afghanistan.

Despite a 21 per cent. reduction in opium poppy cultivation in 2005 (130,000 hectares in 2003–04 to 104,000 hectares in 2004–05), the trade in Afghan drugs remains a significant challenge to Afghanistan's long-term security, development and effective governance. It undermines the stability of the region and accounts for almost 90% of the world supply of opiates.

President Karzai has taken a strong lead in the struggle against the pervasive and corrosive threat posed by the cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotics. His Government has, with the support of the UK as the key partner nation for counter narcotics, recently reviewed and updated its National Drug Control Strategy to ensure its policy approach is the right one. The Strategy was endorsed by the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Counter Narcotics and approved by President Karzai in January. The international community also expressed its strong collective support for the updated Strategy following its presentation by the Afghan Minister for Counter Narcotics, Engineer Habibullah Qaderi, during the counter narcotics session of the London Conference.

The National Drug Control Strategy represents a balanced and comprehensive approach to the drug problem. It sets out four key priorities, which I believe will help make a greater impact on the trade and sustain the reduction in cultivation we have seen in 2005. These are:

disrupting the drugs trade by targeting traffickers and their backers

strengthening and diversifying legal rural livelihoods

reducing the demand for illicit drugs and treatment of problem drug users

developing state institutions at the central and provincial level

The Strategy also notes that "where there are legal livelihoods, a credible threat of eradication is needed in order to incentivise the shift away from poppy cultivation". It also highlights the importance of raising public awareness and improving international and regional co-operation on counter narcotics.

In recognition of the serious threat that narcotics pose to the broader reconstruction effort in Afghanistan and the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach equal to the scale of the challenge, counter narcotics is also included as a cross-cutting theme in the Afghanistan Compact between the Afghan Government and the international community which was also launched at the London conference. The Compact includes high level benchmarks to measure progress in the counter narcotics effort. These benchmarks are underpinned by the more detailed planning in the National Drug Control Strategy and the interim Afghan National Development Strategy, the third of the interlocking documents launched in London.

The challenge now is implementation. In support of the Government of Afghanistan's efforts, the UK will spend £270 million over this and the next two financial years, including some £130 million on legal rural livelihoods and institutional development from the Department for International Development. In the current financial year, about 70 per cent. of the rest of UK spending has been channelled into efforts to target traffickers and disrupt the trade. We expect this to remain a top priority.

As part of the activity to date, the UK has helped to establish and provide training for the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan—the lead drug law enforcement agency, headquartered in Kabul, with seven provincial offices. The UK is also providing training for the Afghan Special Narcotics Force, an elite and highly trained force equipped to tackle high value targets across the country. We are also working with the international community to recruit and train a counter narcotics Criminal Justice Task Force of Afghan investigators, prosecutors and judges to work with the Counter Narcotics Police, to be able to push through successful drugs investigations and prosecutions.

The UK has funded the development of five drug treatment centres and is working with the Ministry of Counter Narcotics to determine how best to support activity in this area following the completion of UNODC's survey on drug use within Afghanistan late last year. We are also supporting the US led Poppy Elimination Programme (PEP) by funding the salaries of Afghan staff charged with raising awareness of the illegality of the opium industry and monitoring Governor-led eradication in priority poppy growing provinces.

From the spring, as my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (Dr. John Reid) announced on 26 January, UK troops will be deployed to the South of Afghanistan, to Helmand province, in support of the UN authorised, NATO-led International Security Assistance Force. They will work to counter insurgency and help the appropriate authorities build security and government institutions to continue the progress of recent years. Above all, their presence will help the Afghans create the environment in which economic development and institutional reform—both essential to the elimination of the opium industry—can take place. ISAF forces will be able to help with the provision of training to Afghan counter-narcotics forces and will, when necessary, provide support to their operations. They will also help the Afghan Government explain their policies to the Afghan people. ISAF forces will not take part in the eradication of opium poppy or in pre-planned and direct military action against the drugs trade. As President Karzai has pointed out, this is a job for the Government of Afghanistan.

The UK is working hard to increase international support, including NATO and Coalition support, for the counter narcotics campaign. It was heartening to note the collective recognition at the London Conference of the need to increase resources to help the Government of Afghanistan deliver against the ambitious, but essential, benchmarks it has set itself. Several delegations, including the US (US$2 million), Sweden (US$2 million), Korea and the UK (at least £30 million (US$52.9 million) announced contributions to the Counter Narcotics Trust Fund set up to support the strategy in London. These contributions add to those already committed by Australia, New Zealand, the EC and Estonia (US$1.5 million, US$338,000, US$18.4 million and US$50,000 respectively), giving a total of $77 million pledged to the CN Trust Fund. The Fund will bring counter narcotics funding on budget; give the Afghans greater ownership over this important agenda; and ensure that assistance is targeted as effectively as possible.

The commitment of the Government of Afghanistan and the support of the international community are starting to yield results. Progress is being made. 2005 saw the establishment of a Ministry for Counter Narcotics in Afghanistan, the passage of vital counter narcotics legislation, the conviction of over 90 drug traffickers and the seizure of some 165 tonnes of opiates. The Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan is now 500 strong and the operations of the Afghan Special Narcotics Force are starting to make an impact on the trade, forcing traffickers to shift their modus operandi, moving and storing drugs in smaller quantities.

In parallel, the National Rural Access Programme has restored thousands of kilometres of roads and renovated hundreds of irrigation systems through labour-intensive cash for work schemes aimed at providing basic employment opportunities for the rural poor. Work is also taking place to improve social protection for the poor (through the creation of social safety nets); to improve access to finance and credit; to develop better provincial development planning processes and research programmes into new crops and markets.

It will not be easy to sustain last year's reduction in cultivation. Sustainable drug elimination strategies take time. Afghanistan will continue to require the strong support of the international community and the firm commitment of its own Government. As the key partner nation for counter narcotics the UK remains committed to the challenge and to supporting the delivery of the

National Drug Control Strategy. We believe this represents the best means of securing a sustainable reduction in the cultivation and trafficking in opium.

Spring Supplementary Estimate

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): Subject to parliamentary approval of any necessary supplementary estimate, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office departmental expenditure limit (DEL) will be increased by £185,034,000 from £1,818,884,000 to £2,003,918,000. The administration budget will be increased by £29,439,000 from £796,238,000 to £825,677,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

New DEL

£000s

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource	176,407	1,999,224	6,713	2,005,937
Capital	13,719	135,697	1,000	136,697
Depreciation*	-5,092	-138,716	0	-138,716
Total	185,034	1,996,205	7,713	2,003,918

*Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from:

Request for Resources 1 (RfR1) Administration

I. Reserve claim of £1,386,000 in respect of Overseas Pricing Mechanism.

II. Take up of £5,000,000 End Year Flexibility (EYF) entitlement.

III. Take up of £23,092,000 Non-Cash End Year Flexibility (EYF) entitlement of which £20,000,000 is impairments DUP and £3,092,000 is administration non cash.

IV. Budget Cover transfer from the Cabinet office of £61,000 for the Parliamentary Counsel Office. Budget Cover transfer to the Security and Intelligence Agencies (SIA) of £100,000 in respect of Planned Activity.

Programme

I. Reserve claims of £8,000,000 from the Emergency Disaster Reserve, £10,500,000 from the reserve to pay for costs incurred from the Tsunami.

II. Reserve claims of £10,000,000 for the international organisations cost sharing agreement, £12,600,000 for Consular premium collected in the UK and £1,407,000 for the British Council Overseas Pricing Mechanism.

III. Transfer of £8,500,000 from RfR2 for the Afghan Delivery Plan.

IV. Budget Cover transfer from the Home Office, £4,000,000 in respect of the Afghan Delivery Plan

V. Draw down of £4,000,000 and £12,000,000 from the Departmental Unallocated Provision

VI. Transfer to the DEL Reserve of £4,349,000 in respect of the Overseas Pricing Mechanism.

VII. Transfer of £1,500,000 to RfR 2 to meet Conflict Prevention activity costs in Iraq.

VIII. PES transfer to the SIA of £875,000 for Planned Programme Activity

IX. PES transfer to the MOD of £2,100,000 for overseas Programme funding.

X. Draw Down from the Departmental Unallocated Provision (DUP) of £20,000,000 for Impairments

Neutral Changes

I. An increase in income and expenditure of £10,000,000 due to an increase in sales into wider markets.

II. A non cash to near cash switch of £20,000,000

III. An increase in income and expenditure of £14,400,000 relating to Consular activity and income. An increase in income and expenditure of £39,100,000 relating to increased Visa activity and income.

Request for Resources 2 (RfR2)

Programme

I. Draw down of £78,533,000 from the Africa Peacekeeping Main Estimate Provision.

II. Draw down of £92,124,000 from the Global Peacekeeping Main Estimate Provision of which £64,000,000 is transferred to the Ministry of Defence.

III. Take up of £6,812,000 EYF entitlement from the Global Conflict Prevention Pool.

IV. Draw down of £10,000,000 DUP from the Global Conflict Prevention Pool.

V. Transfer from RfR1; £1,500,000 to meet Conflict Prevention activity costs in Iraq.

VI. Budget cover transfer from Global Conflict Prevention pool of £334,000 to the SIA, £2,000,000 to DfID and £3,200,000 to the MOD.

VII. Budget cover transfer to DfID from the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool of £150,000 for agreed programme activity.

VIII. A transfer of £8,500,000 to RfR1 for the Afghan Delivery Plan of which £2,500,000 comes from the Africa Peacekeeping provision and £6,000,000 from the Global Peacekeeping provision.

Capital

I. Budget cover transfer from the Home Office of £3,359,000 for capital costs incurred as part of UK Visas Biometrics programme.

II. Claim on the DEL reserve for £360,000 in respect of the Overseas Pricing Mechanism

III. Take up of £10,000,000 EYF entitlement.

Neutral Change

I. An increase in income and expenditure of £3,000,000 relating to the asset recycling agreement.

HEALTH

Spring Supplementary Estimate

The Secretary of State for Health (Ms Patricia Hewitt): Subject to the necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Department of Health's element of the Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) will be increased by £112,322,000 from £78,591,189,000 to £78,703,511,000 and the Administration Cost Limit will be increased by £484,000 from £247,629,000 to

£248,113,000. The Food Standards Agency DEL will be increased by £951,000 from £144,424,000 to £145,375,000. The overall DEL including the Food Standards Agency will be increased by £113,273,000 from £78,735,613,000 to £78,847,886,000. The impact on resource and capital are set out in the following table.

New DEL

	Change £ million	*Voted £ million*	*Non-Voted £ million*	*Total £ million*
Department of Health				
Resource DEL	124.197	75,426.393	-529.414	74,896.979
Capital DEL	-11.875	865.966	2,940.566	3,806.532
Total Department of Health DEL	112.322	76,292.359	2,411.152	78,703.511
Depreciation*	0	-610.510	-51.669	-662.179
Total Department of Health spending (after adjustment)	112.322	75,681.849	2,359.483	78,041.332
Food Standards Agency				
Resources	0.001	143.778	0	143.778
Capital	0.950	1.597	0	1.597
Total Food Standards Agency DEL	0.951	145.375	0	145.375
Depreciation*	0	-2.004	0	-2.004
Total Food Standards Agency spending (after adjustment)	0.951	143.371	0	143.371

*Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since the capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The Department of Health DEL has increased by £112,322,000 to reflect take up of £200,000,000 capital end year flexibility as announced in the public expenditure white paper (Cm 6639) July 2005 and £1,461,000 from the invest to save budget for social care projects. In addition, transfers have been agreed with the DHSS Northern Ireland of £554,000 for out of area treatments and from the Cabinet Office of £484,000 (administration costs) for services of the Parliamentary counsel. These increases are offset by transfers to the Department for Education and Skills of £18,854,000 mainly for capital building programmes and pension costs; a transfer to the Department for Environment and Rural Affairs of £60,000,000 for a contribution towards the over thirty months scheme; to the Department for Constitutional Affairs of £1,500,000 capital associated with the transfer of the mental health review tribunals; to the Scottish Executive of £4,140,000 for out of area treatments; to the National Assembly for Wales of £5,684,000 mainly for out of area treatments and cross border flows.

The Department of Health's administration cost limit has increased by £484,000 from £247,629,000 to £248,113,000 as detailed above.

The changes to the Food Standards Agency resource element of the Departmental Expenditure Limit arises from an increase in MHS gross cost of £5,000,000 offset by a similar increase in the income limit. Due to this neutral change the Programme DEL has been increased by £1,000 to ensure there is a token Supplementary amount to be voted.

The changes to the Food Standards Agency capital element of the Departmental Expenditure Limit arises from increased capital expenditure of £950,000 for the renewal of IT infrastructure and strengthening IT contingency arrangements.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Spring Supplementary Estimate

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): Plans to change the Charity Commission's Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) and administration budget for 2005–06.

Subject to Parliamentary approval of any necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Charity Commission DEL will be increased by £250,000 from £32,607,000 to £32,857,000 and the administration budget will be increased by £250,000 from £32,153,000 to £32,403,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

New DEL

£000

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource	250	32,403	0	32,403
Capital	0	1,604	0	1,604
Depreciation*	0	-1,150	0	-1,150
Total	250	32,857	0	32,857

*Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from: take up of £250,000 Efficiency Challenge Fund (ECF) monies to assist with the delivery of efficiency targets.

The increases will be funded by the take up of ECF monies allocated in the SR04 settlement.

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): Plans of changes to the Departmental Expenditure Limits ("DEL") and Administration Budget for 2005–06.

Subject to Parliamentary approval of the necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Home Office's Departmental Expenditure Limits for 2005–06 will be increased by £30,348,000 from £13,645,786,000 to £13,676,134,000 and the Administration Budget will be increased by £833,000 from £704,526,000 to £705,359,000.

Within the DEL change, the impact on Resources and Capital is as set out in the following table:

New DEL

£000s

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource:	19,172	10,849,560	1,931,209	12,780,769
of which:				
Administration Budget	833	705,359	0	705,359

New DEL

£000s

	Change	Voted	Non-voted	Total
Capital	10,876	910,704	298,203	1,208,907
Less depreciation	300	-258,157	-55,385	-313,542
Total	30,348	11,502,107	2,174,027	13,676,134

*Depreciation, which forms part of Resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since Capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

£000s

(a)	Total	Admin	Prog
The change in the Resource element of the DEL arises from:	19,172	833	18,339
DEL reserve claim:	40,000	0	40,000
This increase reflects HM Treasury's contribution to the Recovered Assets scheme. This is calculated using an agreed formula.	40,000		40,000
Transfer from Other Government Departments:	3,375	1,892	1,483
Cabinet Office: Admin to section O for the costs of legal and parliamentary fees.	1,892	1,892	
Department for Constitutional Affairs: Programme to Section F returning unused funding for the Effective Trial Management information technology programme.	1,310		1310
Crown Prosecution Service: Programme to section F to support the "No Witness No Justice" partnership programme to improve services to prosecution witnesses in criminal cases.	173		173
Machinery of Govetnment Changes:	- 1,685	- 1,035	- 650
Admin and programme from sections G and O for the Machinery of Government change for the transfer of the Coroners Unit from the Home Office to the Department for Constitutional Affairs.	- 1,685	- 1,035	- 650
Transfer to Other Government Departments:	- 22,518	- 24	- 22,494
Crown Prosecution Service: Programme from section F to fund the re-commissioning of a test environment for Exchange Service Stream Release 1 (EXISS R1) and enhancements to the Witness Management System.	- 550		- 550
Department for Education and Skills: Programme from section K to fund prison education allocations.	- 1,483		- 1,483
Programme from section L as a contribution to the Offenders Learning and Skills Service	- 500		- 500
Programme from section G for funding the Agency for Culture & Change Management (ACCM).	- 75		- 75
Department for Constitutional Affairs: Programme from section F to provide additional resources from the Criminal Justice IT funding reserve.	-3,030		- 3,030
Programme from section F to provide funding for the 21st Century CJ System and for the Enforcement programme.	- 300		-300

£000s

(a)	Total	Admin	Prog
Department of Trade and Industry: Admin and programme from section G for equality and human rights work in relation to the Equalities Bill.	- 330	- 24	- 306
Cabinet Office: Programme from section D to fund the National Infrastructure Security Co-Ordination Centre.	- 7,000		- 7,000
Programme from section D as a contribution to the Security and Intelligence Agencies	- 5,000		- 5,000
Programme from section D for a contribution towards the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre.	- 250		- 250
Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Programme from section D to fund counter narcotics work in Afghanistan.	- 4,000		- 4,000
(b)	*Capital*		
The change in the Capital element of the DEL arises from:	10,876		
End-Year flexibility comprising:	13,132		
This represents draw down of EYF Capital to section AA for the procurement of Airwave handsets by the National Crime Squad for SOCA.	13,000		
£132,000 Capital grant to section AL for the Safer Hospitals project.	132		
Transfer from Other Government Departments:	394		
Crown Prosecution Service: Programme to section F to support the "No Witness No Justice" partnership programme to improve services to prosecution witnesses in criminal cases.	394		
Transfer to Other Government Departments:	- 2,650		
Department for Constitutional Affairs: Capital from section F to provide additional resources for Effective Trial Management Programme (ETMP) and the North Merseyside Local Criminal Justice Board's information technology programmes.	- 2,120		
Cabinet Office: Capital from section D for a contribution towards the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre.	- 530		

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Spring Supplementary Estimates

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): Subject to Parliamentary approval of the necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Department for International Development departmental expenditure limit (DEL) will be increased by £46,111,000 from £4,472,082,000 to £4,518,193,000. The administration

budget will be increased by £11,000 from £238,970,000 to £238,981,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

New DEL

£000s

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource	46,111	3,869,027	629,174	4,498,201
Capital	-	42,000		42,000
Depreciation*		-22,008		-22,008
Total	46,111	3,889,019	629,174	4,518,193

*Depreciation, which forms part of the resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL, since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of these assets would lead to double counting.

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from

Voted

A partial draw down of £50,000,000 of other resource end year flexibility, as set out in the Public Expenditure 2004–05 Provisional Outturn White Paper (Cm 6639) within Request for Resources 1 for humanitarian assistance following the earthquake in Pakistan.

An increase of £11,000 in administration costs within Request for Resources 1 relating to funds transferred from the Cabinet Office in respect of DFID's use of the Parliamentary Counsel's Office.

An increase of £2,500,000 within Request for Resources 2 from the take up of Africa conflict prevention departmental unallocated provision for planned programme activity on conflict prevention.

A transfer of £2,000,000 within Request for Resources 2 in respect of a transfer from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for planned programme activity on global conflict prevention.

Non-voted

A reduction of £2,500,000 in Africa conflict prevention departmental unallocated provision relating to the take up of provision within DFID's Request for Resources 2

A reduction of £500,000 in Africa conflict prevention departmental unallocated provision relating to a transfer to the Ministry of Defence to fund approved projects on conflict prevention in Africa.

An increase of £150,000 in Africa conflict prevention departmental unallocated provision in respect of a transfer from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office from savings on conflict prevention projects in Africa.

A reduction of £3,050,000 following the classification of the Retrospective Terms Adjustment charge on interest foregone by the Consolidated Fund on the conversion of loans to grants, as outside public expenditure.

A reduction of £2,500,000 following the reclassification of interest income on bilateral and multilateral loans from outside the OFID resource budget to the Resource DEL.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Spring Supplementary Estimate

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Peter Hain): Subject to Parliamentary approval the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) will be taking a 2005–06 Spring Supplementary Estimate. The effect this will have is to increase the NIO's Resource DEL by £36,241,000 from £1,199,288,000 to £1,235,529,000 and decrease Capital DEL by £580,000 from £65,928,000 to £65,348,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resource and capital are as set out in the following table:

Resource (£000s)				*Capital (£000s)*			
Change	*New DEL*	*Of which: Voted*	*Non-voted*	*Change*	*DEL*	*Of which: Voted*	*Non-voted*
36,241	1,235,529	365,515	870,014	(580)	65,348	29,657	35,691

The change in the resource element of the DEL by £36,241,000 arises from an increase in PSNI pension current service cost of £36,000,000 and the surrender of PES transfers from other Government Departments of £241,000.

The change in capital DEL by £580,000 is due to the surrender of a PES transfer to another Government Department.

SCOTLAND

Spring Supplementary Estimates

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): Subject to parliamentary approval of the necessary Supplementary Estimates, the Scotland Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) will be increased by £108,539,000 (net of depreciation) from £23,049,735,000 to £23,158,274,000.

The DEL increase takes account of the following:

the take-up of End Year Flexibility (EYF) by the Scottish Executive amounting to £135,186,000; and

the take-up of 2005 Pre-Budget consequentials by the Scottish Executive amounting to £2,124,000.

The DEL increase also includes the following transfers between the Scottish Executive and other Government departments, amounting to a net increase of £14,648,000. These are:

a transfer of £2,280,000 from the Department for Transport (Rail);

a transfer of £4,140,000 from the Department of Health (Out of Area Treatments);

a transfer of £228,000 from the Northern Ireland Executive (Out of Area Treatments); and

a transfer of £8,000,000 from the Department for Constitutional Affairs (Judicial Salaries).

The increases will be offset by interdepartmental transfers as detailed above or charged to the DEL Reserve and will not therefore add to the planned total of public expenditur

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Spring Supplementary Estimates

The Solicitor-General (Mr. Mike O'Brien): Subject to Parliamentary approval of any necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Attorney General's DEL will be increased by £14,290,000 from £702,733,000 to £717,023,000 and the Administration budget will be increased by £167,000 from £114,761,000 to £114,928,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

New DEL

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-Voted*	*Total*
Resource	13,767	709,331		709,331
of which: Administration Budget	167	114,928		114,928
Capital	1,106	16,056		16,056
Depreciation*	-583	-8,303		-8,303
Total	14,290	717,023		717,023

** Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.*

The Crown Prosecution Service's (CPS) element of the Attorney General's DEL will be increased by £13,708,000 from £601,813,000 to £615,521,000 and the Administration budget will be reduced by £415,000 from £57,953,000 to £57,538,000.

The change in the CPS's DEL arises from:

The utilisation of £10,400,000 resource End Year Flexibility to support increased expenditure on the prosecution of criminal cases

An increase of £550,000 Programme resources due to the reallocation of resource DEL budgetary cover from the Home Office to the Crown Prosecution Service. This is required to provide additional resources from Criminal Justice Information Technology (CJIT) to fund the re-commissioning of a test environment for Exchange Integration Service Stream Release 1 (EXISSR1) and enhancements to the Witness Management System.

An increase of £1,240,000 Programme resources due to the reallocation of resource DEL budgetary cover from the Department for Constitutional Affairs to the Crown Prosecution Service. This is required to provide additional resources from Criminal Justice Information Technology (CJIT) to aid the development of the IT tools necessary to support Case Progression Officers.

An increase of £2,500,000 Programme resources due to the reallocation of resource DEL budgetary cover from the Department for Constitutional Affairs to the Crown Prosecution Service. This is required to provide additional resources to help fund the Statutory Charging programme.

A decrease of £173,000 Programme resources due to the reallocation of resource DEL budgetary cover from the Crown Prosecution Service to the Home Office. This is required to provide additional resources to fund the "No Witness No Justice" partnership programme to improve services to prosecution witnesses in Court.

A decrease of £415,000 Administration resources due to the reallocation of resource DEL budgetary cover, within the Attorney General's resource DEL, from the Crown Prosecution Service to HM Procurator General & Treasury Solicitors. This is required to provide additional resources to help fund the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers.

A decrease of £394,000 Capital due to the reallocation of capital DEL budgetary cover from the Crown Prosecution Service to the Home Office. This is required to provide additional resources to fund the "No Witness No Justice" partnership programme to improve services to prosecution witnesses in Court.

Other changes which have no net effect on the CPS's DEL are:

Programme expenditure changes in respect of an increase in the Crown Prosecution Service's other current expenditure costs offset by a corresponding increase in Programme income received in respect of costs awarded to the CPS in court. This has increased by £4,000,000 from £29,300,000 to £33,300,000.

The Serious Fraud Office's (SFO) element of the Attorney General's DEL will not change from £46,275,000 and the Administration budget will not change from £27,175,000.

The Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office's (RCPO's) element of the Attorney General's DEL will be reduced by £16,000 from £37,788,000 to £37,772,000 and the Administration Budget will be reduced by £766,000 from £19,412,000 to £18,646,000.

The changes in RCPO's DEL arise from:

The transfer of £750,000 resource DEL to capital DEL to cover additional capital spending. This is required to provide additional resources to help fund the accommodation improvements demanded by the Gower Hammond and Butterfield Reviews.

A decrease of £16,000 Administration resources due to the reallocation of resource DEL budgetary cover, within the Attorney General's resource DEL, from the Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office to HM Procurator General & Treasury Solicitors. This is required to provide additional-resources to help fund the provision of administrative services by the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers.

The Treasury Solicitor's Department (TSD) element of the Attorney General's DEL will be increased by £598,000 from £16,857,000 to £17,455,000 and the Administration Budget will be increased by £1,348,000 from £10,221,000 to £11,569,000.

The change in TSD's DEL arises from:

Administration costs changes in respect of a reallocation of resource DEL budgetary cover, within the Attorney General's resource DEL, of £415,000 from the Crown Prosecution Service, and £16,000 from the Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office to the Treasury Solicitors

Department to meet the cost of policy support to the Attorney General provided by the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers (LSLO).

Take up of capital End Year Flexibility of £750,000 to meet the capital commitments of TSD and LSLO.

Other changes, which have no net effect on TSD's DEL, are:

Administration costs changes in respect of the transfer of £61,000 from the Treasury Solicitors' Department Agency to meet the cost of policy support to the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers (LSLO).

Administration costs changes in respect of a £15,750,000 increase in Treasury Solicitors' Departmental Administration costs offset by a corresponding increase in Administration income to meet an additional demand for legal services provided to other Government Departments.

Administration costs changes in respect of a £45,000 increase in Treasury Solicitors' Departmental Administration costs offset by a corresponding increase in Administration income for the cost of shared finance services provided to the Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office.

Administration costs changes in respect of a £73,000 increase in Treasury Solicitors' Department Administration costs offset by a corresponding increase in Administration income arising from a rate rebate.

Administration costs changes in respect of a £917,000 transfer of depreciation costs from other current to administration costs.

Shaken Baby Syndrome

The Solicitor-General (Mr. Mike O'Brien): My right hon. Friend the Attorney General has made the following Oral Statement.

"I wish to make a statement announcing the outcome of my review of Shaken Baby Syndrome cases and to also make the House aware of new guidance relating to expert witnesses in court.

The House will recall the high profile cases of Sally Clark, Trupti Patel and Angela Cannings, all of which related to allegations of unlawful killing of children. It was following these cases that I undertook to review past cases where a parent or carer had been convicted of killing a baby or infant under the age of two, in the past 10 years.

In December 2004 I reported to the House that 297 cases had been reviewed and 28 were found to have questionable convictions. Today I report that I have fulfilled my pledge to re-examine the 88 cases which were identified at the outset of this process as shaken baby cases.

The review of the shaken baby cases was undertaken once the Court of Appeal ruled in July last year. Today I am able to report that three cases have been found to have questionable convictions.

The three convictions identified as questionable include:

one male convicted of murder in 2001 and sentenced to life imprisonment [and currently still serving that sentence]

one male convicted of manslaughter in 2001 and sentenced to three years imprisonment [no longer in prison]

one female convicted of manslaughter in 1994 and sentenced to seven years imprisonment [no longer in prison—carried out extensive searches but appears to have left the country or changed her name]

The cases of Sally Clark, Trupti Patel and Angela Cannings generated a wide ranging medical debate about infant deaths and also the causes of shaken baby syndrome.

The judgment of the Court of Appeal, which considered the evidence of 25 expert witnesses from all disciplines, is now considered the case law authority on shaken baby syndrome and has helped clarify the law.

It stated that the presence of all or some of three particular injuries is a strong pointer towards shaken baby syndrome. The Court was therefore uniquely placed to comment upon this difficult area, and the differing medical evidence put before it.

The Court's primary focus was on the significance of the so-called "triad" of injuries which, when all or some are present in an infant, is suggestive of deliberate harm. These consist of subdural haemorrhaging, retinal haemorrhaging and encephalopathy or brain swelling.

The Court's critical focus was on the degree of force required to cause those injuries, or indeed whether any force was required. The Court of Appeal found that:

> The presence of the triad of injuries is consistent with shaken baby syndrome, but the triad alone cannot automatically lead to a conclusion that the infant has been shaken.
>
> The triad however remains "... a strong pointer ..." to shaken baby syndrome.

Taking into account the judgment of the Court of Appeal, a thorough review of the 88 cases was carried out by a senior CPS lawyer and independent Counsel, who were part of a team that conducted my wider review into infant homicides in 2004. I have taken an active personal role in supervising the review and believe we have acted carefully, and as swiftly as practicable, in reaching conclusions.

The review has found that three convictions may give cause for concerns as to the safety of those convictions. In the considerable majority of the remaining SBS cases, other extraneous evidence existed to support the findings of shaken baby syndrome.

A few examples are: evidence the infant had been struck against a wall causing catastrophic injuries; admissions to shaking and punching the infant; earlier fractures; and head injuries occurring on two separate occasions.

My office has written to the legal representatives of those involved in the three cases suggesting that it might be appropriate for the safety of their client's conviction to be referred to the Court of Appeal or the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

The letters stress that the determination of the review does not mean that the convictions are unsafe. That will be a matter for the Court of Appeal to decide in due course, if the defendants decide to take the matter further.

While I believe, after careful review, the vast majority of shaken baby syndrome convictions do not give rise to concern, it remains open to anyone with such a conviction to seek leave to appeal to the Court of Appeal or a referral to the Criminal Cases Review Commission.

To ensure that this problem does not happen again, the DPP will be issuing further guidance to prosecutors as a result of this review.

Infant death cases such as those of Angela Cannings and Sally Clark led to concern among practitioners and the public at the way in which the criminal dealt with the issues surrounding expert evidence. It is a concern I share.

I can therefore announce today that, as a result of that work between the Crown Prosecution Service and ACPO, we will now be implementing new guidance that focuses on the requirements made on such witnesses in terms of disclosure. Where experts are police employees, they will continue to work to the requirements of the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996, and in particular the obligations to retain, record and reveal.

Experts who are not police employees will receive a guidance booklet setting out what is required of them, including the need to reveal to the investigator all the material they will have created in working on the case. They will also be required to certify that they have revealed to the prosecution any information that might adversely affect their credibility and or competence as an expert witness. They are reminded that they must not give expert opinion beyond their area of expertise. This guidance will set standards across the criminal justice system for the use of expert witnesses.

The new guidance is one of a number of initiatives underway across government which will improve the management of expert evidence in the criminal courts. In addition the Criminal Procedure Rule Committee is considering new rules that would provide explicitly for pre-trial discussion between experts to identify areas of agreement or disagreement and so save court time.

I believe the clear and thorough guidelines I have announced today will assist in bringing about greater confidence in the criminal justice system in handling such difficult cases where expert witnesses are called on".

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Spring Supplementary Estimate

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Alan Johnson): Subject to Parliamentary approval of the necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Department of Trade & Industry's DEL will be increased by £576,302,000 from £6,374,488,000 to £6,950,790,000 and the administration costs limit will be reduced by £27,917,000 from £391,523,000 to £363,606,000.

Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital is as set out in the following table:

	Change	*Voted*	*New DEL Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource (£000)	412,078	225,473	6,186,687	6,412,160
Capital (£000)	164,224	-214,422	753,052	538,630
Depreciation* (£000)	-15,490	-23,767	-113,923	-137,690
Total (£000)	560,812	-12,716	6,825,816	6,813,100

**Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.*

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from:

RfRI

i) utilisation of £2,444,000 from the unused balance of the Department's End-Year Flexibility entitlement in respect of University Innovation Centres capital grants;

ii) utilisation of £2,055,000 from the unused balance of the Department's End-Year Flexibility entitlement in respect of increased balance sheet provisions for Enemy Property liabilities;

iii) utilisation of £87,000,000 from the unused balance of the Department's End-Year Flexibility entitlement in respect of increased balance sheet provisions for British Shipbuilders liabilities;

iv) utilisation of £ 10,000,000 from the unused balance of the Department's End-Year Flexibility entitlement in respect of the non-cash costs of the Concessionary Fuel liability and associated assets;

v) a transfer of £305,000 from the Home Office in respect of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights transition costs;

vi) a transfer of £38,000 from the Department for Constitutional Affairs in respect of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights transition costs;

vii) a transfer of £229,000 from the Department for Work and Pensions in respect of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights transition costs;

viii) a virement of £18,500,000 to non-voted expenditure (of which £2,000,000 vired to non-voted capital) in respect of the MG Rover support package funded by the Regional Development Agencies;

ix) a transfer of £167,000,000 from the Ministry of Defence in respect of non-voted expenditure of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority;

x) a transfer of £224,000 to the Cabinet Office in respect of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights transition costs;

xi) a virement of £11,497,000 voted non-cash to non-voted near-cash expenditure in respect of British Energy liabilities;

xii) a virement of £21,062,000 from capital grants to capital expenditure, utilising underspends to fund increased expenditure on the National Physical Laboratory (£2,300,000), the Employment Tribunals Service (£4,600,000) and Excellent Corporate Services (£14,162,000);

xiii) utilisation of £31,503,000 from the unused balance of the Department's non-Science End-Year Flexibility entitlement (£3,000,000 near-cash, £8,503,000 non-cash vired to near-cash and £20,000,000 administration vired to programme) in respect of non-voted expenditure on British Energy liabilities;

xiv) utilisation of £ 114,021,000 loaned from the unused balance of the Department's Science End-Year Flexibility entitlement in respect of non-voted expenditure on British Energy liabilities;

xv) utilisation of £979,000 loaned from the unused balance of the Department's End-Year Flexibility entitlement to fund programmes reduced in order to fond British Energy liabilities;

xvii) a virement of £54,024,000 from non-voted near-cash resource expenditure to non-voted capital expenditure in respect of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority;

xviii) a virement of £1,500,000 from non-voted capital expenditure to voted non-cash resource expenditure in respect of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority;

xviii) utilisation of £5,000,000 from the unused balance of the Department's non-cash End-Year Flexibility entitlement in respect of non-voted expenditure of the Regional Development Agencies;

xix) utilisation of £3,000,000 from the unused balance of the Department's non-cash End-Year Flexibility entitlement in respect of non-voted expenditure of the Competition Commission;

xx) a virement of £71,265,000 from non-voted capital grants expenditure to non-voted capital expenditure in respect of the Regional Development Agencies;

RfR2

i) a reduction of £4,400,000 in the non-voted non-cash expenditure of the Natural Environment Research Council due to a windfall gain to the Council's non-cash following implementation of FRS15;

ii) a virement of £18,717,000 from non-voted capital expenditure to non-voted capital grants expenditure of the Research Councils;

Also within the change to resource DEL, the changes to the administration costs limit are (RfR1):

i) a transfer of £1,587,000 from the Cabinet Office in respect of the Parliamentary Counsel Office;

ii) a transfer of £24,000 from the Home Office in respect of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights transition costs;

iii) a transfer of £126,000 from the Department for Constitutional Affairs in respect of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights transition costs;

iv) a transfer of £165,000 to the Cabinet Office in respect of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights transition costs;

v) a transfer of £210,000 to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in respect of Government Offices for the Regions;

vi) a transfer of £100,000 to the Department for Culture Media and Sport in respect of the Minister for Women; and

vii) a virement of £29,179,000 to non-voted programme expenditure in relation to British Energy liabilities.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Main Estimate

i) utilisation of £120,000,000 of the Department's 2006-07 Departmental Expenditure Limit for European Regional Development Fund expenditure borne of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Estimate under the procedures for anticipating future years' expenditure that apply to this budget.

The change in the capital element of the DEL arises from: RfR1

i) virement of £14,000,000 from non-voted expenditure of the Regional Development Agencies to voted expenditure in respect of the London Development Agency;

ii) virement of £500,000 to non-voted expenditure in respect of increased contributions from other Government Departments for the Regional Development Agencies for the Northern Way Growth Fund;

iii) a virement of £21,062,000 from capital grants to capital expenditure, utilising underspends to fund increased expenditure on the National Physical Laboratory (£2,300,000), the Employment Tribunals Service (£4,600,000) and Excellent Corporate Services (£14,162,000);

iv) utilisation of £6,190,000 from the unused balance of the Department's End-Year Flexibility capital grants entitlement to provide cover for an in-year shortfall in recovery of a loan to Ofcom due to early repayment in 2004-05;

v) utilisation of £6,000,000 from the unused balance of the Department's End-Year Flexibility entitlement for the Enterprise Capital Fund/Early Growth Fund;

vi) utilisation of £23,900,000 from the unused balance of the Department's End-Year Flexibility entitlement to provide for a shortfall in non-voted Launch Investment receipts;

vii) a virement of £54,024,000 from non-voted near-cash resource expenditure to non-voted capital expenditure in respect of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority;

viii) a virement of £1,500,000 from non-voted capital expenditure to voted non-cash resource expenditure in respect of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority;

ix) a virement of £2,000,000 from voted capital grants to non-voted capital in respect of the MG Rover support package funded by the Regional Development Agencies;

x) a virement of £71,265,000 from non-voted capital grants expenditure to non-voted capital expenditure in respect of the Regional Development Agencies;

RfR2

i) an increase of £4,000,000 in the non-voted expenditure of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council and an equivalent increase in voted receipts;

ii) a virement of £ 18,717,000 from non-voted capital expenditure to non-voted capital grants expenditure of the Research Councils.

Office of Fair Trading

Subject to Parliamentary approval of the necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Office of Fair Trading's DEL will be increased by £1,237,000 from £58,403,000 to £59,640,000.

Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital is as set out in the following table:

	Change	*Voted*	*New DEL Non-voted*	*Total*
Resource (£000)	487	57,492		57,492
Capital (£000)	750	2,148		2,148
Depreciation* (£000)		-2,549		-2,549
Total (£000)	1237	57,091		57,091

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from:

i) utilisation of £487,000 from the unused balance of the Department's End-Year Flexibility entitlement in respect of the launch of "Codes Program" delayed from prior year.

The change in the capital element of the DEL arises from:

ii) utilisation of £750,000 from the unused balance of the Department's End-Year Flexibility entitlement in respect of the launch of "Codes Program" delayed from prior year.

TRANSPORT

Spring Supplementary Estimates

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): Subject to parliamentary approval of any necessary supplementary estimate, the Department for Transport DEL for 2005-06 will be increased by £270,488,000 from £11,723,915,000 to £11,994,403,000 and the administration costs limits will be increased by £5,365,000 from £264,558,000 to £269,923,000.

Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

£'000

	Change	New DEL Voted	New DEL Non-Voted	Total
Resource				
Administration	5,365	265,900	4,023	269,923
Programme	751,444	6,009,172	3,283,726	9,292,898
Capital	-94,124	1,756,176	1,445,360	3,201,536
Depreciation*	-392,197	-760,131	-9,823	-769,954
Total	270,488	7,271,117	4,723,286	11,994,403

**Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.*

Resource Change: Administration (total increase of £5,365,000)

Voted: total increase of £5,365,000.

RfRI

(i) Partial repayment of £5,000,000 from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency for Continuous Registration start up costs arising from receipts on the scheme; and

(ii) a transfer of £365,000 from the Cabinet Office (Parliamentary Counsel Office) to provide for the introduction of inter departmental charges for Parliamentary Counsel costs.

Resource Change: Programme (total increase of £751,444,000)

Voted: total decrease of £74,248,000

RfR I

(i) take up of £350,843,000 non cash reserve claim for the Highways Agency in respect of depreciation of the road network, writedown of fixed assets, net increase in provisions and loss on disposal of assets.

(ii) take up of £1,421,000 end year flexibility, comprising:

(a) £536,000 Invest to Save Budget for the Mobility and Inclusion Unit and;

(b) £885,000 for European Regional Development Fund projects.

(iii) £17,163,000 Machinery of Government transfer and equivalent receipts from the Cabinet Office in respect of the Government Car and Despatch Agency. The resource costs and income of the Agency are included within the DfT Administration Cost Limit.

(iv) a net transfer of £5,881,000 to other government departments comprising:

(a) £3,808,000 to the Ministry of Defence in respect of the National Metrological Programme and Severe Weather Warning Service;

(b) £2,280,000 to the Scottish Executive in respect of the change in responsibility for making payments to the Strathclyde Passenger Transport Executive from the Strategic Rail Authority;

(c) £500,000 to the Office of the Rail Regulator in respect of the write back of assets; partially offset by

(d) £707,000 from HM Revenue and Customs for the design panel funding associated with work on road pricing; and

(v) a net transfer to non-voted resource provision of £866,572,000 comprising:

(a) £796,265,000 to the Strategic Rail Authority to allow it to continue paying network grants until the end of the financial year;

(b) £21,753,000 to cover the shortfall in the Strategic Rail Authority budget arising from the reclassification of the British Rail Board (Residuary) as a public corporation where only its subsidy and borrowing score within DEL;

(c) £1,313,000 for the Rail Passenger Council;

(d) £13,822,000 in respect of an adjusted budget requirement for the Strategic Rail Authority, which is to continue making Network Grant payments until the end of 2005-06;

(e) £165,000 net reduction in utilisation of National Freight Company provision;

(f) £1,065,000 to cover Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency cost of capital and depreciation costs; and

(g) £32,189,000 to the Departmental Unallocated Provision including £31,604,000 arising from detrunking requirements transferred from the Highways Agency.

(vi) a net transfer of £442,141,000 from non voted resource provision.

(vii) a net transfer of £8,800,000 from the capital voted provision, comprising:

(a) £7,500,000 in respect of Trans European Network capital grants; and

(b) £1,300,000 for development of improved e-services in DVO Group.

(viii) Increased receipts of £5,000,000 generated by the Continuous Registration scheme to support the equivalent increase on administration resource.

Non Voted: total increase of £825,692,000.

RfR 1

(i) take up of £138,066,000 non cash reserve claim for the Highways Agency for an adjustment in respect of utilisation of provisions;

(ii) take up of £174,833,000 end year flexibility (including £58,540,000 vired from capital to capital grants) in respect of Network Grant;

(iii) a net transfer of £57,527,000 from the non voted capital Departmental Unallocated Provision for Network Grants;

(iv) a net transfer of £866,572,000 from the voted resource provision;

(v) a net transfer of £30,835,000 from voted capital provision in respect of Network Grant; partially offset by:

(vi) a transfer to the voted resource provision of £442,141,000 comprising:

(a) £391,729,000 machinery of government adjustment to reflect the transfer of Strategic Rail Authority activities to the Department;

(b) £7,100,000 from the Strategic Rail Authority to Rail Group budgets;

(c) £25,042,000 Channel Tunnel Rail Link de-risked capital grant budget to non de-risked grants; and

(d) £18,270,000 cover reflecting increased Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency receipts.

Capital Change (total decrease of £94,124,000)

Voted: total decrease of £90,950,000

RfR1

(i) take up of £1,385,000 end year flexibility for European Regional Development Fund projects;

(ii) £1,110,000 Machinery of Government net transfer (including receipts of £150,000 from the Cabinet Office in respect of the Government Car and Despatch Agency);

(iii) £415,000 transfer from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in respect of its share of joint IT project costs;

(iv) £600,000 from capital non voted Departmental Unallocated Provision for the Promoting Sustainable Travel Initiatives;

(v) a transfer to non voted capital provision of £55,215,000 comprising:

(a) £39,571,000 for de-trunking;

(b) £5,500,000 for the British Transport Police Authority;

(c) a transfer of £3,506,000 to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency for capital projects including Vehicle System Software Re-Platforming and PFI schemes;

(d) a transfer of £4,000,000 to the British Transport Police Authority (£3,327,000) and the Greater London Authority (£673,000);

(e) £2,311,000 from National Air Traffic Services additional receipts to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency; and

(f) £327,000 from National Air Traffic Services additional receipts to the Greater London Authority.

(vi) a transfer of £30,835,000 to non voted resource provision;

(vii) a transfer of £8,800,000 to voted resource provision and;

(viii) reduction of £390,000 in the Highways Agency receipts to compensate for loss on sale of assets.

Non-Voted total decrease of £3,174,000

RfR1

(i) a transfer of £57,527,000 to resource non voted provision;

(ii) a transfer of £600,000 to capital voted provision;

(iii) £262,000 decrease in respect of increased Humber Bridge receipts; partially offset by:

(iv) a transfer of £55,215,000 from capital voted provision.

London and Continental Railways

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): With construction of the link nearing completion, my Department has been considering its future relationship with the project and with London and Continental Railways, who are responsible for the construction and operation of the Rail Link. A number of options have been considered, touching on future financial arrangements, the current structure of controls in light of current best practice in such projects and the structure of LCR and its subsidiary companies. Officials have for some time held discussions with LCR about the best long term commercial structure. Separately, my Department has recently been approached by a third party, asking about the Department's attitude to their discussing with LCR's shareholders the potential acquisition of their current holdings, and about the issues of finance, structure and control mentioned above. My Department has made clear that any changes to LCR's ownership, corporate structure or controls structure will be considered against the primary objective of ensuring continuing value for taxpayers' money.

Silverlink Metro

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): From 11 November 2007, responsibility for Silverlink Metro services will be transferred to Transport for London (TfL).

Silverlink Metro consists of train services between Richmond and North Woolwich, Gospel Oak: and Barking, Clapham Junction to Willesden Junction and between Watford and Euston.

The transfer is in line with the Department for Transport's White Paper commitment to examine mechanisms for giving the London Mayor more control over rail services within London.

After the date of transfer, TfL will have complete responsibility for services levels on Silverlink Metro. TfL will now begin the process of procuring a concession to operate services after the transfer.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Spring Supplementary Estimate

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. John Hutton): Subject to Parliamentary approval of the necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Department for Work and Pensions DEL will be increased by £120,787,000 from £8,827,404,000 to £8,948,191,000 and the administration budget will be reduced by £30,335,000 from £6,059,262,000 to £6,028,927,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are as set out in the following table:

	£000's	New DEL £000's		
	Change	*Voted*	*Non-Voted*	*Total*
Resource	58,158	7,409,690	1,178,920	8,588,610
Capital	62,000	458,414	9,928	468,342
Depreciation (1)	629	-107,999	-762	-108,761
Total	120,787	7,760,105	1,188,086	8,948,191

Note:

1. Depreciation, which forms part of resource DEL, is excluded from the total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The change in the resource element of the DEL arises from:

RfR1

i. an increase in provision of £4,000,000 (other current) due to increased spending by the Child Support Agency (take up of end of year flexibility);

RfR2

ii. an increase in provision of £37,000,000 (grants) due to increased spending on Employment Programmes (take up of end of year flexibility);

iii. an increase in provision of £74,000,000 (other current/grants) due to increased spending by Jobcentre Plus (£50,688,000), Health and Safety Executive (£8,763,000) and Housing Benefit Administration (£14,549,000) (take up of end of year flexibility);

iv. a reduction in provision of £229,000 (other current) due to a transfer to the Department of Trade and Industry for the transition costs of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights;

v. a reduction in provision of £62,000,000 (other current) due to a switch of funding into capital to reflect revised spending plans;

RfR4

vi. an increase in provision of £3,000,000 (other current) due to increased spending by the Pensions Service (take up of end of year flexibility);

RfR4

vii. an increase in provision of £2,000,000 (other current) due to increased spending by the Disability and Carers Service (take up of end of year flexibility);

RfR5

viii. an increase in provision of £387,000 (administration) due to a transfer of funding from the Cabinet Office for the transfer of the functions of the Parliamentary Counsel Office.

Capital

The change in the capital element of the DEL arises from:

RfR2

ix. an increase in provision of £62,000,000 due to a transfer from other current to better reflect spending plans.

Administration Costs

The movement in the Administration Cost limit arises from:

RfR2

x. a transfer of provision of £30,000,000 within Job Centre Plus from administration to other current to more accurately reflect spending plans;

RfR4

xi. a transfer of provision of £722,000 from Disability Client Group (administration) to Disability Rights Commission (other current);

RfR5

xii. an increase in provision of £387,000 (administration) due to a transfer of funding from the Cabinet Office for the transfer of the functions of the Parliamentary Counsel Office.

Movements from non-voted expenditure

Additionally there are the following drawdowns that are neutral in overall DEL terms:

Welfare Modernisation Fund

xiii. £64,564,000 into RfR1 for Child Support Reform;

xiv. £70,000,000 into RfR2 for Jobcentre Plus modernisation;

xv. £26,000,000 into RfR3 for the Pensions Transformation Project;

xvi. £18,000,000 into RfR4 for Disability and Carers Service modernisation;

Employment Development Fund

xvii. £285,000,000 into RfR2 for Jobcentre Plus roll out.

Financial Assistance Scheme

xviii. £17,000,000 into RfR 3 to reflect spending plans.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 15 February 2006

TREASURY

DEL and Administration Costs Limits

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Ivan Lewis): Subject to Parliamentary approval of any necessary Supplementary Estimate, the Government Actuary's Departmental Expenditure Limit will be decreased by £199,000 from £1,365,000 to £1,166,000. Within the DEL change, the impact on resources and capital are set out in the following table:

New DEL

	Change	*Voted*	*Non-Voted*	*Total*
Resource	-399	728	0	728
Capital	200	438	0	438
Depreciation*	–	-422	–	-422
Total	-199	744	0	744

* Depreciation, which forms part of the resource DEL, is excluded from total DEL since capital DEL includes capital spending and to include depreciation of those assets would lead to double counting.

The change in the resource DEL arises from *(a)* machinery of government transfer to the Office of National Statistics £78,000 and *(b)* efficiency savings identified in response to the Gershon Review £121,000. The change in the capital element arises through a virement of DEL resource into capital £200,000. This capital funding will support investment in business systems for GAD.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Electronic Conveyancing (England and Wales)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Bridget Prentice): My noble Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Baroness Ashton, has made the following written ministerial statement:

"Land Registry has carried out extensive further consultation with stakeholders on the introduction of Electronic Conveyancing in England and Wales since the formal consultation exercise in 2002. The implementation of this important reform programme will continue to be carried out incrementally. A prototype in 2006 (the Chain Matrix) and a pilot exercise in the second half of 2007 (the system to be used for domestic sales) are planned, with further releases as the system progresses. These exercises will be limited to voluntary users. Once sufficient experience of the new system has been gained, the Secretary of State and Land Registry will initiate a consultation process with stakeholders over the form of the rules which will make e-conveyancing compulsory for most transactions. If Parliament approves those rules, I would expect the implementation of the compulsory provisions to take place as soon as possible, which is likely to be in 2009 or 2010".

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Olympic Delivery Authority

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Jim Fitzpatrick): This statement concerns a consultation on the transfer of certain powers from existing planning authorities to the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA). The ODA is to be established, subject to parliamentary approval, following Royal Assent of the London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Bill.

The making of the Planning Functions Order to give the ODA powers must be preceded by a consultation process. Copies of the Olympic Delivery Authority (Planning Functions) Order Consultation Paper have been deposited in the Libraries of both Houses today. The consultation period will run from today for eight weeks until 12 April.

Giving planning powers to the ODA will facilitate the planning process for the Olympic Park, bearing in mind the scale of development involved, the timescales attached, and the integrated nature of the project. The transfer of powers from the existing planning authorities to the ODA would not change the nature of those powers, nor would it lessen the transparency of the planning process. The ODA as planning authority would follow the same, or similar, procedures as the Boroughs and the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation, in which the Olympic Park is situated. Applicants would have the same rights of appeal against decisions by the ODA.

The planning powers taken by the ODA will operate within a defined geographical boundary. The Consultation Map shows the expected area of the Olympic Park, as well as other areas where development is considered integral to the delivery of the Park. The Consultation Paper does not seek views on the layout of the Park or the area to be covered by the Olympic Park development. The Consultation Paper seeks views on what area should be subject to ODA planning powers and the extent of the planning powers to be given to the ODA.

HEALTH

NHS Capital Allocations 2006–07

The Secretary of State for Health (Ms Patricia Hewitt): I am today notifying National Health Service Trusts, Primary Care Trusts and Strategic Health Authorities of their 2006–07 capital allocations. The total value of these allocations is £2,041 million. Details of allocations made to individual NHS organisations has been placed in the Library.

Investment in infrastructure continues to play a pivotal role in the modernisation of this NHS. This funding is for capital investment in NHS land, buildings and equipment.

NHS Trusts and Primary Care Trusts will receive operational capital for the purpose of renewing their existing asset bases and for modernising their equipment.

Strategic Health Authorities will receive Strategic Capital to fund larger scale investments facilitating strategic change. Strategic Health Authorities manage the distribution of strategic capital on to NHS Trusts and Primary Care Trusts in their patches by prioritising business cases for capital investment.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Carlile Report

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): I am pleased to say that Lord Carlile of Berriew QC has completed the report on the operation of Part VI of the Act in 2005, which will be laid before the House today.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Review of UK Assisted Areas (2007–13)

The Minister for Industry and the Regions (Alun Michael): I am today launching a consultation about the criteria we should use in drawing up the map of areas in the UK within which it will be possible to pay state aid for investment (economic funding to help to boost competitiveness) during the period 2007–13. A similar consultation took place before the current assisted areas map drawn up in 2000. Regional investment aid payments can be paid from EU Structural Funds or from a nation's own resources but are limited, at least as far as larger companies are concerned, to areas which need help according to clear criteria. This consultation is the first step in a process of agreeing the regional aid map.

In addition, the Government will be consulting in the near future on the proposed Rural Development Programme for England and on a draft National Strategic Reference Framework, which will be required by European Regulations to set out the broad priorities for future Structural Funds Programmes in the UK over the 2007–13 budgetary cycle.

The Government are committed to making sustainable improvements in the economic performance of all English regions and over the long term reducing the persistent gap in growth rates between the regions.[1] The Devolved Administrations work in partnership with the UK Government to promote economic development in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Government have developed their regional development strategy on the basis of a detailed economic analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the economies of the UK's regions and labour market as set out in Productivity in the UK 3: The Regional Dimension[2], Full Employment in Every Region[3], and Devolving Decision-making 2: Meeting the regional economic challenge[4].

The Review of the Assisted Areas is an important step to ensuring that Regions and Nations have the flexibility to build on strengths and address weaknesses. A national consultation will seek views on the designation of future Assisted Areas from 2007 to 2013. The consultation will be carried out in two parts. Part one of the consultation begins on 15 February 2006 and ends on 19 April 2006.

In part one the Government will seek views on the type of indicators that should be used to identify Assisted Areas, the appropriate geographical unit, and whether "economic development" areas should receive Assisted Areas coverage in their entirety.

The Government are also intending to cover Northern Ireland in its entirety, because of the unique difficulties in spatial targeting, the boundary with Borders, Midland and Western region of the Republic of Ireland, and that fact that Northern Ireland is currently eligible for an aid intensity of 40 per cent. higher than any other region of the UK. Copies of the consultation document have been placed in the House Library.

After responses have been received and analysed, part two of the consultation will contain the Government's response and a draft map and should be issued during the summer.

The new European Commission guidelines on regional aid were adopted on 21 December 2005. Under the new European Commission guidelines, the proportion of the UK population covered by the Assisted Areas will be 23.9 per cent, compared to 30.9 per cent. currently covered. This results mainly from the UK's sustained economic success in recent years. The reduction in coverage for the UK, like other longer-standing Member States, reflects the European Union objective of reducing the quantity of state aid as well as the impact of European Union enlargement. This has led to eligibility for regional aid being concentrated in the new, poorer Member States.

[1] HM Treasury, Office of Deputy Prime Minister and Department of Trade and Industry share a Public Service Agreement target to: "Make sustainable improvements in the economic performance of all English regions by 2008, and over the long term reduce the persistent gap in growth rates between the regions, demonstrating progress by 2006".

[2] www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/enterprise_and_productivity/ent_index.cfm

[3] www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/EAD48/employment_372.pdf

[4] www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/budget/budget_04/associated_documents/bud_bud04_addevolved2.cfm

WORK AND PENSIONS

Pensions Levies 2006–07

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. John Hutton): I am pleased to announce that there will be no increase in either the Pensions Regulator General Levy rates or the Pension Protection Fund Administration Levy rates for 2006–07. Rates will remain at the 2005–06 level as set out in the tables below.

The General Levy meets the cost of the Pensions Regulator (TPR) whose objective is to protect the benefits of members of occupational and private pension schemes; to reduce risks that lead to calls on the

Pension Protection Fund and to promote and improve understanding of, the good administration of work based pension schemes. It also meets the cost of the Pensions Ombudsman and the Pensions Advisory Service which provide scheme members with help, advice and information.

The Pension Protection Administration Levy meets the cost of administrating the Pension Protection Fund. This cost is initially met by money provided by Parliament, then recouped through this levy. The Pension Protection Fund which provides compensation to members of non money purchase pension schemes where the employer in respect of the scheme becomes insolvent later than 6 April 2005, and where the scheme is under-funded and is unable to purchase benefits for members above the level that the Pension Protection Fund would provide.

The provisions for the General Levy are in existing secondary legislation (S.I. 2005/626). The proposed provisions for the PPF Administration Levy are in draft regulations which will be debated in both Houses of Parliament.

General Levy Rates for 2006-07

Number of Members	*Occupational Pension Levy*	*Personal/Stakeholder Pension Levy*
2–11	£24.00 per scheme	£10.40 per scheme
12–99	£2.50 per member	£1.00 per member
100–999	Max (1.80 per member, £250)	Max (£0.70 per member, £100)
1,000–4,999	Max (£1.40 per member, £1,800)	Max (0.60 per member, £700)
5,000–9,999	Max (£1.06 per member, £7,000)	Max (£0.40 per member, £3,000)
10,000 +	Max (£0.74 per member, £10,600)	Max (£0.30 per member, £4,000)

Pension Protection Administration Levy Rates for 2006-07

Number of members	*Amount of levy for a scheme with M members*	*Minimum amount of levy*
2–11		£24
12–99	£2.50 x M	
100–999	£1.80 x M	£250
1,000–4999	£1.40 x M	£1,800
5,000–9,999	£1.06 x M	£7,000
10,000 or more	£0.74 x M	£10,600

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 16 February 2006

TREASURY

Budget Statement

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gordon Brown): I propose to deliver my Budget statement to the House on Wednesday 22 March.

DEFENCE

Chinook Support

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): The Ministry of Defence has today announced the award of a contract for the Through Life Customer Support (TLCS) of the Chinook helicopter fleet to The Boeing Company (Boeing). The key benefit offered by this through-life Partnering Arrangement is the delivery of a holistic, affordable and incentivised support solution, with clearly defined outputs that transfer substantial risk from the MOD to industry, where it can be better managed. The 34-year TLCS contract, which is worth £199 million over the first five years, will result in savings of 17 per cent. (approximately £170 million), over the 34-year life of the contract, compared to the value for money benchmark.

The contract is part of the wider Defence Logistics Transformation Programme and entirely consistent with the policy set out in the Defence Industrial Strategy. It follows the successful implementation of similar support contracts for the Sea King, Harrier and Tornado fleets, all of which seek to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of military logistics support to the front line.

As the major sub-contractor for this contract, DARA has worked in partnership with Boeing and the MOD to deliver an availability-based repair and maintenance capability. DARA's sub-contract is worth £69 million over the five-year period and provides work for its bases in Fareham, Perth & Sealand.

Armed Forces' Pay Review Body (Thirty-Fifth Report)

The Secretary of State for Defence (John Reid): The 2006 Report of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body has been published today. Copies of the Report are available in the Vote Office and the Library of the House. I wish to express my thanks to the Chairman and members of the Review Body for their Report.

The AFPRB has recommended an increase in basic military salary of 3 per cent. for the majority of personnel and 3.3 per cent. for Privates, Lance Corporals and equivalents on the lower pay range. The AFPRB has also recommended increases in the rates of Specialist Pay (e.g. Flying Pay, Submarine Pay, Diving Pay and Hydrographic Pay), and in accommodation charges.

The AFPRB's recommendations are to be accepted in full, with implementation effective from 1 April 2006.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund

The Minister for Local Government (Mr. Phil Woolas): In July 2005 I announced the indicative allocation of £525 million Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) resources for 2006–07 to 86 local authority districts. These allocations were subject to satisfactory progress by Local Strategic Partnerships. I can now confirm the final allocations for all 86 LSPs in receipt of NRF for the period 2006–07.

As I said when we announced the allocation of the NRF last July we are committed to improving the overall quality of life for people living in our most disadvantaged areas. We want them to share fully in a better society where we see respect for people of all ages, races and faiths and respect for the communities they live in. The funds are to support local authorities, other agencies and communities to work together to achieve these goals.

Ministers have made it clear that the initial allocations were conditional on satisfactory assessment of progress in the autumn. Those LSPs assessed as weak at that time were then required to put in place a robust improvement plan and demonstrate they had the capacity to deliver it by 13 January 2006.

Overall Local Strategic Partnerships in these areas have made good progress in achieving neighbourhood renewal objectives since they started in 2001. There is evidence that progress has been made in reducing crime and worklessness and improving health, education and housing. However a small number of these areas—three—need to improve their performance. The Government are to withhold 10 per cent. of the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund allocation for the financial year 2006–07 from these three LSPs. The three LSPs (local authorities and their partners) and the amounts withheld are:

Birmingham	£3,226,641
Kingston upon Hull	£1,284,351
Nottingham	£1,423,614

Each of these LSPs will be required to complete plans to demonstrate how national floor targets are to be met and the gap narrowed between the poorest neighbourhoods and the city average. If these LSPs are able to demonstrate significant improvement by the end of April 2006, the funds withheld will be released during 2006–07.

Details of the final allocations are contained within annex A.

Annex A

Local Authority	*Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Allocation 2006–07*
Great Yarmouth	1,937,614
Norwich	1,958,817
EAST	3,896,431
Ashfield	642,407
Bolsover	2,261,603

Annex A

Local Authority	*Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Allocation 2006–07*
Derby	3,689,320
Leicester	7,692,824
Lincoln	266,667
Mansfield	2,187,637
Nottingham	12,812,528
EAST MIDLANDS	29,552,985
Barking and Dagenham	1,632,728
Barnet	1,000,000
Brent	2,279,124
Camden	6,495,606
Croydon	1,000,000
Ealing	1,187,313
Enfield	1,673,635
Greenwich	5,976,382
Hackney	18,115,529
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,000,000
Haringey	8,214,164
Islington	9,654,127
Lambeth	4,143,042
Lewisham	2,207,255
Newham	20,527,596
Southwark	12,182,881
Tower Hamlets	16,357,518
Waltham Forest	2,298,141
Westminster	3,055,379
LONDON	119,000,419
Derwentside	2,282,354
Easington	6,826,031
Gateshead	4,642,852
Hartlepool	4,830,926
Middlesbrough	8,360,256
Newcastle upon Tyne	7,128,786
North Tyneside	2,766,222
Redcar and Cleveland	3,396,939
Sedgefield	1,025,033
South Tyneside	8,287,116
Stockton-on-Tees	3,684,295
Sunderland	7,163,770
Wansbeck	2,123,794
Wear Valley	2,627,106
NORTH EAST	65,145,480
Allerdale	570,329
Barrow-in-Furness	1,838,382
Blackburn with Darwen	3,901,342
Blackpool	3,193,260
Bolton	5,425,706
Burnley	1,821,612
Halton	6,048,684
Hyndburn	862,424
Knowsley	11,380,037
Liverpool	30,998,897
Manchester	31,710,830
Oldham	4,673,976
Pendle	1,307,295
Preston	2,520,434
Rochdale	4,877,998
Salford	9,308,195
Sefton	5,631,300
St. Helens	3,873,114
Tameside	2,323,657
Wigan	4,095,532
Wirral	6,641,648
NORTH WEST	143,004,649
Brighton and Hove	1,801,470
Hastings	1,574,148
SOUTH EAST	3,375,618
Bristol, City of	6,099,490
Plymouth	2,423,325
Kerrier	1,073,659
Penwith	1,000,000
SOUTH WEST	10,596,474
Birmingham	29,039,769
Coventry	5,289,550
Dudley	1,577,157
Sandwell	12,395,687
Stoke-on-Trent	6,150,036
Walsall	6,409,755
Wolverhampton	5,928,270
WEST MIDLANDS	68,790,225
Barnsley	5,444,138
Bradford	12,612,555
Doncaster	8,699,463
Kingston upon Hull	11,559,159
Kirklees	4,183,464
Leeds	12,811,301
North East Lincolnshire	4,558,610
Rotherham	3,495,660
Sheffield	9,899,449
Wakefield	4,439,314
YORKSHIRE & HUMBERSIDE	77,703,114
TOTAL ENGLAND	517,391,348

HEALTH

Pandemic Influenza
(The Government's Response to the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee Report)

The Secretary of State for Health (Ms Patricia Hewitt): Today, the Government have laid before Parliament their response to the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee's fourth report of Session 2005–06, on pandemic influenza (Cm 6738). Copies have been placed in the Library.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Private Security Industry Approved Contractor Scheme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): On 12 January I announced that the Government had decided to introduce an Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS) for the private security industry and that the detail of the scheme, including the fee structure, would be announced at a later date. The purpose of the scheme is to protect the public and to maintain and improve standards within the private security industry.

The detail of the ACS has now been decided. It will have the following key features:

The scheme will have three broad alternative routes to accreditation, relating to a combination of Options 3 and 4 set out in the draft Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) issued on 25 August 2005:

(a) Self assessment against an Security Industry Authority (SIA)-provided workbook followed by verification from an SIA-approved assessing body;

(b) Confirmation of ISO9001:2000 certification by a UKAS-accredited body compliance, topped up with British Standards ments of the SIA Self Assessment Workbook ady covered;

(c) Use of an existing SIA approved accreditation, based on existing standards, to meet the same requirement as (a).

Companies approved under the scheme will be permitted to deploy up to 15 per cent. of their security personnel who are not yet licensed but who have completed training and have an application pending. I have already announced that they will not be able to deploy unlicensed personnel on assignments that involve contact with children or vulnerable adults. This will ensure that those dealing with this particularly sensitive group have undergone, and satisfied any SIA requirements relating to, a Criminal Records Bureau check.

The fee structure has been set, following consultation on a partial Regulatory Impact Assessment, to enable full cost recovery for each type of firm, and is in two parts:

1. the Application Fee, to cover the pre-approval costs of considering applications for approval;
2. the Annual Registration Fee, to cover the post-approval costs of ensuring that standards are maintained by all employees covered by the scheme.

Type of Firm	*Employees*	*Application Fees*	*Annual Registration Fee*
Micro	under 10	£400	£20 per licensable employee
Small	10 to 25	£800	
Medium	26 to 250	£1,600	
Large	over 250	£2,400	

The application fees are slightly lower than those consulted upon in the Partial RIA.

The detail of the ACS will be subject to annual review.

Regulations will be made to bring the ACS into force from 20 March 2006. A Full Regulatory Impact Assessment will be published on the same date.

Full details of the scheme, including the workbook, are on the SIA website at www.the-sia.org.uk.

National DNA Database

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Andy Burnham): I am today placing in the Libraries of both Houses recently issued guidance from the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) to Chief Officers on the consideration of applications for the removal, in exceptional circumstances only, of DNA and fingerprints from the respective databases. There has been considerable recent interest in the policy and operation of the National DNA Database (NDNAD), particularly in relation to juveniles and those arrested but subsequently not proceeded against. This statement and accompanying guidance is intended to inform that debate.

Under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984, as amended, the police may take without consent a non-intimate DNA sample and fingerprints from all persons arrested for, informed they will be reported for, or charged with a Recordable offence and detained in a police station. Since May 2001, the police have been able to retain the DNA samples and fingerprints taken from persons who have not been convicted of such an offence. That change in legislation was itself challenged by judicial review and in July 2004 a judicial committee of the House of Lords found that the retention of DNA samples and fingerprints in these circumstances was proportionate and justified. The police may also take and retain DNA and fingerprints from persons convicted of a Recordable offence. The amendment to PACE to allow the police to take and retain DNA and fingerprints from arrested persons is contained in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 which was considered carefully by Parliament.

Since the amendment to PACE in 2001, about 200,000 DNA samples have been retained that would previously have had to be destroyed and of these, over 8,000 have been matched with crime scene stains involving nearly 14,000 offences, including murder, rape and other sexual offences. Early research has also shown that sampling persons who have been arrested but not proceeded against has yielded a "match" with a crime scene stain in over 3,000 offences, again including murder, manslaughter and rape. These links may never have been made had the police not been given their current powers to take and retain DNA. In relation to the 24,168 under-18s who have been arrested but not charged, which include 23 arrests for murder and 288 for rape, 541 have been matched to crime scenes profiles for unsolved crimes.

I wish to draw Members' attention to two important points in relation to juveniles under 10. First, there are no under-10s on the NDNAD where the sample has been taken without the consent of a parent or legal guardian, and in fact, there are no powers to do so without such consent. Secondly, it is possible for anyone to apply to their Chief Constable to have their or their child's DNA or fingerprints removed from the databases and the ACPO guidance sets out the process for doing that.

Tony Lake, Chief Constable of Lincolnshire Police Force and Chairman of the National DNA Database Strategy Board has emphasised the value of DNA evidence and the importance of the database to the criminal justice service.

New Governance arrangements for the NDNAD were introduced in December 2005 following the transformation of the Forensic Science Service to a Government owned Company. A new Delivery Unit, which will initially be part of the Home Office, is responsible for the standard setting and oversight of the NDNAD, ensuring quality and integrity of the service. It will be overseen by the National DNA Database Strategic Board, a tripartite Board composed of representatives from the Home Office, ACPO and the Association of Police Authorities. Representation at meetings of the Board by the Human Genetics Commission is being increased from one to two persons in order to strengthen lay representation and the Government are additionally looking to establish a dedicated ethics group to provide independent oversight of Board decision making.

Inclusion on the NDNAD does not signify a criminal record and there is no personal cost or material disadvantage to the individual simply by being on it. Given this, and the clear evidence showing the substantial public benefit in relation to the detection of serious crime, it is the judgment of the Government that the existing policy is justified. However, we accept the need for on-going accountability to the public and the NDNAD Annual Report, which publishes details of its activities and will be laid before Parliament, is an

important part of the aim to increase transparency and maintain and improve public confidence in the oversight, management and operations of the NDNAD.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Devolving Policing and Justice

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Peter Hain): Later today I will be introducing a Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill which will, amongst other things, pave the way for future devolution of policing and justice in Northern Ireland. I am introducing this enabling legislation now because I want to send out a clear message: I believe that responsibility for policing and justice in Northern Ireland should properly lie with a Northern Ireland Assembly, directly accountable to the people of Northern Ireland.

Devolution of policing and justice cannot happen until the Assembly is restored and requests devolution of these functions, and until Parliament agrees it. But although this may be some way off, it is important that we start discussing now, with all the parties, how devolution of policing and justice can work most effectively for the people of Northern Ireland.

We need to ensure that we are agreed on the model for the new department or departments. We need to develop a shared understanding of exactly what will be devolved and how it will operate. And we need to make sure that a future Northern Ireland Assembly has the tools it needs to deliver policing and justice effectively, for example giving the Assembly the power to raise revenue for policing from a policing precept, as is the case in England, Scotland and Wales.

The discussion paper is intended to initiate and facilitate those discussions. It sets out what the Government believe is a sensible and pragmatic framework for policing and justice in Northern Ireland under an Assembly. It sets out which specific powers we think should be devolved and how these could operate. It also identifies particular areas where further thinking is needed.

The paper is not a blueprint but a discussion document. It is an opportunity for all those with an interest, but particularly the political parties in Northern Ireland, to engage with the Government and, together, work out how devolution of policing and justice should work.

The Bill contains a number of provisions in addition to those providing for future devolution of policing and justice, including provisions relating to elections in Northern Ireland, a power to create a wholesale electricity market for the island of Ireland and provision to facilitate the funding of sustainable energy development in Northern Ireland.

The various policies in the Bill have been equality screened to assess whether they impact adversely on any of the nine equality groups in Northern Ireland. The assessment is that no such adverse impact arises. Steps are being taken to draw the Bill and the discussion paper to the attention of representative groups.

I am placing in the Libraries copies of the Regulatory Impact Assessment prepared in relation to the single wholesale electricity provisions in the Bill, and of the Discussion paper.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries (Economic Partnership Agreements)

The Minister for Trade (Ian Pearson): I would like to update the House on how the UK has sought to deliver its position on the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) that are currently being negotiated between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and also to highlight our objectives in 2006, which is a critical year for the EPA process. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Department for International Development (DFID) published a position paper in March 2005 called "Making EPAs Deliver for Development", which was outlined in a ministerial statement made by Patricia Hewitt, then Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, on 22 March 2005. That statement set out the Government's view that EPAs should be designed to deliver long-term development, economic growth and poverty reduction, and that in its work on EPAs, the EU should take a non-mercantilist approach and not pursue any offensive interests. Since then, we have made progress in taking forward some of these goals, particularly in reinforcing the underpinning principle that these trade agreements should be tools for development in the ACP.

The UK position paper has helped to give EPAs a much higher profile among EU Member States. During 2005, we used our presidency of the EU to ensure that there was more and better dialogue on EPAs both with other EU member states and with the European Commission about the shape these agreements should take. At ministerial and official levels where we aimed to ensure that the crucial role of EPAs in development was fully recognised, and that the trade and development aspects of EPAs are discussed coherently.

We established a technical "EPA Expert Group", involving trade and development officials which is chaired by the Commission. We have also established an informal EPA network of EU development officials which facilitates informal dialogue on the critical issues and helps us work more closely with other EU member states. EPAs were discussed at the first meeting of Director-Generals of Trade and Development in the EU, and at the informal meeting of EU development ministers. We have been pleased to see a more pro-development approach reflected, for example in the European Commission Staff Paper, "Trade and Development Aspects of the EPA Negotiations" published in November 2005, as well as in the EU-Africa Strategic Partnership agreed at the European Council in December 2005.

The UK Government have continued to work closely with the ACP countries in order to understand their views and help support their development interests in the EU policy debate. For example, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for International Development, met with the chief ACP negotiators in

October 2005, where he listened to their concerns on the slow disbursements of development assistance for EPAs. Since then, the Government have agreed with several other EU member states and the European Commission that we will jointly work to co-ordinate our bilateral and multilateral development assistance for EPAs. DFID has been continually developing their EPA research programme to provide new evidence to inform the policy dialogue. This research is practical and policy-oriented and includes exploring how ACP countries can ensure that any liberalisation that they undergo is paced and designed in a way that works for them. DFID has also expanded its technical assistance programme to support the ACP and promote a more level playing field in the negotiations. For example, DFID is helping the Caribbean region to decide how to structure their offer to the EU on market access in goods. This support has been well-received by the ACP and we have received very positive feedback from the ACP negotiators.

During 2006, we will build on the progress achieved so far, and continually press for agreements that are in the interests of ACP countries' development, economic growth and poverty reduction. We will also push to ensure that the review of the negotiations provided for in the Cotonou Agreement is both comprehensive and fully involves the participation of the ACP. From a UK perspective, we believe that the review should firstly aim to take stock of progress across all the ACP regions on specific priority issues and confirm that each ACP regional group can make its own decisions on the timing, pace, sequencing, and product coverage of market opening. The review should also help steer the EPA process during 2007 towards the conclusion of the negotiations. We continue to develop our specific priorities based on the principles above, in response to discussions with the ACP.

We will also work to ensure there is more systematic assessment of whether development aspects are properly incorporated into EPAs, as well as to check that the impact of implementing the agreements does not cause harm to ACP countries in the longer term. To this end, we will support the establishment of an improved monitoring mechanism that will check progress against development objectives.

We will continue to work closely with the Commission, other EU member states and the ACP as the negotiations continue. Obviously the Commission is charged with representing the balance of EU opinion, but we will prioritise our objectives and advance clearly on our pro-development approach, ensuring that the UK voice carries the maximum weight.

Small Business Research Initiative

The Minister for Industry and the Regions (Alun Michael): On 13 December 2005 in response to a question from the hon. Member for Burnley (Ms Kitty Ussher), Official Report, column 1907W, I informed the House that the DTI's Small Business Service (SBS) would shortly be publishing the overall Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) performance figures for 2003–04 and 2004–05. I have today published these figures. A copy has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The overall SBRI target is that Government Departments will procure at least 2.5 per cent. of their extramural R&D from small firms, very good progress is being made. In 2004–05 of a proposed SBRI baseline of £2,532.9 million, £269.1 million (10.6 per cent.) went to small firms in the form of contracts.

Also on 12 December 2005, in reply to a question from the hon. Member for Burnley, *Official Report*, column 1675W, as to whether the guidelines issued to all Government Departments in implementing the mandatory SBRI would be placed in the Library, I said the guidelines were being revised and would be placed in the Library shortly, the updated guidelines have, today, been placed in the Libraries.

TRANSPORT

Firth of Forth Oil Spill Contingency Plan (Consultation)

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): I announced on 21 November that the Maritime and Coastguard Agency would co-ordinate a public consultation to assess the implications for relevant nature conservation sites in the Firth of Forth, of Forth Ports' revised and amplified oil spill contingency plan.

The consultation has been launched today, and will last for a period of 12 weeks. The consultation package comprises the submitted oil spill contingency plan material and supporting information from Forth Ports and, Scottish Natural Heritage. The consultation is limited to assessing the implications of the plan for the protected sites (in view of their conservation objectives) with a view to ascertaining whether the plan will adversely affect the integrity of the sites concerned.

Details on how to take part in the consultation are available on the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's website www.mcga.gov.uk.

Railways (Eastern Regional Planning Assessment)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Derek Twigg): Today the Department for Transport has published the first of its series of Regional Planning Assessments for the Railway (RPAs). This is the Eastern RPA, covering North and East London and the East of England Region.

Regional Planning Assessments are designed to inform the development of the government's strategy for the railway. They look at the challenges and options for development of the railway in each region over the next 20 years, in the wider context of forecast change in population, the economy and travel behaviour. An RPA does not commit the Government to specific proposals. Instead it sets out the Government's current thinking on how the railway might best be developed to allow wider planning objectives for a region to be met, and identifies the priorities for further development work.

RPAs are the key link between regional spatial planning (including preparation of regional transport strategies) and planning for the railway by both

Government and the rail industry. There will be 11 RPAs covering England and Wales.

The RPA clarifies the role of the railway in the region, its contribution to the economy and its place in the overall transport system, setting out where greater rail capability and capacity will be needed over the next 20 years, and the options route-by-route for responding to that need. In the shorter term (five years), the Government are committed to making the best use of existing capacity on the network by matching resources to demand.

Copies of the Eastern RPA have been placed in the House Library today.

Vehicle Registers (Release of Data)

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): I am today launching a full public consultation on the release of data from the DVLA and DVLNI vehicle registers. I have placed copies in the House Library and it is also available on the DfT website at: www.dft.gov.uk.

The Government take very seriously their responsibilities for protecting individuals' legitimate expectations of privacy and confidentiality. Information collected from citizens is therefore held securely and will only be released to third parties where there is a lawful basis for doing so. There is a broad consensus that some groups—such as the police—should have full access to details from the vehicle register. Over the past 40 years, a wide range of other groups have been granted access to details held on the register for what is judged to be "reasonable cause". However, the activities of a small number of groups who have been granted access has raised significant concern. And so we are today setting out how the current system operates, and the main options for the future. Consultation will last six weeks and we look forward to receiving responses by 31 March.

Specifically, the consultation seeks views on the groups that should have information from the vehicle register and the reasons for their having it; how we manage access to the register; and the audit regime for those who are granted access.

Following the consultation we will announce any changes that are to be made and if necessary, amend legislation accordingly. We intend to ensure that this current review produces a system that protects vehicle keepers from misuse of their information; ensures that those who do have a good case can get the data they need; balances the right to privacy of individuals whose data are held on the register with the rights of others to gain proper redress; is cost effective—in that the costs to all are proportionate to the benefits that the scheme delivers; and is right in principle and works in practice.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefits

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mrs. Anne McGuire): It has been brought to my attention that the reply I gave the hon. Member for Bury St. Edmunds, David Ruffley, on 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 248W, did not contain an adequate explanation of shortcomings in the data provided. I apologise for this oversight.

The figures in the last two columns of the table provided are not comparable over the time series given.

Due to an operational decision at the time of transfer, between 1993 and 1995, many existing Invalidity Benefit cases had their start-dates reset at the time of transfer to the Incapacity Benefit system, resulting in an underestimate of long-term IB cases prior to May 2000.

The information is in the tables.

Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance claimants by duration of claim each May 1997–99

	All Durations	*Up to 3 months*	*3 to 6 months*	*6 months to 1 year*	*1 to 2 years*	*Over 2 years*
May 1997	2,848,800	173,000	156,500	227,600	352,000	1,939,700
May 1998	2,795,200	154,500	132,300	223,300	357,300	1,927,800
May 1999	2,754,800	149,600	129,300	198,300	320,100	1,957,600

Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance claimants by duration of claim each May since 2000

	All Durations	*Up to 3 months*	*3 to 6 months*	*6 months to 1 year*	*1 to 2 years*	*2 to 5 years*	*Over 5 years*
May 2000	2,737,800	170,900	136,800	206,500	308,800	745,500	1,169,300
May 2001	2,808,600	170,500	143,900	214,700	311,500	704,000	1,264,000
May 2002	2,822,200	163,500	132,600	196,300	313,000	673,000	1,343,800
May 2003	2,829,700	158,700	133,600	195,800	286,700	662,600	1,392,300
May 2004	2,825,000	152,900	130,900	188,400	286,100	639,000	1,427,600
May 2005	2,784,000	138,200	118,400	180,600	271,500	614,900	1,460,400

Source

DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. Samples from 1997 to 1999 and Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data thereafter.

Notes

1. Figures for the years 1997 to 1999 have been produced using 5 per cent. data and have been rated up in accordance with the Great Britain WPLS 100 per cent. IB SDA totals.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. "Claimant" figures include all Incapacity Benefit (IB) and Severe Disability Allowance claimants, including IB credits only cases.

Financial Assistance Scheme

The Minister for Pensions Reform (Mr. Stephen Timms): The general notification period for the Financial Assistance Scheme ends on the 28 February. The notification period began on 1 September and is the period during which the scheme manager must be supplied with some basic details of potentially eligible pension schemes in order for them to be considered for qualification. The scheme manager may, at his discretion, accept notification of those details for any particular scheme after the 28 February.

Although FAS offers help to those pension schemes which began winding-up between 1 January 1997 and 5 April 2005 where the principal employer became insolvent on or before 28 February, extending the notification period for any particular scheme also extends the period in which an insolvency event can occur. This means it may be possible for some pension schemes which would not otherwise qualify for FAS or for compensation offered under the Pension Protection Fund to become qualifying schemes for FAS. I wish to make it clear that we may be able to extend help to some individual pension scheme members who have lost part or all of their occupational pensions but who may not have appeared eligible for help from either FAS or the PPF.

The Government will set a definitive cut-off date for insolvency events before the end of the calendar year. Until then the scheme manager will consider requests for an extension to the notification period from those pension schemes that undergo a qualifying insolvency event after the 28 February.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 30 January 2006

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal Welfare Bill

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what scientific advice her Department has received on whether to include cephalopods within the remit of the Animal Welfare Bill. [45980]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA officials have considered numerous reports on whether cephalopods experience pain and suffering, but the current scientific evidence is not clear-cut. Before making a decision, we intend to await the outcome of a European Union review of Directive 86/609/EEC relating to the use of cephalopods in scientific research.

If future research shows that cephalopods can in fact experience pain and suffering, there are powers within the Animal Welfare Bill to extend the definition of an animal to include such invertebrates.

Batteries

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of batteries were recycled in each European Union country in the last year for which figures are available. [43353]

Mr. Bradshaw: Information on percentage of batteries recycled in European Union countries is not readily available for all battery chemistries. Member states have not been required to provide this in the past. However, officials are in the process of acquiring this data.

Portable battery (small consumer type batteries—used in phones, clocks, watches, cameras) collection rates are available for 2002 for the following countries:

Collection rate as percentage of sales in 2002

Austria	44
Belgium	59
France	16
Germany	39
Netherlands	32
Sweden	55
Spain	14
UK	0.5

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department will spend on research into the disposal of batteries in each of the next three years. [40621]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) are currently undertaking work to determine the most cost effective way to meet the collection targets set out in the forthcoming EU Batteries Directive. They are aiming to look at ways of ensuring that this is done without incurring excessive costs for any of the businesses involved in the collection and recovery or disposal of batteries. The work is being funded by Defra's BREW (Business Resource Efficiency and Waste) programme with just under £600,000 spent in 2005. We are about to determine funding for the next three years as part of departmental business planning.

Beavers

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the *(a)* progress of the reintroduction of the beaver to Gloucestershire and *(b)* its compatibility with the British ecosystem. [43706]

Jim Knight: The Department is continuing to hold constructive discussions about the project in Gloucestershire which, to the Department's knowledge, is keeping the beavers in captivity and is therefore not a re-introduction project.

The re-introduction of beavers into the wild in England would require a licence under section 16(4) of the 1981 Act. As part of the application process for such a licence, an impact assessment would have to be undertaken to consider the possible consequences for the local environment (such as forestry, farming, fishing, public health), impacts on local biodiversity and also to consider issues such as liability or compensation payments.

Biodiesel (Environmental Impact)

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what environmental impact assessment has been carried out into the process that converts vegetable oils into biodiesel of diesel quality. [43911]

Mr. Morley: The most common process for converting vegetable oil into biodiesel is trans-esterification. This process is well known from years of use in the oleochemical sector. However, the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership will be looking at the specific environmental impacts of biodiesel processing as part of their work on developing draft environmental standards for biofuels. The impacts in terms of pollution to air, land and water are controlled by the Environment Agency. A pollution prevention control permit is required where biodiesel is being produced for own-use by six or more people or for commercial operations producing more than 5,000 litres a year. The processing of biodiesel from waste cooking oil and tallow is also subject to waste management controls. Various studies have assessed the greenhouse gas impact across the whole production process from raw material to finished biodiesel. UK-produced biodiesel typically gives greenhouse gas savings of around 55 per cent. compared to fossil diesel.

Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make

provision for those cattle that react following a skin test to have a blood test before they are required to be slaughtered. [46348]

Mr. Bradshaw: The current skin test for bovine tuberculosis is an effective test. It is the accepted standard laid down in both national and international legislation for determining the existence of the disease in a cattle herd. Under EU law, the gamma-interferon diagnostic blood test may be used to supplement the skin test. It is considered marginally more sensitive than the skin test, but less specific. This means that it results in a higher probability of false positives. EU legislation allows for the gamma-interferon test to be used to pick up cases missed by the skin test, but not to overrule it.

Preparations are being made for wider use of the gamma-interferon test (in prescribed circumstances). A Gamma-interferon Working Group has been established to prepare and deliver a policy for increased use of the test.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish the minutes of the discussions she has had with His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on bovine tuberculosis. [42253]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra Ministers have not held any recent discussions on bovine tuberculosis with His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the Government's policy is on badger culling to eliminate bovine TB. [46347]

Mr. Bradshaw: No decision has been made on culling badgers to control bovine tuberculosis (TB) in England. We are still consulting both on the principle and the method of a badger culling policy in areas of high TB incidence in cattle.

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what financial savings she has estimated will be made over *(a)* two, *(b)* five, *(c)* 10 and *(d)* 15 years from the planned closure of Centre for Ecology and Hydrology sites; and what the cost to her Department will be over each period of obtaining the services previously provided by those centres. [44150]

Mr. Morley: Defra would not make any savings over *(a)* two, *(b)* five, *(c)* 10 and *(d)* 15 years from the proposed closure of Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) sites. CEH is part of the Natural Environment Research Council, which receives grant in aid funding from the Department for Trade and Industry. As well as funding from NERC, CEH also obtains external funding for commissioned research.

Defra contracts research to CEH and the current contractual agreements would continue to be delivered.

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the *(a)* financial and *(b)* scientific impact of the proposed closure of each of the five centres for Ecology and Hydrology on research into (i) emergent diseases, (ii) invasive species, (iii) climate change, (iv) Avian influenza, (v) GMO release, (vi) sea level rises and (vii) monitoring biodiversity; and if she will make a statement. [44151]

Mr. Morley: The aim of the restructuring proposal for the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) is to ensure its long-term sustainability which would ensure continued capacity for environmental research in the UK into the future. The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) has confirmed that the scientific programmes for the restructured CEH would remain as:

Biodiversity
Water
Biogeochemistry
Climate Change
Sustainable Economies
Environmental Informatics

Defra contracts research to CEH and the current contractual agreements would continue to be delivered.

NERC is currently consulting widely with stakeholders and I am sure that NERC council will consider all evidence and views on the potential impact of the proposals.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect of the closure of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology on *(a)* the amount of independent research undertaken into climate change and *(b)* capabilities for the long-term collection and analysis of environmental and ecological data necessary to reveal the effects of climate change; and if she will make a statement. [44850]

Mr. Morley: The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) is only one of a large number of institutions undertaking climate change research for, and providing long-term environmental and ecological datasets to the Department. We believe that the restructuring that the Natural Environment Research Council has proposed for CEH would not reduce the amount of independent research into climate change nor reduce capabilities for the long-term collection and analysis of environmental and ecological data available to the Department.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact that proposed Centre for Ecology and Hydrology closures will have on the Government's ability to maintain and improve the environment; and if she will make a statement. [44851]

Mr. Morley: The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) is one of a large number of institutions undertaking scientific research for the Department. We believe that the restructuring that the Natural Environment Research Council has proposed for CEH would not reduce the amount of scientific research capability available to the Department. Consequently there should be no loss to our ability to be able to maintain or improve the environment.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the extent to which the proposed Centre for Ecology and Hydrology closures will affect the

capacity of the Government *(a)* to react to environmental issues across the geographic range of the United Kingdom and *(b)* to monitor biological diversity in different regions. [44861]

Mr. Morley: The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) is only one of a large number of institutions undertaking climate change research for, and providing long-term environmental and ecological datasets to the Department. We believe that the restructuring that the Natural Environment Research Council has proposed for CEH would not reduce our capacity to react to environmental issues across the geographic range of the United Kingdom nor affect our ability to monitor biological diversity in different regions.

Chewing Gum

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which councils have applied to join the Department's scheme tackling the problem of chewing gum litter. [45102]

Mr. Bradshaw: We do not yet know which local authorities have applied to take part in the campaign as the closing date for applications is 3 February.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons the Government decided not to introduce a tax levy on the price of chewing gum as part of its proposals for tackling chewing gum litter. [45103]

Mr. Bradshaw: Taxation is a matter for my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I am however, not convinced that a levy on gum, which would be paid by those who dispose of their gum correctly as well as those that do not, would be a fair way of funding the costs of cleaning discarded gum from the streets.

Correspondence

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan dated 27 August 2005 regarding his constituents Mr. and Mrs. W. Ritchie (DEFRA ref 223198). [46148]

Mr. Bradshaw: A reply was sent on 27 October 2005. I will arrange for you to receive a further copy.

Departmental Transport

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2376W, on departmental transport, if she will place a copy of the revised Travel Plan for her Department in the Library. [42544]

Jim Knight: A copy of the revised Travel Plan for the Defra building at Merrow, Guildford will be placed in the Library of the House.

Energy Efficiency Directive

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what targets she has set for energy efficiency gains under the Energy End-use Efficiency and Energy Services Directive by *(a)* 30 June 2007, *(b)* 30 June 2011 and *(c)* 30 June 2014. [46022]

Mr. Morley: The Energy End-use Efficiency and Energy Services Directive is expected to enter into force in May this year following publication in the Official Journal. Member states will then have two years to transpose the Directive's requirements into domestic legislation. The Directive provides for an indicative energy-savings target for every member states of 9 per cent. over the nine-year period from 1 January 2008. Within that period member states must set one intermediate target for the third year of application consistent with achievement of the overall target. The decision about what that intermediate target should be in the UK has not yet been made and will be determined during the implementation process.

Fisheries

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what formal approaches she has made to the Government of the Republic of Ireland about the effect on UK salmon stocks of drift netting off the coast of Ireland. [46541]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have discussed this issue with the Irish Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources on a number of occasions. I have urged on him the need to take steps to reduce the impact of the salmon driftnet fishery on salmon returning to English and Welsh rivers.

Flood Protection/Alleviation

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much has been spent *(a)* in England and *(b)* in the Ouse catchment area on flood protection and alleviation measures by (i) the Government and (ii) City of York council in each year since 1996–97. [43646]

Mr. Morley: Defra funds most of the Environment Agency's flood related work and grant aids individual capital improvement projects undertaken by local authorities and, in low-lying areas, internal drainage boards. The programme to manage risk is driven by these operating authorities; Defra does not build defences, nor direct the authorities on what specific projects to undertake.

Prior to April 2004 most of the Environment Agency's flood defence funding came from levies paid by local authorities. These levies have now largely been replaced by direct funding from Defra. Local authorities still pay some levies to the agency and also continue to fund other flood defence related work; such expenditure is supported by the local government funding mechanisms operated by what is now ODPM.

Table 1 shows total central and local government expenditure on flood protection and alleviation measures in *(a)* England and *(b)* the Ouse catchment area. This includes expenditure on flood defences, flood warning, research and development etc. but excludes expenditure on measures primarily to reduce risk of coastal erosion (which can also sometimes help reduce flood risk).

Table 1

£ million

	England		
	Defra grant and other expenditure	*Local authority expenditure*	*Ouse catchment*[1]
1996-97	54.6	196.1	0.26
1997-98	53.5	218.8	0.39
1998-99	42.3	221.9	0.49
1999-2000	41.6	236.1	0.59
2000-01	51.0	251.3	0.98
2001-02	69.8	269.4	1.59
2002-03	91.2	287.5	1.69
2003-04	93.4	309.2	3.97
2004-05	376.9	73.8	3.97

[1] Defined as Environment Agency expenditure within the Ouse catchment between the confluence with the River Ure and the confluence with the River Derwent. Defra grant to local authorities and or internal drainage boards within the Ouse catchment could not be determined without incurring disproportionate cost.

Table 2 shows revenue (i.e. non-capital) spend by City of York council on their own flood defence measures and on special levies to internal drainage boards. The Council's expenditure is limited to investment in the Ouse catchment area.

Table 2

£000

	Flood defence revenue expenditure	*IDB special levies*
1996-97	21	352
1997-98	11	345
1998-99	307	353
1999-2000	50	361
2000-01	73	391
2001-02	106	453
2002-03	81	480
2003-04	98	484
2004-05	114	504

Notes

Data for 2003-04 and 2004-05 were collected on a Financial Reporting Standard 17 (FRS17) basis. Figures before this were collected on a non-FRS17 basis so are not directly comparable to the 2003-04 and 2004-05 data.

Source

ODPM Revenue Outturn (RO) forms—RO4 RO5 data.

Racehorses

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will commission research on the animal welfare implications of whipping race horses. [45790]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has no plans to commission a survey on the animal welfare implications of whipping racehorses.

Landfill

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on her Department's landfill policy. [41867]

Mr. Bradshaw: Landfills are a major source of emissions of methane—a powerful greenhouse gas—and also a potential pollution hazard requiring careful management. For this reason landfill lies at the bottom of the waste hierarchy, and thus represents the least favourable management route for most wastes. The Government has targets under the EU Landfill Directive to reduce the amount of biodegradable municipal waste going to landfill to 75 per cent. of 1995 figures by 2010 and to 35 per cent. by 2020. The Government seeks to discourage all landfill—including that of commercial waste—through the landfill tax escalator. Landfill remains, however, the best management route for certain wastes in certain circumstances and, indeed, the only available option for some others (such as heavy sludges from industrial processes).

The Government is currently undertaking a review of its wider waste strategy, for which the consultation document will be published shortly.

Nuclear Waste

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how the Government plan to dispose of the nuclear waste stored in the UK; and if she will make a statement. [46293]

Mr. Morley: Under the Managing Radioactive Waste Safely Programme, jointly sponsored by UK Government and the devolved Administrations, the independent Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRAWM) has been established to advise on the best option, or combination of options, for the safe long-term management of the UK's higher activity radioactive waste. The committee is due to deliver its recommendation in July 2006. Low level radioactive waste is already disposed of in various ways, most notably to the national disposal facility close to the village of Drigg in Cumbria.

Pesticides

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action her Department is taking to help stop foreign farm workers from being exposed to dangerous pesticides. [44979]

Mr. Morley: UK pesticide and health and safety legislation provide a high degree of protection to all those, irrespective of their origin, whose work in the UK requires them to handle or use pesticides. Specific guidance is given in the Statutory Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products.

In addition a number of other schemes have been established to protect the health and safety of migrant workers. These include the recently revised Seasonal Workers' Scheme (SAWS) operated by the Home Office and the establishment of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA) and its supporting legislation. The GLA will look specifically at health and safety issues as part of their inspection of labour providers and any breaches of Health and Safety legislation will be referred to the relevant body.

National Poultry Register

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government are taking to ensure that poultry owners register their flocks on the national poultry register. [43552]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government are working closely with a wide range of interested parties to promote the GB poultry register and to make poultry keepers aware of the requirements of the Avian Influenza (Preventive Measures) (No 2) Regulations 2005. Over 40,000 leaflets have been distributed to poultry keepers and advertisements have been placed in a number of poultry and countryside magazines. DEFRA has also distributed posters to veterinary surgeries, MPs, livestock markets and auctioneers, and to Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) staff. In addition, state veterinary service colleagues, in the course of their day to day duties, are reminding poultry keepers of their obligation to register.

As we approach the 28 February deadline, we will consider what further action needs to be taken; for example, proactive visits to premises to remind poultry keepers of their obligations.

Pre-movement Testing

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the veterinary profession on its capacity to undertake large-scale pre-movement testing. [45841]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 26 January 2006]*: The Department has had a number of discussions with various stakeholders on this issue. The veterinary profession was represented on the independently chaired Pre-Movement Testing Stakeholder Group and the issue of veterinary capacity was given careful consideration. Pre-movement testing will be introduced in two phases as a result of recommendations made by the Group.

Defra officials also met with the British Veterinary Association (BVA) twice during the development of policy on pre-movement testing. The BVA did not express any concern about veterinary capacity to deliver pre-movement testing.

Reusable Products

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether it is her policy to promote reusable products over single-use disposable products. [40971]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government has no such policy overall, but the reuse of suitable products is strongly encouraged.

The Environment Agency has carried out work to compare the lifecycle impacts of disposable and reusable nappies.

Tail Docking

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the inclusion of a ban on dog tail docking in the Animal Welfare Bill. [44961]

Mr. Bradshaw: The law currently permits the docking of dogs' tails by veterinary surgeons. Although the Government is inclined to support the status quo, we appreciate there are genuine views held on both sides of the debate and believe that the status of tail docking should be for Parliament to decide.

The views expressed during the Second Reading and in the Standing Committee considering the Animal Welfare Bill were strongly in favour of a complete ban on the docking of dogs' tails, while some members argued for an exemption for working dogs. As a result, we are currently considering how best we can provide all MPs with the opportunity to express a view as the Bill proceeds through the House.

TRACES

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the EU-wide computer system, TRACES, records *(a)* which species are imported, *(b)* the country of origin of imported species, *(c)* whether imported animals and birds are captive-bred or wild-caught and *(d)* the level of mortality among imported animals and birds. [45985]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 26 January 2006]*: TRACES records which species are imported and the country they are imported from. It does not distinguish between captive-bred or wild-caught birds, nor does it show the level of mortality among imported animals and birds.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether information gathered by the EU-wide computer system, TRACES, is available to the public in the UK. [45986]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 26 January 2006]*: The information gathered by TRACES is only directly available to Member States' Competent Authorities and Official Veterinarians. Registered traders have the option of using the system to request export certification.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she is making to other EU member states about the merits of an improved system to monitor imports of animals and their products into the European Union. [45987]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 26 January 2006]*: In 2004 a computerised system to record imports of animals and animal products into the European Union, known as TRACES, was introduced by the European Commission. Officials from DEFRA are closely involved in the continued development of the system. The UK is represented at meetings with the Commission and other member states to discuss issues associated with the effective operation of the system.

Waste Paper

Stephen Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's policy is on minimising waste paper within the Department. [46683]

Mr. Bradshaw: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1954W.

Wild Bird Imports

Ms Angela C. Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the European Commission on its progress in reviewing policy on importing wild birds into the European Union. [45226]

Mr. Bradshaw: All imports of live birds and their products, from countries which have notified Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), have been banned. In addition, the EU has agreed a temporary ban, now extended to 31 May 2006, on the imports of all wild birds from any other countries. Additional restrictions on captive pet birds coming in with their owners have also been imposed.

The Government are considering the conclusions of the Dimmock report (the Independent Review of Avian Quarantine) which said that imports of captive birds should be permitted as a ban might divert imports to illegal, un-quarantined, channels which would pose a greater risk. Discussions are continuing with stakeholders and the European Commission to find a longer-term solution to the problems associated with the importation of wild birds.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Prosecutions (Northern Ireland)

David Simpson: To ask the Solicitor-General how many prosecutions in Northern Ireland have been abandoned for national security reasons in each of the last 30 years, broken down by charge. [46463]

The Solicitor-General: National security is only one of a number of factors that may have contributed to a decision to discontinue a prosecution in the public interest. To provide this information would require the individual examination of the file of every case discontinued in the public interest. The information requested is not centrally recorded and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Christmas Cards

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will estimate the cost to his Department of sending Christmas cards in 2005. [46483]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) produced its own 'Season's Greetings' in 2005 at a cost of £2,102.09 for 7,000 copies. As individual teams from across DFID were responsible for mailing out cards to stakeholders and contacts, to obtain information relating to postage charges would incur a disproportionate cost.

Ethiopia

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on UK aid to Ethiopia. [46527]

Hilary Benn: I refer the hon. Member for Boston and Skegness to the statement I made on 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 49WS.

Global Fund

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding the UK Government has allocated for the Global Fund for each of the next five years. [46451]

Mr. Thomas: The UK has committed £359 million to the Global Fund for the period 2002 to 2008. Our contribution in 2005 was £51 million, which brings our total contribution to date to £159 million.

Over the next two years we have pledged to provide £100 million to the Global Fund for 2006 and £100 million for 2007 to support the Fund's estimated resource needs of US$7 billion for this period. The two-year total of £200 million represents 8.4 per cent. of the total pledged to date (ie. £3.4 billion) and 5.1 per cent. of the US$7 billion. This is above our Gross National Income (GNI) fair share and is consistent with our past support. The UK is currently the fourth largest donor for the period 2006–07; after France, the US and Japan, and the second largest in the EU.

Good Governance

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to promote good governance in the developing world; and if he will make a statement. [45643]

Mr. Thomas: Good governance is at the core of DFID's work to reduce poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This recognises that developing and transitional states' ability to achieve the MDGs and eliminate poverty will depend greatly on the quality of their governance.

DFID encourages improved governance and assists with governance reforms through specific programme activities, aid allocations and use of different ways of delivering aid. DFID's work supports seven broad areas: political systems that extend opportunities to poor people; economic management that brings stability and facilitates investment; delivery of policies that benefit the poor; raising revenue and delivering public services; maintenance of safety security and justice; national security; and accountability and tackling corruption. Governance reforms need to be prioritised, achievable and appropriate to context.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Department of International Development will be speaking about governance and its role in eliminating poverty on February 2nd at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. I will ensure a copy of his speech is sent to the hon. Member for Guildford (Anne Milton).

Madagascar

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what discussions he has had with Water Aid on the impact of its work of the closure of the British embassy in Madagascar; and if he will make a statement; [45574]

(2) what assessment he has made of the impact of the closure of the British embassy on the sustainable development of Madagascar. [45611]

Hilary Benn: I have had no discussions with Water Aid on the impact of the closure of the British embassy in Madagascar on its work. British interests in Madagascar are currently represented by an Honorary Consul. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office are in the process of accrediting the British high commissioner in Port Louis, Mauritius, as non-resident ambassador to Madagascar.

As DFID does not have a bilateral development programme with Madagascar the closure of the embassy is unlikely to have any effect on the sustainable development of the country.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department intends to take to support Madagascar's programme of development and good governance. [45609]

Hilary Benn: DFID does not have a bilateral development programme with Madagascar, but we provide significant support through our share of European Union and multilateral agencies' development programmes. In 2003 (the latest figures we have), the UK's imputed share of multilateral aid going to Madagascar was £33.9 million, primarily through assistance from the World Bank, European Commission and United Nations agencies.

Pension Costs

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body; (ii) Executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005-06. [40002]

Mr. Thomas: Following the response I gave to the hon. Member on 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1962W; I now wish to submit the following answer.

The question asked about the cost of pension contributions incurred by my department, my response stated that my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for the Department for International Development was not responsible for any non-departmental government bodies, executive agencies or other public body, this is factually incorrect; my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State is responsible for the following non departmental public bodies:

Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK

Crown Agents Holding and Realisation Board

Overseas Service Pensions Scheme Advisory Board

There are however, no pension contribution costs incurred in respect of these bodies.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which British Government aid programmes were conducted through the Government of Zimbabwe between 1997 and 2003; and what their total value was. [42471]

Hilary Benn: Between 1997 and 2003 DFID supported some 60 projects in Zimbabwe which involved the Government and public sector organisations, with a total spend of £145 million. These projects ranged from a substantial sexual health project with a commitment of £9 million to initiatives on anti-corruption involving grants as little as £10,000. Sectors included health, education, water and sanitation, agriculture, forestry, livestock, wildlife and tourism, infrastructure, private sector development, civil society, justice, public reform, local government and public finance.

DFID suspended development assistance to the Government of Zimbabwe in 2002, in protest of the continuing disregard for democratic principles and mismanagement of the economy by the Government of Zimbabwe. Since that time, DFID has supported the international response to the humanitarian and HIV/AIDS crisis in Zimbabwe, through funding to United Nations agencies and non-governmental organisations, but has provided no funding to the Government of Zimbabwe.

TRANSPORT

A1 (Roundabout Removal)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects work to begin on the roundabout removal on the A1 at *(a)* Apleyhead and *(b)* Blyth. [45744]

Dr. Ladyman: The anticipated start dates for works for the Apleyhead and Blyth junctions subject to the availability of funds and the satisfactory completion of the appropriate statutory procedures are:

A1/A614 Blyth junction improvement – June 2006

A1/A57/A614 Apleyhead junction improvement – July 2006.

A11 (Dualling)

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to make an announcement on the dualling of the A11 between Fiveways Roundabout and Thetford; and if he will make a statement. [45956]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 26 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 384W.

A27

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the *(a)* locations and *(b)* reported consequences of injury crashes on (i) the eastbound and (ii) the westbound sections of the A27 west of Worthing between the 40 mph sign and the Hammerpot junction in each of the last three years. [45396]

Dr. Ladyman: The following table lists the reported consequences of the recorded injury accidents on this stretch of road.

	East-West				West-East				
	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total	Total
2002	0	3	4	7	0	1	3	4	11
2003	0	4	1	5	1	0	5	6	11
2004	1	0	6	7	0	1	5	6	13
2005[1]	0	3	2	5	0	0	2	2	7
Total				24				18	42

[1] On this stretch of road up until end of October 2005 where information has been validated.

A map detailing locations of accidents from January 2002 to October 2005 on the A27 west of Worthing to the Hammerpot junction, a distance of approximately 4.5 km, has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

A3 (Hindhead)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will accept the recommendation of the South East of England Regional Assembly Regional Transport Board's recommendation with regard to the A3 at Hindhead; and if he will make a statement. [46379]

Dr. Ladyman: We expect to respond to the South East Region's advice on its priorities for major transport schemes, including improvement of the A3 at Hindhead, during the spring.

Airlines (Tax Treatment)

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the revenue from fuel tax that would have been received in each of the last three years by the Government if airlines had been subject to the same tax treatment as public transport bus companies. [44234]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

A discussion paper published jointly by HM Treasury and the Department for Transport in March 2003, entitled 'Aviation and the Environment: using economic instruments', considered the role of economic instruments and the environmental costs of aviation. This was also considered in 'Air Transport White Paper. The Future of Air Transport', published on 16 December 2003 and in chapter 5 of 'Aviation and Global Warming', published by the Department for Transport on 10 February 2004.

The Air Transport White Paper set out the conclusions of the Government's analysis, including our view that aviation should be brought within the ED emissions trading scheme by 2008, as the most effective way of tackling the climate change impact. Along with other measures to tackle local environmental impacts, this will help to ensure that the air transport sector meets its environmental costs.

Under the terms of the Chicago convention, it is illegal to tax fuel for international flights, and so the Government have not undertaken an analysis of the potential revenue implications that would result from taxation of fuel used on international flights. Also, figures for aviation turbine fuel consumption for specific flight services are not collected. It is therefore not possible to estimate the potential revenue effect of applying the same tax treatment to the domestic aviation industry as to public transport bus companies. The Government anyway does not accept such direct comparisons as valid as they assume no change in demand or to the working practices of the aviation industry.

Airports

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which airports in the UK do not have airbridge facilities; and what steps he is taking to reduce the number of such airports. [44790]

Ms Buck *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* The CAA has advised that, of the 143 UK aerodromes currently licensed by the CAA, 12 have airbridge facilities.

The provision of airbridges is not a licensing issue. It is a matter for each airport operator itself to determine whether to invest in this equipment.

The 12 airports with airbridge facilities are:

Cardiff,
Newcastle,
Heathrow,
Gatwick,
Stansted,
Manchester,
Birmingham,
Edinburgh,
Glasgow,
Aberdeen,
Belfast International,
Leeds Bradford.

Borough Market Site

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations his Department has made to the planning inquiry for the Borough market site. [45766]

Dr. Ladyman: None. As the Secretary of State will be jointly responsible with the Deputy Prime Minister for determining the various applications relating to Network Rail's Thameslink project, the Department wishes to avoid prejudicing these decisions. We presently await the Inspector's report.

Bus Services

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many bus services were operated from *(a)* York, *(b)* Selby and *(c)* Tadcaster (i) in May 1997 and (ii) on the most recent date for which figures are available. [46814]

Dr. Ladyman: The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) do not hold data which identifies the start and finish points of registered local bus services for 1997.

The current figures are:

	Number
York	81
Selby	24
Tadcaster	14

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many bus services have been withdrawn in South Manchester since 1997. [44390]

Ms Buck: The data kept by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency on registered bus services does not differentiate between South Manchester and the rest of the North Western Traffic Area.

The following table represents the number of bus services cancelled in the North West Traffic Area from 1 April 1998. Information prior to this date could not be recovered without disproportionate cost.

Financial year	*Cancellations*
1998–99	790
1999–2000	842
2000–01	1,048
2001–02	666
2002–03	578
2003–04	584
2004–05	589

An application which is cancelled is one which has been accepted by the Traffic commissioner, commenced running and at a later date the operator has applied to cease operating.

Cabin Air Supply

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will ask the Civil Aviation Authority to investigate organophosphate contamination of cabin air supply on commercial aircraft; and if he will make a statement. [46169]

Ms Buck: The House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology did an investigation, which reported in November 2000 and said:

"The absence of confirmed cases of tri-ortho-cresyl phosphate (TOCP) poisoning from cabin air and the very low levels of TOCP that would be found in even in the highly unlikely worst case of contamination from oil leaking into the air supply lead us to conclude that the concerns about significant risk to the health of airline passengers and crew are not substantiated."

In 2004 the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) published research into fume events by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory Porton Down and the (then) Defence Evaluation and Research Agency. That concluded that

'no single component or set of components can be identified which at conceivable concentrations would definitely cause the symptoms reported in cabin air quality incidents'.

But acids were found which could act as irritants, and as a result CAA brought in specific troubleshooting and maintenance actions to minimise the potential for fume events.

The inter-departmental Aviation Health Working Group has recently arranged for the independent Committee on Toxicity (COT) to review further evidence which the British Airline Pilots Association (BALPA) has collected. This process is under way and should help us to specify any further research needs in an area where public funds have already been invested without finding a link between cabin air and long-term health problems.

Meanwhile, some research is starting in the USA funded by the Federal Aviation Administration. Government officials are in touch with the research team to monitor progress. In principle, we are interested to join in international research when we have a clearer idea of the needs, and we shall review our position on the American project after the COT has held a formal meeting in public in the spring.

Car Insurance

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many prosecutions have resulted from the campaign to target motorists driving without insurance. [46156]

Dr. Ladyman: The latest figures available are for the year 2003 when there were 320,937 convictions for uninsured driving.

No further figures are yet available for the year 2004, nor for the period since June 2005 when we began the introduction of new measures to tackle uninsured driving.

Congestion (West Midlands)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish a league table to highlight the most congested roads in the West Midlands. [46312]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department for Transport will shortly be publishing journey time reliability data for individual roads on the strategic road network in England operated by the Highways Agency. These data will form the baseline for the new public service agreement target for the Highways Agency network. Performance on a sample of 25 of the most important roads in the West Midlands will be monitored as part of the Public Service Agreement relating to movements on a sample of routes in the ten largest urban areas in England. These data will not be presented in the form of a league table.

Cycling Accidents

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many children under the age of 16 years have *(a)* died and *(b)* received serious head injuries as a result of a cycling accident in each of the past 10 years. [45887]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of child pedal cyclists (aged 0–15) who were killed or seriously injured as a result of personal injury road accidents between 1995 to 2004 (the latest year for which figures are available), is given in table.

Child pedal cyclists (aged 0–15) killed or seriously injured in personal injury road accidents, 1994 to 2004

Year of accident	Fatalities[1]	Seriously injured
1995	46	1,201
1996	54	1,177
1997	33	983
1998	32	883
1999	36	914
2000	27	731
2001	25	649
2002	22	572
2003	18	577
2004	25	552

[1] Deaths within 30 days of the accident

Information on the child pedal cyclists (aged 0–15) who received serious head injuries as a result of a cycling accident is not available.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to reduce the number of children who are killed or receive a serious head injury as a result of cycling accidents. [45891]

Dr. Ladyman: Our policy is to persuade cyclists to protect themselves by wearing helmets. We concentrate our paid publicity on teenage and child cyclists. The Department developed the 'Cycle Sense' safety campaign encouraging teenagers to wear cycle helmets, other safety issues are also addressed. The campaign consisted of a new website, posters and a supporting TV filler film. A new campaign is planned for summer 2006. Aimed at younger children, the 'Cycle Smart' campaign for seven to 10-year-olds is a series of posters and a comic that use Disney characters to communicate simple cycle safety messages, including helmet wearing. The latest edition was released in summer 2003 and we launched a new website, in partnership with Disney, on 18 March 2005. A new campaign is also planned for later this year.

In addition, the current version of the highway code includes a section for drivers on road users requiring extra care, including cyclists. We strongly advise parents to encourage their children to take cycle training, and not to let them out on the roads until they are clearly competent to handle their cycles safely. We have also established a new national standard for cycle training with more than 20 road safety bodies.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from buildings occupied by his Department in the past 12 months. [43442]

Ms Buck: Items reported as stolen, between 1 January 2005 and 31 December 2005, which have a value of more than £100 are listed below:

£

Item	Value
8 flat screen computer monitors	3,081
2 tool kits and cases	200
1 overhead projector	300
Computer parts removed from desks	190
7 laptop computers	8,600
1 printer	170
1 desktop computer	1,000
1 personal organiser	300

All buildings have appropriate security measures in place including both a manned presence at some locations or remote monitoring and response arrangements elsewhere. Incidents are reviewed and action taken to risk assess the need for improved security in that location in accordance with Government guidelines. The majority of incidents have also been reported to the police.

Driving Instructors

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what are the results of his Department's review of the regulatory arrangements for approved driving instructors. [45604]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department's Road Safety Strategy, "Tomorrow's Roads—Safer for Everyone", commits the Government to raising the standard of tuition offered by driving instructors. The Driving Standards Agency has commissioned three pieces of independent research into occupational standards for driving instructors and their continuing professional development. This can be viewed on the Agency's website. The Agency is currently engaged in discussion with the industry's consultative groups on how best to take these matters forward.

DVLA (Data Protection)

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of whether the making available to third parties against payment by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency of data relating to the owners of vehicles is consistent with the Data Protection Act 1998; and if he will make a statement. [46274]

Dr. Ladyman: The Data Protection Act exempts from its non-disclosure provisions the release of information where the law allows it. Regulation 27 of the Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 2002, permits the release of information from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's vehicle register to the police, to local authorities and to those who can demonstrate 'reasonable cause' for receiving the information. 'Reasonable cause'' is not defined in legislation and requests are considered on their merits.

DVLA works closely with the Information Commissioner to ensure that disclosure is fair and lawful. The Information Commissioner has published guidance on his website.

I recently announced a review of these regulations and this will commence shortly.

Gatwick Express

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the future of the Gatwick Express. [44808]

Derek Twigg: Proposals relating to Gatwick Express will be made in the context of the Brighton Main Line Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS). An announcement about publication of the RUS will be made shortly.

Green Travel Plans

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what national target he has set for the number of *(a)* employers and *(b)* public sector employers implementing the Green Travel Plans by 2009. [45529]

Ms Buck: We have put in place a requirement in the planning system that significant new developments, both for the public and private sectors, should have a staff travel plan. However, the implementation of travel plans by employers for existing sites is voluntary. We have not therefore set a national target for their introduction. Instead, we promote the business case and other benefits of travel plans through our publications, conferences and other events.

Under the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate, Government Departments were mandated to implement sustainable travel targets to reduce CO_2 emissions through a range of measures. These included reducing both road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions by at least 10 per cent. and single occupancy car commuting to the workplace by 5 per cent. by 2006, against a baseline year of 2002–03. The Framework is currently being reviewed in order to deliver a step change in the way the Government manages its land and buildings sustainably.

Heathrow (Sustainable Development)

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment has been made of the air pollution impact of the introduction of mixed mode at Heathrow in advance of the publication of the report from the project for the sustainable development of Heathrow. [46297]

Ms Buck: Work is still in hand to develop proposals for the possible introduction of mixed mode at Heathrow, prior to consultation. Air quality impacts will be assessed drawing on the outcome of the work of the air quality technical panels, whose report is currently being finalised.

Highway Code

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the consultation on the next update of the Highway Code will begin. [45603]

Dr. Ladyman: The consultation on the next update of the Highway Code will begin in the next few weeks.

Housing Development (Mid-Sussex)

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much is being allocated from the Community Infrastructure Fund to support transport infrastructure related to planned housing development in mid-Sussex. [46686]

Ms Buck: None. The Community Infrastructure Fund was established to support transport infrastructure costs that enable faster housing development in the four growth areas announced in the 'Sustainable Communities Plan' (Thames Gateway, Milton Keynes South Midlands, London Stansted Cambridge Peterborough and Ashford).

Humber Bridge

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment of the purpose the Humber Bridge would serve was made in advance of its construction. [45338]

Dr. Ladyman: The construction of the Humber Bridge was enabled by legislation—the Humber Bridge Act 1959 as amended by the Humber Bridge Act 1971—promoted by a consortium of Humberside local authorities.

It was for those authorities to assess the role the Bridge would serve.

A report entitled 'Humberside: A Feasibility Study' was produced by the Central Unit for Environmental Planning in 1969 (published for the then Department of Economic Affairs). This report considered the likely need for major development in the Humberside area in the 1980s—based on estimates of population growth in the UK—and concluded that there was a case for a Humber Bridge being built by 1976 to facilitate improvements to Humberside's economy and underwrite the area's value for major development.

Lighthouse Keepers

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many lighthouse keepers there are in Great Britain. [45967]

Dr. Ladyman: None. The automation of all lighthouses over the last 30 years has made the role of the lighthouse keeper defunct. The lights are monitored by the General Lighthouse Authorities' operation centres in Harwich and Edinburgh and require little or no maintenance outside the annual maintenance regime.

London Airports

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the airports within a 100 mile radius of London that take commercial air traffic; in each case what the existing weekly capacity for flights is; and to what percentage of that capacity each airport is operating in relation to *(a)* wide bodied jets, *(b)* commercial passenger aeroplanes and *(c)* executive and personal jets. [45661]

Ms Buck: This information is not held centrally in the form requested. However, information on aircraft movements at those airports is available from the Civil

Aviation Authority website at: http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/80/airport_data/2004AnnualTable_03_1_Aircraft_Movements_2004.pdf

M42

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many vehicles on average use the (*a*) northbound and (*b*) southbound sections of the M42 between (i) junction 5 and junction 6, (ii) junction 6 and junction 7, (iii) junction 7 and junction 8 and (iv) junction 8 and junction 9 each day. [46313]

Dr. Ladyman: The average daily traffic flows between the specified junctions of M42 are as follows. The figures are taken from data collected in 2005:

Junctions 5–6	
Northbound	65,000
Southbound	66,900
Junctions 6–7	
Northbound	63,500
Southbound	68,400
Junctions 7–8	
Southbound	49,600
Junctions 8–9	
Southbound	44,400

Similar data is not currently available for M42 northbound between Junction 7 and 9. A traffic monitoring facility for this stretch of road is in the process of being commissioned.

National Safety Camera Programme

Mr. Walter: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the locations identified by the National Safety Camera Programme where casualties on roads with speed cameras have increased; and what steps he is taking to reduce the casualty rates in these locations. [45607]

Dr. Ladyman: Details of all the cameras in England and Wales operating in the National Safety Camera Programme as at 31 March 2004, including those where casualties had increased, were published in June 2004 alongside the three-year evaluation of the National Safety Camera Programme. This information is on the Department's website.

It should be recognised that at any individual location there is some element of chance variation in the number of serious accidents between one year and the next, so it would be wrong to conclude automatically that a camera is not effective. However, the Handbook of Rules and Guidance for the National Safety Camera Programme for England and Wales for 2005–06 published in November 2004, requires partnerships to, at least annually, review the effectiveness of existing camera sites and to specifically consider sites where there appears to be a continuing problem of high numbers of collisions, notwithstanding the use of cameras, to assess whether further or different action should be taken.

In these instances partnerships should consider what alternative cost-effective engineering or other solutions should be implemented to tackle the problem instead of, or in addition to, the cameras. Solutions might include greater speed enforcement, road improvements, traffic calming or road safety education and information measures. Operational cases for 2005–06 indicated that as a result some 104 camera sites were being stood down.

An updated Handbook of Rules and Guidance for the National Safety Camera Programme for 2006–07 has today been published on the Department's website. A copy has been placed in the Library of the House. This requires partnerships to keep existing sites under review.

Office of Rail Regulation

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people are employed by the Office of Rail Regulation. [44778]

Derek Twigg: As at Monday 16 January 2006, the Office of Rail Regulation employed 135 people.

Port of London Authority (Consultation) Harbour Revision Order

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reasons hon. Members representing constituencies with riparian areas were not consulted prior to the making of the Port of London Authority (Consultation) Harbour Revision Order 2005; and if he will make a statement. [43154]

Dr. Ladyman: In line with statutory requirements applications for Harbour Revision Orders are advertised in the *London Gazette* and local newspapers. It is not current practice to inform MPs separately about Harbour Revision Orders.

Private Aircraft

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many privately operated aircraft have landed in airports in the UK in each of the last five years; and what information is collected on the operators of private aircraft. [45977]

Ms Buck: The CAA publishes aircraft movement data compiled from returns by UK airports in their Annual UK Airport Statistics report. The number of privately operated movements, which have landed at or taken off from UK airports, is shown as follows.

	Total number of private movements (for all UK reporting airports)
2004	221,096
2003	231,722
2002	212,982
2001	247,361

These figures exclude private movements operated by aero-club members for instruction or pleasure, on which the CAA also collects data. Data for 2005 are not yet available.

As private flights are not required to seek the prior permission of a State to overfly, land or make non-traffic stops the Department does not hold information for these flights. However, the individual airports, as well as air traffic management providers (NATS Ltd. and Eurocontrol), do keep records of aircraft movements for their own purposes.

Rail Franchises (Value for Money)

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1150W, on train operating companies, what the benefits are whose delivery is monitored and enforced through continuous management of franchise contracts with train operating companies. [39377]

Derek Twigg: Franchise contracts place a wide variety of obligations on train operators associated with the provision of franchised services. In many cases they also prescribe penalties for non-compliance. Franchise contracts are managed and monitored to ensure that these obligations are delivered and that subsidy, premium payments and liabilities are managed in the interests of the taxpayer.

Road and Public Safety

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which organisation is responsible for road and public safety matters between the start of a new development and the date when roads are adopted by the local highways authority. [44198]

Dr. Ladyman: Where there is a new development such as a housing estate or a business park which provides for public access the responsibility for road and public safety matters principally lies with the owner of the site. This will usually be the developer until the properties are sold after which the owners of the properties fronting the road will become responsible for maintaining it until it is adopted as a publicly maintainable highway by the relevant highway authority. While the road remains unadopted, the relevant street works authority can serve a notice requiring the owners of premises fronting the street to execute such works to obviate danger to traffic using it as may be specified in the notice within a prescribed time. Should the works not be carried out in the required timescale the street works authority may carry out the works itself and recover the costs from the owners of the relevant properties.

In addition, the local traffic authority has a duty to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic, including pedestrians. This applies to all highways and roads to which the public has access, irrespective of whether or not the road has been adopted as a public highway.

The relevant police authority will also have a responsibility for safety matters in its area.

Where the new development is a new highway intended for use by the public and does not impinge on an existing highway the highway authority promoting the new highway and which makes the orders in relation to the construction of the new highway is the authority responsible for road and public safety matters during the construction stage as well as after adoption of the road as a public highway.

When the new development is an improvement to an existing highway, depending upon the circumstances, either the highway authority promoting the improvement to the highway or the traffic authority which regulates the use of the existing highway is the authority responsible for road and public safety matters. Usually the relevant highway authority and the relevant traffic authority are the same authority.

Who the relevant highway authority or the relevant traffic authority is will depend upon the location of the highway development, the classification of the highway (i.e. local road, trunk road or special road) and the nature of the development.

Road Gritting

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance the Government issues to local authorities on the gritting of roads during cold weather; and if he will *(a)* place a copy in the Library and *(b)* provide a weblink to the documents. [46324]

Ms Buck: The Government strongly recommend that local authorities carry out winter maintenance, including gritting, in accordance with Section 13 of "Well-maintained Highways, Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management" published by the UK Roads Liaison Group in July 2005. A copy of this is in the Library, and it is also available electronically at www.ukroadsliaisongroup.org

Road Improvements (Stonehenge)

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials last met representatives of the National Trust to discuss road improvements at Stonehenge; and if he will make a statement. [46852]

Dr. Ladyman: There have been no recent meetings of Department for Transport Ministers with the National Trust at which road improvements at Stonehenge have been discussed.

An official from the Highways Agency and representatives from the National Trust attended the last meeting of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site Committee on 29 November 2005 at which progress with the A303 Stonehenge Review was discussed.

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost was to *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Highways Agency, to the end of July 2005, of preparatory work on the A303 Stonehenge improvement scheme. [45816]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency has spent £14.1 million on preparatory work with its suppliers since awarding the contract for the Stonehenge improvement scheme in March 2002 up until end-March 2005.

This figure does not include HA salary and other costs which would be difficult to apportion. Similarly, it is not possible to apportion DfT salary and other costs on developing the scheme.

Road Pricing Framework Division

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the scope and remit is of the Road Pricing Framework Division within his Department; how many persons *(a)* are and *(b)* are planned to be employed therein; and if he will make a statement. [46393]

Dr. Ladyman: The Road Pricing Framework Division is a new division established within the Department for Transport's Roads, Regional and Local Transport Group in January 2006.

The purpose of the division is to take forward work on the technical systems and standards that will need to be developed to support the piloting of road pricing.

It is planned that the division will employ up to 13 full-time equivalent members of staff. Seven posts have already been filled.

Road Safety (Barnsley/Doncaster)

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many fatalities there have been in *(a)* Barnsley and *(b)* Doncaster in each of the last 10 years as a consequence of road traffic accidents. [46554]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of fatalities in personal injury road accidents in the Metropolitan Districts of Barnsley and Doncaster between 1995 and 2004 (the last year for which figures are available) are shown in the table.

Fatalities[1] in Barnsley and Doncaster districts: 1995–2004.

	Barnsley	*Doncaster*
1995	18	21
1996	11	20
1997	11	13
1998	11	10
1999	4	23
2000	14	15
2001	14	15
2002	15	11
2003	11	18
2004	14	16

[1] Deaths within 30 days of the accident.

Road Transport Fuel Obligation

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated into the design of a certification scheme for the sustainability of the sources of fuel to be accepted within the proposed Road Transport Fuel Obligation. [46192]

Dr. Ladyman: We have made clear from the outset that we want the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation to promote the use of the most environmentally beneficial forms of biofuel. We are discussing with stakeholders how best to achieve this.

In the meantime, we have asked the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership to take forward two separate but related pieces of work in this area, both of which have been part-funded by this Department. The first is the development of an agreed and user-friendly methodology to allow the carbon savings from different biofuels to be calculated. The second is the development of a sustainability assurance standard for all biofuels.

Safe Driving Skills

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what modern learning techniques have been developed by the Driving Standards Agency since September 2005 to help learners develop safe driving skills. [45605]

Dr. Ladyman: The Driving Standards Agency (DSA) is always looking at new and innovative ways of helping drivers to learn and prepare for their tests. Earlier this year the DSA launched a revised version of its free information DVD "Are You Ready?". This is sent to all categories of theory test candidate with the appointment letter. The DVD explains the nature of the different parts of the driving test and the standards that candidates need to reach.

Thames Gateway Port Project

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact on the Thames Gateway Port project of the possible takeover of P&O by Dubai World Ports; and if he will make a statement. [46214]

Dr. Ladyman: None. The potential change in ownership of P&O does not affect the application for the port. The proposed harbour empowerment order would involve the establishment of London Gateway Port Limited as a separate new statutory harbour authority, the London Gateway Port Harbour Authority.

Thameslink 2000

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what stage the approval by his Department of the Thameslink 2000 project has reached; what the estimated cost of the project is; and if he will make a statement. [41336]

Dr. Ladyman: The public inquiry into the Thameslink 2000 project was re-opened between 6 September and 7 December 2005, following the submission of fresh applications by Network Rail to address deficiencies in the scheme identified by the original inquiry.

The Inspector is currently preparing his report on the re-opened inquiry for submission to the Secretary of State for Transport and the Deputy Prime Minister, who are jointly and severally responsible for determining the various consent applications required to implement the project. We expect to receive the Inspector's report in March. We also expect to receive in the spring a report from London Travelwatch on the railway closures required to implement the project. The estimated cost of the project is £2.7 billion at 2001 Quarter 2 prices.

Transport 2010 Document

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will update Table A3 of the Transport 2010 document published in July 2000 with actual totals for the years 2000–01 to 2004–05. [40856]

Ms Buck: The Department for Transport (DfT) no longer records spending in the same way as presented in Table A3 of the Transport 2010 and so comparable figures are not available. The latest outturn figures for public spending by DfT for each year from 1999–2000 to 2003–04 are set out in Tables A1-A3 of DfT's Annual Report 2005 (Cm 6527, June 2005).

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many service personnel on duty in Afghanistan were injured in *(a)* action and *(b)* accidents, broken down by severity of injury, for each year since UK forces have been deployed there. [45457]

John Reid: In the period 1 to 25 January 2006, no UK Service personnel have been categorised as very seriously ill/injured (VSI) or seriously ill/injured (SI) as a result of injuries sustained in Afghanistan in any circumstances. The information for previous years is not held centrally and will take some time to collate.

I will write to the right hon. Member when the figures are available and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

The Ministry of Defence intends to publish casualty figures for Afghanistan from 1 January 2006 onwards, identifying the number of personnel categorised as SI and VSI, on its website in the coming weeks, and to update them regularly.

Aircraft Cannibalisation

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many cannibalisations of *(a)* C-130 Hercules, *(b)* Tristars, *(c)* VC-10s and *(d)* C-17A Globemasters occurred in each of the last five years. [45142]

Mr. Ingram: The removal of serviceable parts from one aircraft for use on another is a routine and temporary measure to ensure that the maximum number of aircraft are available to the front line.

The number of these instances over the last five years is given in the following table.

	2005	*2004*	*2003*	*2002*	*2001*
Tristar	74	102	119	122	118
VC10	196	322	242	254	314
C17	40	56	65	61	29
C130K	113	145	116	[1]177	[2]No data
C130J	879	638	848	1717	[2]No data

[1] April to December data only.
[2] C130 data is not available before April 2002.

Apache Helicopter Fleet

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what recent research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the job satisfaction of Apache helicopter (i) qualified pilots and (ii) engineers; and if he will make a statement; [43873]

(2) what steps he plans to take to retain the services of Apache helicopter *(a)* qualified pilots and *(b)* engineers for (i) the full three year term of their posting and (ii) a longer period; and if he will make a statement. [43874]

Mr. Touhig: There has been no specific research commissioned to evaluate the job satisfaction of Apache pilots or engineers, though job satisfaction across the Army is monitored through the Continuous Attitude Survey. This survey has been in place for over 20 years and is based on a stratified random sample of personnel and sent out twice a year. The surveys are analysed by occupational psychologists.

Apache pilots are required to sign a four year 'Training Return of Service' from the start date of their conversion course. This means the individual cannot leave the service for that period of time.

Aircraft and avionics technician trades are required to sign a three year 'Training Return of Service' from the completion of basic technician training. Technicians who progress in grade sign a further two year 'Return of Service'.

There are financial retention incentives for certain aircrew for all aircraft types and the eligibility is generally connected to length of service. These are in the form of taxable lump sums at particular stages of career and in certain circumstances with the advantage of an enhanced pension scheme.

Across the Army a range of financial and non-financial retention measures have been put in place which include improvements to service housing and the Operational Welfare Package.

Armed Forces (Divorce Rates)

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the divorce rates have been in each of the armed forces since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [45170]

Mr. Touhig: Available information is shown in the following table on the annual divorce rates of Army and RAF personnel:

Percentage

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Army1								
Officers	[1]—	[1]—	0.9	1.1	0.9	1.4	1.1	1.0
Other ranks	[1]—	[1]—	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.9	2.7	2.7
RAF								
Officers	[1]—	1.0	0.9	1.4	1.5	1.3	1.1	1.2
Other ranks	[1]—	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.0	1.8	2.0

[1] Denotes not available.

Source:

DASA (Tri-Service)

Figures are for UK regular forces, and therefore exclude Gurkhas, full-time reserve service personnel, the home service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment, mobilised reservists and Naval Activated Reservists.

Rates are calculated as a percentage of the average married strength during the calendar years.

For the years 1999, 2000 and 2001, annulments are excluded from the calculations for divorce rates, as the information is not available. The remaining years include annulments in their calculation.

Naval Service marital status data is not available.

Armoured Infantry Units (Trade Pay)

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will extend trade pay for crews in armoured regiments to armoured infantry units. [45937]

Mr. Touhig: The current armed forces pay structure, known as pay 2000, does not use the 'trade pay' system. Instead it places each rank within each and every trade into either a higher or lower pay band, based upon job weight.

All Infantry and Royal Armoured Corps (RAC) trades have undergone job evaluation within the last two years. As a result, from 1 April 2006 the only differences in pay banding between the infantry and RAC will be at colour sergeant rank where the infantry are in the lower band, and RAC staff sergeants (the equivalent rank) are in the higher band, and at corporal rank where infantry corporals are in the higher band and RAC crewmen are in the lower range. Infantry soldiers are paid in the higher band at all ranks except private and colour sergeant.

Army Battalions

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the full strength establishment is of each battalion of the British Army; and what the actual complement of each battalion was on the most recent date for which figures are available. [45173]

Mr. Touhig: The following table shows the Army by arm/service compared to the liability. The infantry strength is broken down by regiment, but the liability is not defined individually for infantry regiments. However, the strength and establishment figures for whole infantry and Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers (REME) by individual battalion are not held centrally and to collate these data would incur disproportionate costs.

Of the arms/services within the Army it is only the infantry and REME that have units categorised as 'battalions'.

Full-time trained strength of the Army (including full-time reserve service (FTRS) as at 1 December 2006 compared to the liability

Arm/service	*Liability*	*Strength*	*Strength as percentage of liability*
Staff	720	810	112
The Household Cavalry/ Royal Armoured Corps	5,790	5,560	96
Royal Regime of Artillery	7,480	7,410	99
Corps of Royal Engineers	9,460	8,780	93
Royal Corps of Signals	8,440	8,640	102
The Infantry	24,620	24,520	100
of which:			
Grenadier Guards	—	740	—
Coldstream Guards	—	760	—
Scots Guards	—	680	—
Irish Guards	—	600	—
Welsh Guards	—	580	—
Royal Scots	—	570	—
Royal Highland Fusiliers	—	580	—
Kings Own Scottish Borderers	—	570	—
Black Watch	—	630	—
Highlanders	—	590	—
Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders	—	560	—
Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment	—	1,300	—
Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	—	1,270	—
Royal Anglian Regiment	—	1,310	—
Kings Own Royal Border Regiment	—	610	—
King's Regiment	—	590	—
Prince of Wales' Own Regiment	—	640	—
Green Howards	—	610	—
Queen's Lancashire Regiment	—	680	—
Duke of Wellington's Regiment	—	650	—
Devonshire and Dorset Regiment	—	590	—
Cheshire Regiment	—	540	—
Royal Welch Fusiliers	—	650	—
Royal Regiment of Wales	—	580	—
Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment	—	620	—
Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment	—	610	—
Staffordshire Regiment	—	590	—
The Light Infantry Regiment	—	1,280	—
Royal Green Jackets	—	1,260	—
The Parachute Regiment	—	1,990	—

Full-time trained strength of the Army (including full-time reserve service (FTRS) as at 1 December 2006 compared to the liability

Arm/service	*Liability*	*Strength*	*Strength as percentage of liability*
The Royal Irish Regiment (General Service)	—	640	—
Others	—	650	—
Army Air Corps	2,010	1,980	98
Royal Army Chaplains Department	130	140	102
The Royal Logistics Corps	15,700	15,680	100
Royal Army Medical Corps	3,270	2,810	86
Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers	9,680	9,730	101
Adjutant General's Corps (Provost Branch)	1,800	2,010	112
Adjutant Generals Corps (Staff and Personnel Support Branch)	4,040	4,440	110
Adjutant Generals Corps (Educational and Training Services Branch)	290	340	119
Adjutant Generals Corps Royal (Army Legal Service)	120	100	83
Royal Army Veterinary Corps	190	190	97
Small Arms School Corps	140	150	105
Royal Army Dental Corps	420	370	89
Intelligence Corps	1,550	1,440	93
Army Physical Training Corps	420	440	105
General Service Corps	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps	1,080	840	78
Corps of Army Music	880	940	107
Long Service List	480	620	128
Unallocated	[1]—	10	[1]—
Total trained regular Army and FTRS	98,710	97,940	99
Gurkhas	3,090	3,360	109
Full-time trained Army	101,800	101,300	100

[1] Denotes zero or rounded to zero

Notes:

1. FTRS figures include full, limited and home commitment.
2. Figures exclude home service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment, mobilised reserves, Territorial Army and other reserves.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
4. Liability is based on the Regular Army liability 2009.

Bottle-nosed Whale

Mr. Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of whether the bottle-nosed whale calf which died during the attempted rescue on January 21 was forced up the Thames by *(a)* sonar from a naval vessel or *(b)* explosions at Shoeburyness. [45764]

Mr. Ingram: No Royal Navy ships were operating military sonar in the area of the Thames estuary or the North sea on 21 January 2006 or in the days immediately preceding 21 January 2006.

An independent company specialising in noise and vibration monitoring, has advised that the impact of Ministry of Defence activities at Shoeburyness on the marine environment at Shoeburyness is miniscule compared to the impact of everyday shipping in the area. We have no evidence to suggest that our use of Shoeburyness forced the whale up the Thames.

Compensation (Japanese Detainees)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether it was the intention when the scheme for compensating British civilian detainees of the Japanese was established that detainees with no blood link to the UK would not be included in the scheme. [45335]

Mr. Touhig: When the scheme was first announced in November 2000, it was intended that payments would be made only to those British civilian internees who could demonstrate a close link with the United Kingdom at the time of internment. In March 2001, this close link was defined in terms of the individual or one of his or her parents or grandparents having been born in the UK. This definition was made public in July 2001 and has become known as the birthlink criterion. My Department is currently undertaking a review of the scheme to establish what criteria were used for claims from British civilian internees that were decided before the introduction of the birthlink definition. I will report the outcome to the House.

Contractors

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many of the 41 contractors listed on 9 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1177W were awarded follow-on contracts; and in cases where re-let contracts resulted in a new contractor, what the financial returns (percentage of basic material price) to his Department or the Treasury were from *(a)* the original and *(b)* the new contractors; [43203]

(2) whether the one case of arbitration referred to on of 9 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1177W, has been finally settled. [43209]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 18 January 2006]:* Of the 41 contractors listed on 9 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1177W, four (Serial Nos. 3, 7,16 and 36) hold or have held follow-on contracts, although not for precisely the same scope of service as for the initial contracts. The contracts are "incentivised" agreements that allow contractors to retain a percentage of the final sale price of those items declared surplus to

requirements. The information requested on financial returns is commercially confidential and as such is being withheld.

The arbitration referred to 9 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1177W, has not been settled.

Defence Training Review

Mr. McFadden: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate his Department has made of the number of jobs that are likely to be created in the West Midlands if DCAE Cosford is selected as a preferred site in the Defence Training Review. [38989]

Mr. Touhig: The Defence Training Review programme is currently evaluating the bidding consortia's proposals. No estimation has yet been made of the number of jobs that may be created in the West Midlands as a consequence of the DTR programme. Such an estimation is dependant upon bidder's training and estates solutions, including proposed training efficiencies and the scale of distributed learning. This work will not be completed until the evaluation phase has concluded in about spring 2006.

Mr. McFadden: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what account will be taken of *(a)* existing training resources in aerospace, ICT and engineering industries, *(b)* location and *(c)* proximity to local labour markets in evaluating sites bidding in the defence training review. [38986]

Mr. Touhig: As part of the Defence Training Review programme, comprehensive and rigorous evaluation of the bidding consortia's proposals is underway judged against defined evaluation criteria. This includes an assessment of bidders' compliance with the total requirement and the quality and deliverability of their proposals.

Mr. McFadden: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the likely effect on the *(a)* further and high education sectors and *(b)* manufacturing companies of the Defence Training Review. [38987]

Mr. Touhig: The Defence Training Review (DTR) programme is currently evaluating the bidding consortia's proposals. The impact on further and higher education sectors and manufacturing companies depends on bidders' training and estates solutions, the extent to which the education and manufacturing sectors are drawn into training design, delivery and support and the exploitation of third party opportunities and revenue. Until the evaluation phase is complete and a decision has been taken to select a preferred training partner, I am not in a position to make any detailed comment on the wider impact of the DTR solution.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by his Department in Forest of Dean constituency. [46617]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence owns the following estate within the Forest of Dean constituency:

Beachley Barracks, Chepstow.

Gloucestershire Volunteer Estate:

Coleford Army Cadet Force, Coleford.

Newent Army Cadet Force, Newent.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* property and *(b)* land is owned by his Department in North East Milton Keynes constituency. [46857]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence does not own or lease any land or property in the North East Milton Keynes constituency. However the Territorial Army, which is funded by the Department, lease the Territorial Army Centre off Yeoman's Drive, Blakelands, Milton Keynes.

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much was spent by his Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41252]

Mr. Touhig: Comprehensive and detailed information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost, as 'refreshments' are not treated as a discrete expenditure item and are made available in a range of circumstances. I am, however, able to provide limited information, specifically on refreshments for committee meetings, for the period 1997–98 to 2001–02, when such expenditure was recorded separately. This is shown in the following table:

Financial year	*Committee refreshments (£ million)*
1997–98	0.249
1998–99	0.345
1999–2000	0.481
2000–01	0.485
2001–02	0.472

It should be noted that all expenditure of this nature is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in Government Accounting.

Departmental Staff (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many staff employed by his Department live in Castle Point. [42812]

Mr. Touhig: Data on the residential location of civilian personnel is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Helicopter Deployment (Afghanistan)

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British military helicopters he is planning to make available in support of the projected deployment of British forces to Helmand Province in Afghanistan; and what type of helicopters he plans to make available. [46873]

John Reid: I refer the right hon. Member to the statement I made to the House on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1531, about the deployment of our armed forces to Afghanistan.

HMS St. Albans

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* security and *(b)* cost implications are of the unauthorised disclosure of the future deployment details of HMS St. Albans. [45391]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 26 January 2006]:* To mitigate the security risk arising from the inadvertent disclosure of HMS St. Alban's deployment details, some changes to the ship's programme have been made. These changes are being implemented at no additional cost.

Iraq

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many service personnel signed disclaimers before taking nerve agent pre-treatment tablets during Operation Telic; and what warnings were given to service personnel about potential side effects before they signed the disclaimers. [44219]

Mr. Touhig: Ministry of Defence policy is that no personnel are asked to sign disclaimers before being issued with, or taking nerve agent pre-treatment sets (NAPS) tablets.

A Patient Information Leaflet detailing the potential side-effects of the tablets is issued to personnel with the tablets.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how nerve agent pre-treatment tablets were administered during the 2003 invasion of Iraq on Operation TELIC; what records of their administration were kept; and what monitoring of potential side-effects took place. [44224]

Mr. Touhig: Self-administration of NAPS is one of the crucial life-saving protection measures that can be taken in a situation where a nerve agent attack is a possibility.

Nerve agent pre-treatment sets (NAPS) tablets were issued to personnel by their commanders, and self-administered on command. Operational commanders were given the authority to decide when troops should start and stop taking NAPS in order that the use of the countermeasure could be adapted to meet the threat situation at the time.

Due to the policy of self-administration of NAPS tablets, as opposed to administration by a medical officer, no records of their administration are kept.

All Service personnel receive training on the importance of taking NAPS in theatre and instructions for the use of NAPS are well publicised to command and medical staff.

The use of NAPS on Operation TELIC ceased in April 2003. As at 30 April 2003, no serious adverse events had been reported through epidemiology and theatre reporting systems.

International Security Assistance Force

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the policy of NATO is relating to the rendition of terror suspects detained by International Security Assistance Force; and what agreement has been reached between NATO and the Afghan Government relating to arrest and detention of suspects in Afghanistan. [45582]

John Reid: I refer the right hon. Member to the answers given on 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1805W and 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1982W to the right hon. and learned Member for Devizes (Mr. Ancram).

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements have been made by NATO to ensure that terror suspects detained by Afghan authorities will be treated in compliance with international law. [45584]

John Reid: ISAF policy is that individuals detained should be handed over to the Afghan authorities at the first opportunity and within 96 hours, or released.

It is of course the primary responsibility of the Afghan Government to treat individuals it detains in accordance with international law. But as NATO prepares to expand in the south of Afghanistan it is discussing detention issues with the Afghan Government with the aim of agreeing a comprehensive policy in full compliance with international law.

Kosovo

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions he has had with his NATO counterparts regarding the Council of Europe request to inspect Bondsteel camp in Kosovo; and if he will make a statement. [44171]

Mr. Ingram: Defence Ministers have not had any discussions with their NATO counterparts regarding the Council of Europe's request to inspect Bondsteel Camp in Kosovo.

Meteorological Office

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the consultees who were given the opportunity to respond to the proposed new option four of the Met Office's proposals to change its civil centre forecast production network. [28350]

Mr. Touhig: The original Met Office consultation period began in July 2005 when details of the options for consultation were circulated to Met Office staff, customers, stakeholders and parliamentarians.

Details of the prospective new option 4—which was developed as a result of feedback from responses to the original phase of consultation (5 July 2005 to 20 October 2005)—were circulated to the same group of Met Office staff, customers, stakeholders and parliamentarians in October 2005. The consultation document was also available on the Met Office external website and was therefore effectively available for anyone to access.

Porton Down

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects a funding agreement to be concluded

between the Defence, Science and Technology Laboratory and Defence Estates on remediation work at Porton Down. [44165]

Mr. Touhig: An informal agreement has already been reached between the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory and Defence Estates to allow work on the remediation of the Porton Down site, which commenced in early 2005.

It is anticipated that this agreement will be formalised with effect from 1 April 2006 and, subject to review as deemed necessary, remain extant until 31 March 2015.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 13 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 16W, on private finance projects, what the *(a)* capital value, *(b)* annual revenue cost, *(c)* start date and *(d)* end date is of each private finance initiative and public private partnership project his Department is undertaking. [45305]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* The information is provided in the following table. However, you should note:

that the table contains an updated list of PPP projects including details of projects signed since the answer given on the 13 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 16W;

that the Contract End Date, as given in the following table, is generally based upon the date that the contract was entered into. However, for certain projects, the Contract End Date is calculated from the date that the service provided under the contract becomes fully "operational";

that the annual revenue cost of projects is commercially sensitive information and cannot therefore be provided. However the MOD Annual Report and Accounts 2004–05 provides details of the total payments made for PFI projects for the last two years and includes future service payment commitments.

The information that you request cannot be given for projects that are either being considered or in procurement as the information has not yet been determined or is commercially sensitive.

Project name	*Contract entered into*	*Contract end*	*Contract period*	*Capital value (£ millions)*
Army Foundation College (AFC)	February 2000	December 2029	30	73
ASTUTE Class Training Service (ACTS)	September 2001	January 2037	36	80
Attack Helicopters Training—Apache Simulator Training	July 1998	September 2027	19	165
Bristol, Bath and Portsmouth Family Married Quarters	November 2001	September 2028	25	78
C vehicles	October 2004	April 2021	15	114
Central Scotland Family Quarters (HQ)	August 1999	January 2021	20	25
Colchester	February 2004	February 2039	35	539
Commercial Satellite Communication Service—INMARSAT	March 2001	March 2006	20	3
Defence Animal Centre (DAC)	August 2000	August 2025	25	11
Defence Electronic Commerce Service (DECS)	July 2000	July 2010	10	9
Defence Fixed Telecommunications Service (DFTS)	July 1997	July 2012	10	70
Defence Helicopter Flying School (DHFS)	December 1996	March 2012	15	73
Defence Housing Executive—Information Systems (DOMIS)	October 2001	September 2010	10	12
Defence Intelligence System (DIS)/Information System (Touchstone)	June 1999	September 2006	7	5
Defence Sixth Form College (DSFC)	June 2003	August 2033	28	20
Devonport Support services ARMADA	January 2004	January 2029	25	45
Electronic Messaging System (Armymail)	April 1997	April 2007	10	33
Field Electrical Power Supplies (FEPS)	July 2002	July 2022	20	74
Hawk Simulator	December 1997	December 2015	18	19
Hayes PFI Project—Records Storage and Management	September 2003	September 2028	25	11
Hazardous Stores Information System (HSIS)	October 1997	October 2007	10	1
Heavy Equipment Transporters (HET)	December 2001	December 2021	20	58
Joint Services Command and Staff College	June 1998	August 2028	20	93
Light Aircraft Flying Training (LAFT) (Bulldog)	April 1999	March 2009	10	20
Lynx Aircrew Training	July 2000	July 2025	25	15
Main Building Refurbishment	May 2000	May 2030	30	345
Marine support to Range and Aircrew Services	December 2001	December 2012	10	12
Material Handling Equipment (MHE)	August 2002	July 2010	8	9
Material Handling Equipment (MHE)—(Follow on)	May 2002	May 2010	8	12
Medium Support Helicopter Aircrew Training Facility (MSHATF)	October 1997	October 2037	40	114
MOD-wide Water and Waste Water Project (Aquatrine)—Package A	April 2003	November 2028	25	154
MOD-wide Water and Wastewater (Project Aquatrine)—Package B	September 2004	March 2030	25	86
MOD-wide Water and Wastewater (Project Aquatrine)—Package C	October 2004	March 2030	25	364
Naval Communications	June 2000	January 2030	27	58
NRTA Fire Fighting Training Units	April 1999	April 2019	20	23
Portsmouth Housing 2	October 2005	July 2032	25	33
RAF Cosford and Shawbury Family Quarters	March 1999	June 2025	25	15
RAF Fylingdales (Power)	December 1998	December 2023	25	8
RAF Lossiemouth Family Quarters	June 1998	September 2019	20	25
RAF Lyneham Sewerage	August 1998	August 2023	25	4
RAF Mail	November 1998	November 2008	20	12
RAF Sentry E3D Aircrew	July 2000	December 2030	30	7
Skynet 5	October 2003	February 2018	15	1,079
Storage Facilities	April 1996	January 2011	15	22
Strategic Sealift (Ro-Ro Ferries)	June 2002	December 2024	25	175
TAFMIS (IT)	August 1996	August 2007	10	41
Tidworth Water and Sewerage	February 1998	August 2018	20	5
Tornado GR4 Simulator	June 1999	June 2031	32	62

Project name	Contract entered into	Contract end	Contract period	Capital value (£ millions)
Tri Service Materials Handling Service	June 2000	June 2010	10	35
Tri Service White Fleet	January 2001	January 2011	10	40
Wattisham Married Quarters	May 2001	March 2028	25	34
Yeovilton Family Quarters	July 1998	July 2028	30	8

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the estimated *(a)* capital value, *(b)* annual revenue costs, *(c)* start date and *(d)* end date is of each (i) private finance initiative and (ii) public private partnership projects under consideration by his Department but not yet signed. [45372]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* HM Treasury defines public private partnerships as privately financed projects and other forms of joint ventures, but excludes prime contracts, partnering and other outsourcing deals.

The Ministry of Defence has a forward programme of 16 private finance initiative (PFI) projects that are either under consideration or in procurement. Of these, 10 projects have progressed to various stages in the procurement process as shown in the following list. Further information on the status of individual projects is available on the MOD's PFI website at http://www.mod.uk/business/ppp/pfi_database.htm. The estimated capital value, annual revenue cost, start date and end date of these projects has either not yet been determined or is commercially sensitive and is not therefore on the website at present. Further information will be added to the website as decisions are taken.

Invitation to Negotiate Issued
Brize Norton Area Serviced Accommodation
Corsham Development Project
Defence Training Review (DTR)
Future Provision of Marine Services (FPMS)
MOD Estates in London (MODEL)
UK Military Flying Training System (UKMFTS)
Preferred Bidder
Allenby/Connaught
Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft (FSTA)
Northwood Headquarters
Royal School of Military Engineering (RSME)

Psychological Trauma

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps his Department is taking to ensure armed forces personnel receive assistance from medical professionals for issues relating to physiological trauma. [45660]

Mr. Touhig: Physiological trauma may arise as a result of any physical injury or illness, including environmental injury, and its treatment is an integral part of the medical care and support given to injured armed forces personnel by members of the Defence Medical Services.

When deployed on operations, United Kingdom forces are supported by a range of in-theatre medical facilities, staffed by fully-qualified military medical personnel. These are capable of providing immediate treatment in theatre, and are backed up by fast and efficient medevac procedures to return personnel to the UK for further treatment as necessary.

On return to the UK, injured personnel will be given the treatment they need, usually through one of the MOD's Ministry of Defence hospital units attached to NHS hospitals. When necessary, follow-up treatment is provided through specialist units such as the 15 regional rehabilitation units (RRUs) in the UK and Germany, and the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre (DMRC) at Headley Court, which provides world-class medical care, rehabilitation, prosthetics and adaptations for service personnel. Where there are psychological consequences, further treatment is provided through one of 15 MOD Departments of community mental health located in the UK (plus other satellite centres overseas), or if necessary through in-patient care at Priory Group facilities, with whom there is close liaison.

QinetiQ

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of the proceeds of the QinetiQ flotation will *(a)* be reinvested with his Department and *(b)* go to the Treasury. [44154]

John Reid: The Treasury and the Ministry of Defence have agreed that the MOD will be able to retain a substantial proportion of the QinetiQ receipts for reinvestment in the defence programme. The precise proportion to be retained by the MOD will not be determined until the actual value of the overall receipt from the sale is known.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether royalties being paid to QinetiQ/Defence Evaluation and Research Agency for the use of intellectual property rights and research before privatisation will continue to be paid to new owners. [42425]

John Reid: The Ministry of Defence does not pay royalties to QinetiQ for MOD's own use of intellectual property generated as a result of MOD contracts. The MOD has free rights to such information for its own use or for use by its contractors for defence and security purposes. The MOD also has rights to disclose such information to other Governments for international co-operation purposes. All these rights apply regardless of whether the work was carried out by DERA or by QinetiQ, and they are not affected in any way by the Initial Public Offering (IPO). These arrangements are consistent with those for all other defence contractors undertaking research under contract for MOD. Existing royalty arrangements in place between QinetiQ/DERA and other parties will also not be affected by the IPO. The shareholders, including the Government, will continue to benefit from the value generated by these payments.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of the proceeds from the flotation of QinetiQ will be re-invested in defence research. [44155]

John Reid: The Treasury and the Ministry of Defence have agreed that the MOD will be able to retain a substantial proportion of the QinetiQ receipts for reinvestment in the defence programme. The precise proportion to be retained by the MOD will not be determined until the actual value of the overall receipt from the sale is known. The allocation of this money within the MOD will be determined by the normal planning process.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what restrictions he has placed on QinetiQ's use of technology funded by his Department for third party contracts. [44159]

John Reid: Should QinetiQ wish to use the United Kingdom Government-funded technology in third party contracts, arrangements established in July 2001 allow the Ministry of Defence to prevent transactions that it judges would cause an unmanageable conflict of interest or otherwise be contrary to the defence or security interests of the UK. These arrangements will remain in place after the initial public offering in QinetiQ.

Radioactive Waste

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what funds his Department has made available in each year since 1997 to help facilitate the treatment of legacy radioactive waste of military origin held at *(a)* Sellafield and *(b)* other civil nuclear sites; and what plans he has to provide such funding in the future to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority. [46038]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 26 January 2006]:* Due to the complex nature of the treatment of legacy radioactive waste of military origin, I am unable to give details of the funding as this will take time to collate. I will write to the hon. Member when I have the information and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

As part of the transfer of the Ministry of Defence's historic nuclear liabilities to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (through the Department of Trade and Industry) the MOD will be transferring £624 million covering the period of financial years 2005–06 to 2007–08. All responsibility for bids for future funds now rests with the NDA.

Royal Ordnance Chorley

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many products produced by Royal Ordnance Chorley have been strategically stockpiled by *(a)* Royal Ordnance and *(b)* his Department. [43618]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* Information on ammunition natures held in the strategic stockpile is classified information and as such is withheld as disclosure would not be in the national interest. Any requirement for BAE Systems Land Systems to stockpile ammunition for its own purposes is a matter for the company.

Stonehenge

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the last occasion was on which *(a)* Ministers, *(b)* officials and *(c)* military personnel met the director general of the National Trust to discuss Stonehenge road issues; and what was discussed. [46669]

Mr. Touhig: Ministers have not met with the director general of the National Trust (DG/NT) to discuss Stonehenge road issues. At DG/NT's request, the chief executive of Defence Estates (CE/DE), met with her on 11 January 2006. DG/NT wanted to explore possible options for re-routing the A303 in the Stonehenge area, and for a further meeting to be arranged between officials. The Department's current plans for the area were explained, and it was made clear that Salisbury plain and the surrounding garrison towns would continue to be required as military sites for the foreseeable future.

NT and DE officials met on 16 January. NT hoped to identify a broad corridor that avoids the archaeological features between the A303 and Larkhill. DE officials reiterated the advice already given and undertook to examine NT proposals in detail, but emphasised that this was an interdepartmental issue.

Vice-Admiral Dunt (CE/DE) is a serving officer; no other military personnel have been involved in the meetings.

Training and Evaluation Capabilities

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to conclude the review of air training and evaluation capabilities. [44174]

Mr. Ingram: A review of the air test and evaluation process and its impact upon the delivery of military capability is due to be reported to senior officials in early 2007.

The Ministry of Defence future requirement for the air test, evaluation and training services capability provided by QinetiQ under a long-term partnering agreement is also being assessed as part of the first quinquennial review of the contract.

War Pensions Committee

Mr. Benyon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether a war pensions committee panel is to be set up in respect of the case of the late Lieutenant William Norbury and his widow. [45228]

Mr. Touhig: No war pensions committee has received a formal request. A war pensions committee panel will be set up on receipt of a formal request from Mrs. Norbury.

Mr. Benyon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether it is within the remit of war pensions committee panels to determine appropriate sums to be paid in respect of past periods for which war disability pensions were not paid due to errors. [45232]

Mr. Touhig: It is not within the remit of war pensions committees (WPCs) to determine amounts to be paid to pensioners. The WPCs are advisory bodies who can hear complaints and make recommendations to the Veterans Agency for consideration.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

General Election Expenditure

29. **Mr. Allen:** To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission if the Commission will review the limits on expenditure for candidates in general elections; and if he will make a statement. [46118]

Peter Viggers: In its report on "The funding of political parties" published in 2004, the Electoral Commission identified a need to review the balance between party and candidate spending limits at all relevant elections. The Commission will consider how to take forward the recommendations it made when the Government have responded to the report.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Magazines/Periodicals

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission which magazines and periodicals have been delisted from the Library in each month in the last two years; and for what reason. [45875]

Nick Harvey: In 2003–04 the Library carried out a review of periodicals. Such reviews are carried out at regular intervals with the aim of ensuring that the Library's holdings continue to reflect Members' needs in the most cost-effective way.

During the review use of periodicals was recorded over a 12-month period. As a result many periodicals that were no longer being used widely were cancelled, titles taken in duplicate were reduced where practicable, with copies held in the place of greatest use, and a number of closed runs were disposed of. £29,000 of savings have been redeployed to meet new needs, including subscriptions to electronic sources. Out of 1,400 titles 419 current subscriptions were cancelled and a further 319 closed runs of older titles agreed for disposal. Some cancellations were made during the summer of 2004, and the majority came into effect in January 2005, when existing annual subscriptions ended. The large majority of cancelled titles were not kept on display in the Members Library as they were of marginal interest and not in demand. The Library has subsequently received a small number of queries from Members with regard to specific titles, as a result of which two titles have been relocated to the Members Library and five titles reinstated. Single articles from titles not held in the Library can be obtained for Members through Inter Library Loan.

A full list of titles agreed for cancellation and disposal has been placed in the Library.

CABINET OFFICE

Government Communications

Mr. Gale: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much was spent on Government public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [46040]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Records of expenditure on public relations and information services across government are not held centrally.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Professional Football (Governance)

9. **Bob Russell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent discussions she has had with football authorities on the governance of the professional game. [46098]

Mr. Caborn: In my ongoing discussions with the football authorities about the governance of football I continue to urge the Football Association to implement the Burns Review recommendations.

The FA must use this Review to ensure they are fit for purpose in the 21st Century and make the necessary changes without delay.

Digital Radio Stations

10. **Mr. Blizzard:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with Ofcom on the range of musical genres offered by specialist digital radio stations. [46099]

Mr. Lammy: None. Licensing of independent radio is a matter for Ofcom.

Gaming Act

11. **Mr. Stewart Jackson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the trend has been in applications for new casino licences under the

Mr. Caborn: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave earlier to the hon. Member for Gainsborough (Mr. Leigh).

Television Licence Concessions

12. **Michael Jabez Foster:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will introduce proposals to extend the provisions relating to television licence concessions to residents in sheltered accommodation. [46101]

Tessa Jowell: As indicated in the BBC Charter Review Green Paper published in March last year, we believe the current scope of licence fee concessions is about right. However, we undertook to re-examine any anomalies in the existing concessions policy, particularly the accommodation for residential care scheme. Our conclusions, which will take into account the responses to the Green Paper consultation, will be set out in the White Paper which we intend to publish shortly.

World Heritage Sites

13. **Ben Chapman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what process governs applications for World Heritage Site UK nominee status. [46102]

Mr. Lammy: For a site in the UK to be considered for inscription under the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, it must first be included on the national Tentative List of Sites. The UK Tentative List, first published in 1999, is due to be reviewed and I shall be making an announcement about this later this year.

Selection of a site from the Tentative List for nomination is made by Government following a rigorous assessment process including consultation with the devolved Administrations. Final decisions on inscription are made by the World Heritage Committee at its annual meeting.

Tourism Deficit

14. **Simon Hughes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the UK tourism deficit. [46103]

Mr. Lammy: The UK tourism deficit was £17.3 billion in 2004. Although we have a strong domestic tourism industry, a number of factors including increasing prosperity and cheaper air travel are encouraging more British people to holiday overseas. The UK is not alone in this—Germany's deficit stands at £27 billion.

Community and Amateur Sports Clubs (West Midlands)

15. **Mr. Jim Cunningham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department has taken to promote community and amateur sports clubs in Coventry, South and the West Midlands. [46104]

Mr. Caborn: The Community Amateur Sports Club Scheme is open to eligible community and amateur sports clubs across the country, including those situated in Coventry, South and the West Midlands. So far over 3,500 clubs have registered for the Scheme in total, the benefits of which include mandatory rate relief as well as exemptions from Corporation Tax and which have totalled some £8 million to date.

In addition, in the financial year ending 31 March 2005 Sport England allocated over £1.75 million from lottery and exchequer funding to grass roots sport, including community and amateur sports clubs, in Coventry, and over £6 million to the West Midlands as a whole.

Licensing Act

16. **Mr. Burns:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent assessment she has made of the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 on sports clubs. [46105]

Mr. Caborn: While we believe that the Act will benefit sports clubs in the long term by removing the need to obtain a number of different permissions for different activities, I recognise that some concerns have been expressed about how sports clubs will adapt to the new licensing regime.

I have therefore asked the Central Council for Physical Recreation to provide any information about how sports clubs are adapting to the new licensing regime and, in particular, to feed in any evidence about the impact of the fees into the Independent Fees Review Panel.

In addition, I recently met representatives of the National Golf Clubs' Advisory Association, who confirmed that the transition period had gone well, without any major problems.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 on sports clubs. [45856]

James Purnell: While we believe that the Act will benefit sports clubs in the long term by removing the need to obtain a number of different permissions for different activities, I recognise that some concerns have been expressed about how sports clubs will adapt to the new licensing regime.

I have therefore asked the Central Council for Physical Recreation to provide any information about how sports clubs are adapting to the new licensing regime and, in particular, to feed in any evidence about the impact of the fees into the Independent Fees Review Panel.

In addition, I recently met representatives of the National Golf Clubs' Advisory Association, who confirmed that the transition period had gone well, without any major problems.

Olympic Games

17. **Mark Pritchard:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on proposed training facilities for the 2012 Olympics. [46106]

Tessa Jowell: Preparation and holding camps are an important element of the Games, potentially bringing benefits to the whole of the UK, both in economic terms and in galvanising the participation and engagement of local communities who will play host to elite athletes from around the globe. The responsibility for co-ordinating preparation and holding camps lies with the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) in conjunction with the British Olympic Association who are developing a pre-training guide and application process to assist the Devolved Administrations and the English Regions in securing these training camps. The 2012 Nations and Regions Group, chaired by Charles Allen, will also be working with the Regions to develop plans for maximising the benefits of hosting the Games and regional working groups will be fully engaged on this issue as work goes forward.

18. **Mr. Pelling:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on progress with arrangements for the 2012 Olympics. [46107]

Tessa Jowell: We have made excellent progress since 6 July with preparations for London to host the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. Top appointments at the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games and the interim Olympic Delivery Authority have been made, the London Olympic Games

and Paralympic Games Bill continues to make good progress through Parliament, and work is under way on the Olympic Park site.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on progress with arrangements for the 2012 Olympics. [46175]

Mr. Caborn: We have made excellent progress since 6 July with preparations for London to host the 2012 Olympic games and Paralympic games. Top appointments at the London Organising Committee for the Olympic games and the interim Olympic Delivery Authority have been made, and the London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Bill continues to make good progress through Parliament. Work is already under way on the Olympic Park site.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what progress is being made in involving regions outside London in preparation for the 2012 Olympics. [46176]

Mr. Caborn: We have established a nations and regions group (NRG) chaired by Charles Alien, the chairman of ITV. It will ensure the whole of the UK is engaged with and realises the benefits—economic, social and sporting—from the 2012 Olympic games and Paralympic games. Each nation and region has also established a national or regional working group to draw together people from across the nation or region with a role to play in engaging local communities and securing the benefits from 2012.

The NRG met in London on 25 January and representatives from the national and regional working groups met in Leeds on 26 January to consider future arrangements in more detail.

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment was made by PricewaterhouseCoopers in their Olympic games impact study of December 2005 of the economic impact in the south Wales valleys of holding the Olympic games in London in 2012. [46572]

Mr. Caborn: The Olympic games impact study analyses the potential economic, social and environmental impacts of hosting the 2012 Olympic games and Paralympic games on three geographical areas: the UK as a whole; London; and north east London. It does not analyse the impact on other particular regions or nations within the UK.

The report presents a picture of what would happen if nothing was done to spread the benefits from the games. Government and 2012 stakeholders are committed to ensuring timely and appropriate action is taken to spread the benefits throughout the UK.

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on progress of preparations in Dorset for the 2012 Olympics. [45854]

Mr. Caborn: The Dorset Olympic Steering Croup (DOSG) has been set up as the local lead for venue development. DOSG links in with a new local co-ordination structure for Dorset. This comprises the Dorset Strategic Partnership, Dorset Economic Partnership and County Sports Partnership. The Dorset Strategic Partnership is currently developing a vision statement for Dorset and 2012, consulting all relevant partners. The CEO of Dorset county council sits on a regional steering group which has now been set up to co-ordinate the programme of activity across the south west.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has for the provision of training facilities in the Eastern Region for the 2012 Olympic Games, with particular reference to rowing. [45989]

Mr. Caborn: I am aware of the excellent rowing facilities that already exist in the Eastern Region and in the hon. Gentleman's own constituency of Peterborough. It will be for the National Olympic Committee of each country to decide where their teams will train for the London 2012 Games. The London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) is responsible for co-ordinating the preparation of training camps for the Games in conjunction with the British Olympic Association (BOA). They are currently developing a Pre-Training Guide that will both assist partners in the Devolved Administrations and the English Regions to secure these training camps.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what liaison bodies have been established between her Department and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in relation to the arrangements for the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic games; and if she will make a statement. [46065]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) worked closely with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) during London's bid to host the 2012 Olympic games and Paralympic games. Since winning the right to host the games, DCMS has continued to work closely with ODPM on preparations for the games.

The DCMS has established, and chairs, an inter-departmental steering group which will provide strategic direction in delivering the games and its legacy and a working level network of Olympic co-ordinators. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), along with other Whitehall Departments, is represented on both of these groups. ODPM are also represented on the Olympic delivery group and the Olympic projects review group established by DCMS.

DCMS and ODPM represent Government on the Olympic board steering group that was established by the four Olympic stakeholders (Government, the Mayor, the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games and the British Olympic Association).

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and the Deputy Prime Minister are both on the ministerial committee on the Olympics (MISC 25) that co-ordinates and oversees Government issues relating to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games.

Horseracing Industry

19. **Mr. Wallace:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what support her Department gave to the horseracing industry in the last financial year. [46108]

Mr. Caborn: My Department sponsors the horseracing industry and two non-departmental public bodies, which provide support and funding.

In the last financial year, the Horserace Betting Levy Board distributed £96 million to racing and the Horserace Totalisator Board contributed £11 million, in addition to its levy payments.

Children's Play

20. **Helen Goodman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on her Department's policy on children's play. [46109]

Mr. Lammy: My Department recognises the importance of play in children's lives, not only for its own sake, but also in terms of other government priorities such as reducing obesity or increasing educational attainment. We remain committed to play and we are developing a more strategic approach to play policy through the cross departmental group which was set up last year.

Administrative Costs

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the administrative costs were of each agency for which she has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [39855]

Mr. Lammy: The Department is responsible for one agency, The Royal Parks. All of the agency's resource expenditure is classed as "other current" costs rather than "administration costs" in the Supply Estimates and the Departmental Resource Accounts. The Royal Parks expenditure figures for 2004–05 can be found in the Royal Parks Annual Report at pages 48–60, a copy of which is available in the House of Parliament Library and from The Royal Parks website, www.royalparks.gov.uk/about/publications. Expenditure is broken down into the following categories:

Gross expenditure	*£000*
Staff costs	6,456
Depreciation	1,374
Notional charges	1,242
Programme costs	
Consultancies	633
Telecommunications	175
Works maintenance	7,574
Grounds maintenance	6,495
Nursery	1,020
Trees	312
Training	63
Vehicle hire	236
Cleaning contracts	922
Entertainments	124
Utilities	563
Service contracts	702
Police service	5,041
Other	1,223
Total	34,155

All of the agency's expenditure is regarded as "identifiable" for country and regional public expenditure statistical analyses.

Amateur Sports Clubs

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate her Department has made of the number of sports clubs *(a)* eligible for and *(b)* which have attained community amateur sports club status, broken down by sport; and if she will make a statement. [45999]

Mr. Caborn: The Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) scheme is administered by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), who provide data on CASC registrations and the overall financial benefits to clubs. There are however no reliable estimates of the number of clubs that may be eligible for CASC status. As of 22 December 2005, 3,504 clubs had successfully registered as CASCs, up from a figure of 2,004 on 31 December 2004, representing an increase of 74 per cent. over the twelve month period. The following table breaks down registrations by sport.

	Number
American Football	3
Angling	24
Archery	16
Athletics	58
Badminton	11
Basketball	4
Baton Twirling	1
Billiards	2
BMX	2
Bodybuilding	1
Bowls	568
Boxing	20
Canoeing and Kayaking	29
Caving	5
Cricket	690
Croquet	23
Curling	3
Cycling	11
Dance Sport	2
Diving	2
Equestrian	5
Fencing	4
Flying and Gliding	35
Football	270
Gaelic football	70
Golf	243
Gymnastics	31
Harness Racing	1
Highland Games	1
Hockey	53
Hurling	2
Ice Hockey	3
Ice skating	3
Keep Fit	1
Korfball	1
Lacrosse	4
Lawn Tennis	323
Martial arts	29
Mixed Sports	234
Motor Cycling	2
Motor Racing	1
Mountaineering	6
Netball	4
Orienteering	3
Petanque	1
Rambling	1
Real tennis	1
Rowing and Sculling	76
Rugby League	23

	Number
Rugby Union	280
Sailing, Yachting and Cruising	207
Shinty	4
Shooting	88
Skating	1
Skiing	9
Snooker and Pool	2
Speedway	1
Squash	48
Sub-Aqua	23
Swimming and Diving	19
Table tennis	11
Trampolining	4
Triathlon	4
Volleyball	1
Water polo	3
Water skiing	5
Total	3,616
Clubs representing two or more sports	(112)
Final total	3,504

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department has taken to promote community amateur sports club status in each quarter since April 2002; what the costs were; and if she will make a statement. [46000]

Mr. Caborn: The Department does not hold this information in the format requested.

Since April 2002 my Department has supported and undertaken a number of initiatives to promote the Community Amateur Sports Clubs Scheme (CASC), resulting in a 74 per cent. increase in registration in the year ending 31 December 2005.

In both 2003 and 2004 the Department contributed to the costs of a series of seminars organised by the Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR) to promote the scheme.

In June 2004 the Economic Secretary to the Treasury and I held an event at Totteridge Cricket Club to publicise the scheme. In November 2004 DCMS organised, and I spoke at, a seminar for the National Governing Bodies (NGB) of sport to encourage their members to seek CASC membership. The meeting was held in tandem with the publication of a new information leaflet to NGBs about the benefits of CASC and information about the application process. This leaflet was produced and distributed by my Department.

In addition, we have also worked with Sport England to promote the CASC Scheme, including a round of regional seminars in 2003, and the organisation of nine regional workshops which were staged in the second half of 2005.

Anniversary Events

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans her Department has for celebrating anniversaries of major events up to 2010; and if she will make a statement. [45995]

Mr. Lammy: The Secretary of State is responsible for organising, on behalf of the Government, the annual Remembrance Day Ceremony at the Cenotaph and the Under-Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the hon. Member for Tottenham (Mr. Lammy) is working closely with the Deputy Prime Minister and Paul Goggins, Minister for Race Equality and external stakeholders to ensure the best support for the forthcoming bicentenary marking the abolition of the slave trade in 2007.

Many of DCMS's sponsored bodies are planning to celebrate anniversaries of various other major events, including the 200th anniversary of the birth of Isambard Kingdom Brunei in 2007, the 90th anniversary of the end of the First World War in 2008 and the 500th anniversary of Henry VIII's accession to the throne in 2009. Any plans by the Department or its sponsored bodies for the celebration of other major anniversaries will be announced closer to the time.

Ashes Test Series

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether Ministers or officials will represent the Department at any of the Ashes test series matches in Australia in 2006. [46094]

Mr. Lammy: No decision has been reached on whether Ministers or officials from the Department will be going to any of the Ashes test matches in Australia in 2006. A decision on the matter will be made later in the year.

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on how many occasions her Department consulted citizens juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens jury. [46241]

Mr. Lammy: My Department has not used citizens juries as a means of consultation in the last five years.

Concessionary Television Licences

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many pensioners over 75 years were receiving a free television licence in Selby constituency in the most recent period for which figures are available. [46799]

James Purnell: TV Licensing, who administer free television licences for people aged 75 or over as agents for the BBC, are not able to provide geographical breakdowns of the number of free licences issued. However, the number of households with at least one person aged 75 or over claiming the winter fuel payment in the Selby constituency in 2004–05 was 5,500 according to Department for Work and Pensions records.

Constantine Anniversary

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps the Government is taking to commemorate the 1700th anniversary of the proclamation in the City of York of Constantine, the Roman Emperor; what support her Department has given to the York Museums Trust's exhibition on Constantine; and if she will make a statement. [45765]

Mr. Lammy: The Constantine exhibition, mounted in association with the British Museum, has received £50,000 in funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The activities of York Museums' Trust are supported through the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's Renaissance in the Regions programme. Renaissance has funded a new space in the Yorkshire Museum to support activities for schools. During the exhibition, this learning space will be dressed in Roman style with real objects to handle. A Roman story trail for children and families has also been developed.

Departmental Estate

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps have been taken to provide a clear description of her Department's estate which includes *(a)* executive agencies, *(b)* staff numbers, *(c)* buildings and *(d)* land managed. [44705]

Mr. Lammy: Both the Department for Culture Media, and Sport and The Royal Parks have their own Estates Management databases. They are also working with the Office for Government Commerce on the Electronic Performance Indicator Management System for the Government Estate.

The number of staff in the Department and The Royal Parks are published in Table C in Civil Service Statistics 2004 which is available in the Library of the House and on the Cabinet Office website www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

Departmental Websites

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the cost of maintaining her main departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46300]

Mr. Lammy: The information is as follows:

Maintenance costs

The DCMS primary website www.culture.gov.uk is managed in-house from existing resources. Total costs for 2005 were £47,000.

Hosting—£12,000 (figure includes costs for a number of other departmental sites)

Development—£10,000

Software licence—£25,000

Unique visitor numbers to the site

January	57,316
February	193,522
March	251,237
April	236,966
May	212,858
June	221,181
July	251,224
August	193,665
September	226,160
October	277,926
November	324,624
December	260,952

English Heritage

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much lottery funding was allocated to English Heritage in 2005–06. [46354]

Mr. Lammy: A total of £9,521,177 for three projects has been allocated to English Heritage by the Heritage Lottery Fund in the period April 2005 to January 2006. No other lottery distributor has allocated funding to English Heritage in that period.

Film Council

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list films to which the UK Film Council has given financial assistance in each of the last five years; and how much each received. [45704]

James Purnell: A complete list of the films that have received financial assistance from the UK Film Council in each of the last five years, and the amounts received, is available on the UK Film Council website at www.ukfilmcouncil.org.uk . I am also arranging for the complete list to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what criteria the UK Film Council uses to determine eligibility for financial assistance to film-makers. [45705]

James Purnell: The UK Film Council provides financial assistance to film projects to help deliver a consistent flow of high quality and culturally significant films. All film projects are selected according to an assessment of their cultural and creative merits. Funding will generally be given only to projects that are wholly or substantially capable of certification as a 'British' film. However, the UK Film Council is able to exercise discretion and may still elect to finance a film if there are other strong cultural reasons for doing so. Full details of the eligibility criteria for individual funding schemes are available on the UK Film Council website at www.ukfilmcouncil.org.uk

Government Art Collection

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether the Government's art collection is catalogued; and if she will make a statement. [46835]

Mr. Lammy: The Government Art Collection (GAC) maintains a catalogue and database of the collection in line with the documentation standards of the Museums Accreditation Scheme administered by Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.

The GAC has a website that includes an on-line catalogue of works in the collection. All original works and impressions of all modern prints in the collection are included; historical prints are currently being added.

In addition, the GAC has published a range of books about the collection including a summary catalogue of original works from the 20th century (published 1997).

The GAC and the Public Catalogue Foundation (PCF) are planning a volume of the PCF's ongoing series of catalogues "Oil Paintings in Public Ownership" to include the GAC's holding of paintings.

Green Ministers

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what work her Department's green Minister has undertaken in the last three months in an official capacity within that role. [45439]

James Purnell: I met with representatives from South Hams district council in October to discuss a sustainable approach to tourism and I chaired two meetings of the Tourism Reform Implementation Group (TRIG) at which the sustainability sub groups recommendations were discussed.

In November 2005 in my capacity as DCMS member of the EE(SD) committee I had a bi-lateral meeting with the Minister for Climate Change and Environment (Elliot Morley). I am currently preparing my Department's sustainable development action plan.

Hampton Court Green

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what notice was given to residents at Hampton Court Green of Historic Royal Palaces' intention to allow the parking of vehicles on the Green for the Christmas event within the walls of the Palace from 1 to 11 December 2005; and whether an application was made to Richmond upon Thames borough council in relation to parking for this event. [45774]

Mr. Lammy: Historic Royal Palaces did not give any specific notice to local residents of their intention to allow parking on Hampton Court Green for the Christmas event, although residents living in the vicinity of Hampton Court Green were sent promotional leaflets which showed the Green as the location for the main car park. Historic Royal Palaces did not make any application to Richmond upon Thames borough council in relation to parking for the Christmas event. It is the responsibility of the event organisers, contracted by Historic Royal Palaces, to obtain any necessary consent that may have been required. The council was aware of the event, and no application was made by the event organisers.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many days each event held by Historic Royal Palaces on Hampton Court Green lasted in 2005, including time for setting up and dismantling. [45775]

Mr. Lammy: In 2005 Hampton Court Green was used for events under licence from Historic Royal Palaces for 52 days (37 event days and 15 days for setting up and dismantling.) The 2005 events were as follows: nine days for a funfair at Easter (five days for the event, four for set-up and dismantling), 14 days for a circus during the May holiday (11 and three days respectively), 11 days for a country affair at the August bank holiday (three and eight days respectively), seven days for temporary car parking for the Hampton Court Palace flower show and 11 days for temporary car parking for a Christmas affair.

Information and Communication Technology

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the Arts Council England spent on information and communication technology projects for each year since 1997; what *(a)* the nature of the project, *(b)* commencement date, *(c)* planned completion date and *(d)* actual completion date was in each case; whether contractors were involved in each project; and if she will make a statement. [46031]

Mr. Lammy: Information and Communication Technology expenditure since 1997:

	Expenditure (£)
1998–99	100,000
1999–2000	2,310,000
2000–01	2,294,000
2001–02	1,797,000
2002–03	1,823,000
2003–04	553,000
2004–05	1,775,000

Project details

Year 2000: Ensuring IT systems were compliant for the year 2000 changeover. Work was carried out during 1998–99.

ARTIS:

A finance and grants management system replacing those in place prior to 1996–97. The initial phase went live on 1 April 2001 with further phased releases during 2001–02 and 2002–03.

Telephone system:

Harmonisation of the telephone network following the merger with the 10 Regional Arts Boards in 2002. This was implemented during 2002–03 and 2003–04. Installation was completed in line with the original timetable.

Thin client:

Creation of a thin client IT infrastructure following the merger of the Arts Council of England with the 10 Regional Arts Boards in April 2002. This was rolled out during 2003–04 and 2004–05. Installation was completed in line with the original timetable.

Single system:

A new system for finance, grants and management information following the merger of the Arts Council of England with the 10 Regional Arts Boards in April 2002. The planned implementation date is September 2006.

Expenditure (in £) by project

	Year 2000	*ARTIS*	*Telephone system*	*Thin client*	*Single system*
1998–99	100,000	0	0	0	0
1999–2000	0	2,310,000	0	0	0
2000–01	0	2,294,000	0	0	0
2001–02	0	1,797,000	0	0	0
2002–03	0	1,362,000	461,000	0	0
2003–04	0	0	353,000	180,000	20,000
2004–05	0	0	18,000	34,000	1,723,000

The Arts Council made use of contractors for all of the above projects, as the cost of retaining a permanent IT staffing resource of specialist expertise to deliver projects of this type is prohibitive. Exact records of commencement, planned and actual completion dates were not retained.

Lottery Funding

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much was paid to the arts through *(a)* grant-in-aid to the Arts Council, *(b)* the Arts Lottery Fund and *(c)* the Big Lottery Fund in 2004–05. [45997]

Mr. Lammy: In 2004–05 Arts Council England received £369.9 million in Grant in Aid and £170.2 million in Lottery funding. The Big Lottery Fund also funds arts projects but does not categorise these separately. Therefore the figures could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much was paid to sport through *(a)* grant-in-aid to Sport England, *(b)* the Sports Lottery Fund and *(c)* the Big Lottery Fund in 2004–05. [45998]

Mr. Caborn: In 2004–05, Sport England Exchequer awards totalled £86.8 million; awards from the Sports Lottery Fund[1] totalled £135.2 million (Sport England: £121 million and UK Sport: £14.2 million) and awards from the Big Lottery Fund[2] totalled £395 million.

[1] The figure provided includes Lottery funding awarded by Sport England and UK Sport, which are the NDPBs sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

[2] This figure includes New Opportunities for PE and School Sport, Space for Sport and the Arts, and community sports programme awards. It does not include Awards for All, Positive Activities for Young People and other grants which have funded sport indirectly.

New Opportunities Fund

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the expenditure of the New Opportunities Fund for physical education and sport was in each year since 2001; and if she will make a statement. [46001]

Mr. Caborn: The table shows awards and payments made by the New Opportunities Fund to programmes for physical education and sport for each year since 2001. These figures do not include Awards for All, Activities for Young People and other grants which have funded sport indirectly.

£

	Awards made	*Payment made*
2001–02	10,596,800	11,400
2002–03	88,622,611	4,801,339
2003–04	202,444,347	31,618,846
2004–05	395,174,057	84,993,116
Year to date	79,292,733	202,244,646

Private Security Industry Act

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received from sports bodies about the Private Security Industry Act 2001; and if she will make a statement. [46162]

Mr. Caborn: A number of sports bodies, including the Central Council for Physical Recreation, have contacted my Department with concerns about the impact of the Private Security Industry Act 2001. We are working closely with the Home Office to ensure that sport is not unnecessarily burdened by the legislation.

Royal Works of Art

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when the inventory of royal works of art was completed; and where it can be consulted by members of the public. [46534]

Mr. Lammy: The Royal Collection is a department of the Royal household and is not a responsibility of my Department. However, I understand that the custodial inventory was completed in 1997, and is used to help manage the collection and answer public enquiries. In partnership with the National Trust, the Royal Collection is currently developing a new collections management system; and in April 2005 the Royal Collection launched the first phase of its online e-Gallery, an interactive, multimedia catalogue of works of art, which is available on the Royal Collection's website.

Second World War Records

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans her Department has to record the accounts of ex-servicemen who served during the Second World War; and how much has been spent on doing this in each of the last 10 years. [45651]

Mr. Lammy: The accounts of ex-service people who served in the Second World War are being recorded by two of the national museums sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Since the beginning of 1996, the Imperial War Museum's Sound Archive has planned for, acquired, documented, stored, preserved and made accessible 4,263 recordings of people's accounts of Second World War service, representing approximately 52 per cent. of the intake for those years. The direct cost of the Second World War recordings has been £1.22 million, excluding costs for accommodation, utilities and storage.

In addition, the Department of Documents at the Imperial War Museum is responsible for the collection of the unpublished diaries, letters and memoirs of servicemen and women who have taken part in the conflicts in which Britain and the Commonwealth have been involved since 1914. Some 15,000 individuals' experiences are now represented in the archive, of which close to half cover service in the Second World War, and the collection is continuing to grow. The costs associated with these Second World War accounts are also in the region of £1.2 million.

The Royal Armouries currently runs a programme called 'Memories', which records through DVD the reminiscences of veterans from the Second World War about the Department for weapons they either used or encountered during conflict. A DVD is currently on

display in the main entrance to the Royal Armouries in Leeds, and 10 more Second World War veterans will be interviewed by the end of February. The project is in its early days and it is estimated that it will cost £7,000 in 2005–06, with plans for further development.

Stonehenge Visitors Centre

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the cost was to *(a)* her Department and *(b)* English Heritage, to the end of July 2005, of preparatory work in connection with the Stonehenge Visitors Centre. [45817]

Mr. Lammy: The total expenditure by English Heritage in connection with the Stonehenge Visitors Centre since 2000–01 is £8.9 million. This includes funds to purchase land on which the centre is to be built together with consultancy and project team costs associated with architectural, structural and environmental design of the centre.

£3 million of this amount was allocated as grant in aid in 2000–01 to English Heritage from DCMS for land purchase. Some additional staff costs have fallen to my Department but these are included in overall running costs and not separately recorded.

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether the earmarked allocation of funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the Stonehenge Visitors Centre is ring-fenced for that project irrespective of possible planning and construction delays. [46663]

Mr. Lammy: The Heritage Lottery Fund has earmarked £25 million to support the Visitor Centre element of the Stonehenge Project. There are no current plans to reallocate these funds.

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when the last occasion was that *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials met representatives of the National Trust to discuss road improvements at Stonehenge. [46853]

Mr. Lammy: I met the chairman of the National Trust on 25 January. There have been regular meetings at official level, the last of which included a visit to Stonehenge on 19 January.

Sustainable Development

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate, what her Department has identified as the most significant sustainable development impacts in relation to the operation of its estate. [45830]

James Purnell: The Department has identified the most significant sustainable development impacts pursuant to the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate as being:

Part E—Energy

Part F—Procurement

Part G—Estates Management and Construction

Television Licence Fee

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many fines for non-payment of a television licence have been collected from premises used to shelter women from domestic violence in each of the last three years in each *(a)* country, *(b)* region and *(c)* constituency of the UK. [45826]

James Purnell: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will take steps to include women's refuge centres in the concessionary television licence scheme available to people living in residential care accommodation. [46172]

James Purnell: In the BBC Charter Review Green Paper published in March 2005, the Government indicated that it believed the current scope of television licence fee concessions was about right but undertook to re-examine any anomalies in the existing concessions policy, particularly the accommodation for residential care scheme. Our conclusions, which will take into account the responses to the Green Paper consultation, will be set out in the White Paper which we intend to publish shortly.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the level of the colour television licence fee has been in each year since 1996–97. [46351]

James Purnell: The level of the colour television licence fee in each year since 1996–97 has been:

£

	Licence Fee
1996–97	89.50
1997–98	91.50
1998–99	97.50
1999–2000	101.00
2000–01	104.00
2001–02	109.00
2002–03	112.00
2003–04	116.00
2004–05	121.00
2005–06	126.50

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the penalties are for not paying the television licence fee. [46352]

James Purnell: Under section 363 of the Communications Act 2003, the penalty for unlicensed installation or use of a television receiver is a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale, currently £1,000.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people in West Lancashire were prosecuted for not having a television licence in each of the last five years. [45119]

Fiona Mactaggart: I have been asked to reply.

The information from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform is contained in the table and shows the number of people proceeded against at magistrates courts in Lancashire police force area for offences under the Wireless Telegraphy Acts 1949 to 1969 (mainly television licence

evasion), 2000–04. It is not possible to identify those prosecutions in West Lancashire, as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Number of persons proceeded against at magistrates courts for offences under the Wireless Telegraphy Acts 1949 to 1967 (mainly television licence evasion), Lancashire police force area 2000 to 2004[1]

	Proceeded against
2000	3,888
2001	4,720
2002	5,058
2003	3,824
2004	4,145

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
Source:
Home Office

PRIME MINISTER

Christmas Cards

Mr. Hands: To ask the Prime Minister if he will estimate the cost to his Office of sending Christmas cards in 2005. [45916]

The Prime Minister: Approximately 1,600 cards were purchased for official use at a cost of £325. All expenditure incurred in the purchase and posting of these cards is in accordance with the departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on the principles set out in "Government Accounting".

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Prime Minister how many employees of his Office have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46776]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office (Jim Murphy) to reply. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Library of the House.

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Prime Minister what his Office did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46763]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 621W.

Special Advisers

Mr. Heald: To ask the Prime Minister (1) how much was spent on special advisers in each year since 1996–97; and what the estimated spend is for 2005–06; [47199]

(2) if he will list the *(a)* paid and *(b)* unpaid special advisers working in each Government Department. [47200]

The Prime Minister: Since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each payband. I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement I made on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, 158–61WS. Information on the numbers of special advisers prior to 2003 was provided at regular intervals and this information is available in the Libraries of the House.

Information on special advisers for 2005–06 will be published in the normal way once it has been completed.

Terrorism Victims (Compensation)

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 888W, on terrorism victims (compensation), when he expects to be able to report to the House on the results of the Government's consideration of the feasibility of introducing a scheme to provide compensation for UK victims of terrorism referred to in his reply to the hon. Member for Walsall, North (Mr. Winnick) on 15 October 2005. [46558]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to the answer I gave the hon. Member on 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 888W.

Tibet

John Bercow: To ask the Prime Minister what recent discussions he has had with President Hu about the destruction of historic buildings by the Chinese Government in Tibet. [45549]

The Prime Minister: I last met President Hu during his state visit in November 2005 where we discussed a wide range of issues. The British ambassador to China raised the destruction of historic buildings in Tibet with the Vice-Mayor of Lhasa in July 2004. He stressed the need to balance modernity with the preservation of Tibetan culture.

The Government monitor developments in Tibet closely and regularly raises Tibet-related issues with the Chinese Government, including during our biannual UK/China human rights dialogue.

Torture

David Howarth: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his Oral Answer to the right hon. Member for Ross, Skye and Lochaber (Mr. Kennedy) of 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 862, whether the definition of torture he uses includes cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. [45815]

The Prime Minister: The Government understands the term "torture" to have the meaning set out in Article 1 of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT).

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Council Tax

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the *(a)* merits and *(b)* cost of a revaluation of council tax bands. [46021]

Mr. Woolas: The Government believe that it is right to maintain a fair alignment between house prices and council tax bands. However they announced on

20 September 2005 that they were postponing the 2007 revaluation of council tax so that revaluation can take full account of Sir Michael Lyons' extended inquiry into local government funding. Sir Michael published his initial findings and research so far in December last year and will publish his final report at the end of this year.

It is not possible at this stage to estimate what the costs of a future revaluation will be.

Coventry City Council

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of Coventry City council housing stock has been sold under the right-to-buy scheme in each year since 1980. [45659]

Yvette Cooper: The proportion of housing stock owned by Coventry City council, sold through the right-to-buy scheme in each financial year since 1980–81, as reported by Coventry City is tabulated. The table shows the number of right-to-buy sales in each financial year as a percentage of the stock at the beginning of that period. There have been no right-to-buy sales since September 2000 when all remaining local authority stock was transferred to a registered social landlord.

West Lancashire: right-to-buy sales

Percentage

Financial year	*Proportion of LA stock sold through RTB*
1980–81	0.0
1981–82	1.7
1982–83	2.9
1983–84	1.7
1984–85	1.1
1985–86	1.6
1986–87	1.5
1987–88	2.2
1988–89	4.0
1989–90	3.1
1990–91	1.3
1991–92	0.9
1992–93	0.6
1993–94	0.6
1994–95	0.7
1995–96	0.6
1996–97	0.7
1997–98	1.0
1998–99	0.9
1999–2000	1.5
2000–01	0.5

Source:
P1AB returns from local authority to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was spent by his Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41259]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed in May 2002. Figures for ODPM are unavailable for 2002–03. The ODPM does not hold separate information on expenditure on refreshments, however expenditure on catering which includes refreshments is held and the figures for these are as follows.

	£
2003–04	192,271.22
2004–05	200,124.53
2005–06 to date	203,643.86

All expenditure is incurred in line with the appropriate guidance.

Emissions Targets

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will include emissions targets in the public service agreements his Department has with local and regional organisations. [44392]

Mr. Woolas: Local public service agreements are now negotiated with local authorities and their partners by Government offices as the 'reward element' of local area agreements (LAAs).

The LAA Outcomes Framework, published as part of the LAA Guidance Note in June, 2005, provides for targets to be negotiated relating to concentrations of air pollutants and to the energy efficiency/carbon performance of properties.

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the relationship between the work of the Interdepartmental Taskforce on the Improvement of Energy Efficiency in Existing Buildings and the energy review. [45394]

Yvette Cooper: The recommendations of the review of the sustainability of Existing Buildings which, among other issues, is considering measures which could be taken to improve the energy efficiency of existing buildings, will be taken into account in the much wider energy review, as stated in the consultation document, "Our Energy Challenge: Securing clean, affordable energy for the long-term", that was issued on 23 January.

Energy Policy

David Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to ensure that the work of the interdepartmental review on energy use in existing buildings led by his Department is made available to the Minister of State for Energy to assist him with his review of energy policy. [44814]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The review of the sustainability of existing buildings which, among other issues, is considering measures to improve the energy efficiency of buildings, is being steered by a project board of senior officials from several Government Departments including the Department of Trade and Industry.

The Energy Review consultation document, acknowledges the need to take account of a number of related exercises including this existing buildings review.

Single Regeneration Budget

Charles Hendry: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total expenditure on the single regeneration budget has been for each year since introduction in each local authority area. [46680]

Mr. Woolas: The Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) was allocated to regeneration partnerships and funding by local authority area is not collected centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. 1,027 SRB schemes were successful under the six rounds of the SRB including thematic, pan or sub-regional schemes that each embraced several local authority areas. £5.706 billion of SRB funding was allocated over the schemes' lifetime of up to seven years. Details of the schemes have been made available in the Library of the House. These include an indication of their location (except for the thematic or pan-regional schemes) and region and their lifetime funding.

Stonehenge

Robert Key: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost was to *(a)* Wiltshire county council and *(b)* Salisbury district council of preparatory work in connection with (i) the A303 Stonehenge Road Improvement Scheme and (ii) the Stonehenge Visitors Centre project to the end of July 2005. [45818]

Yvette Cooper: Wiltshire county council is unable to give an estimate of the total cost of its involvement in the future of the A303 through the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, although the major cost has been in staff time. However, it has identified that its specific legal costs in connection with the Public Inquiry over the Road Improvement Scheme were £16,550.

Salisbury district council estimates that in excess of £350,000 has been spent on the Stonehenge project. Approximately 90 per cent. of this figure is in respect of the Visitor Centre.

Thames Gateway Port

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list *(a)* formal and *(b)* informal committees considering aspects of the Thames Gateway Port transport infrastructure; what the (i) objectives and (ii) composition of each is; and whether a possible link to Canvey Island is part of the remit of any of these committees. [45717]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

There are no committees considering transport infrastructure for the proposed London Gateway port.

On wider Thames Gateway matters, the Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership is chaired by my hon. Friend the Minister for Housing and Planning. It has within its remit the consideration of transport matters across the whole of the Thames Gateway.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Apprenticeships

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to extend apprenticeship schemes beyond the age of 25 years. [46082]

Phil Hope: The Department for Education and Skills has already changed the rules so that young people who start a Government-funded apprenticeship at any point up to their 25th birthday can complete it. Beyond that, the Department is currently trialling apprenticeships for adult entry in three sectors: engineering, construction and health and social care, and discussions are taking place to include the IT sector. These trials are due to complete in March 2006, although some programmes may take longer depending upon their starting date. We will decide in the light of these trials how the apprenticeship model can be adapted to the needs of older entrants to an occupation; and what—if any—extra public funding should be made available to support the costs of the learning.

Child Abuse

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the judgment in Re H and R on the standard of proof required in cases involving allegations of child abuse. [44659]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

In Re: H and R in 1996 Lord Nicholls of Birkenhead explained that the standard of proof required is that it is the balance of probabilities. In the judgment of Re: U and B in May 2004, given in the Court of Appeal by the past President of the Family Division Dame Elizabeth Butler-Sloss, Lord Justice Thorpe and Lord Justice Mantell, the standard of proof that applies in civil/family cases was rehearsed in some detail and confirmed as the approach explained by Lord Nicholls. Re: H and R should continue to be followed as before.

Child Care

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what visits abroad Ministers in her Department have made in relation to child care policy since 2001. [43672]

Bill Rammell: Since 1999, the Government have published on an annual basis information relating to Cabinet Ministers' visits overseas costing more than £500. Copies of the published lists for the years 2001 to 31 March 2005 are available in the Libraries of the House. The detailed information you have requested in respect of other Ministers is not collected centrally and to collect it would involve incurring disproportionate cost.

Ministerial travel is conducted in accordance with the "Ministerial Code" and "Travel by Ministers".

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what targets she has set for *(a)* the establishment of children's trusts, *(b)* the use of home childcarers, *(c)* expanding the number of (i) neighbourhood nurseries and (ii) early excellence centres and *(d)* the use in schools of the extended schools programme; what assessment she has (A) made and (B) plans to make of each scheme; and what progress has been made towards meeting those targets. [43832]

Beverley Hughes: The Government's expectation is that most local authority areas will have a children's trust by April 2006, and all will by 2008. There is progress in all areas towards having children's trusts arrangements in place by 2008.

There is no target for the use of home childcarers. In April 2003, we introduced the Home Childcarers Scheme allowing Ofsted to approve registered childminders to provide care in parents' homes. 300 carers were approved under that scheme. A subsequent PSA target required us to introduce, by April 2005, a light-touch Childcare Approval Scheme. This new scheme was launched in December 2004 and became effective in April 2005. 1,339 carers have been approved under it. Our target for the Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative was the creation of 45,000 new full-time daycare places for children under 5 in the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged areas by 2004. This was achieved. There are no plans to expand the programme. Our focus now is on the development of Sure Start children's centres, building on neighbourhood nurseries and other early years provision.

107 early excellence centres (EECs) were established and there are no plans to expand the programme. There were no targets for the development of EECs. We expect all EECs to develop into children's centres.

We expect all schools to be making a core offer of extended services including child care, 8am-6pm, all year round, by 2010, with a third of secondary schools, and half of primary schools, doing so by 2008. The vast majority of schools are currently providing some extended services, and all local authorities have received funding in the current financial year, 2005–06, to support the development of extended schools in their areas. The National Remodelling Team is monitoring progress through its work with local authorities.

There has been an evaluation of children's trusts in place since April 2004. It will be completed by the end of March 2007. Two interim reports have already been published and available at: www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/strategy/childrenstrustpathfinders/nationalevaluation/ whilst three practitioner focused reports will be published in May 2006.

The Childcare Approval Scheme is being run by Nestor Primecare Services Ltd., the approval body, under contract to the DfES. The scheme is being closely monitored as part of the contract management process, overseen by an Inter-departmental Implementation Board.

A comprehensive national evaluation of the neighbourhood nursery initiative began in August 2002, and will run until August 2006. The final evaluation report is due to be published towards the end of 2006.

The 29 pilot EECs were the subject of an evaluation study between 1997 and 2002. The final report of this study was published in November 2004.

The Department is implementing a comprehensive research and evaluation strategy for extended schools, including an evaluation of the impacts of full service extended schools. The findings of the evaluation of the first year of the full service extended schools, and a baseline survey of extended services in maintained schools were published in September 2005. We are collecting annual data from schools to show progress towards the extended school core offer targets published in the Ten Year Childcare Strategy.

Reports on the neighbourhood nurseries, early excellence centres and extended school research and evaluation published so far are available at: www.surestart.gov.uk/research.

Childminders

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what changes have taken place in the measurement of the number of childminders since 2001. [43671]

Beverley Hughes: From 1999 to 2003 the number of childminders and childminder places created were reported to the Department by local authorities.

Since March 2003 the Department has been able to use more reliable childminder and place data recorded by Ofsted.

Children's Commissioner for Children

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what was the cost of the Children's Commissioner for England in the last year for which figures are available. [45944]

Beverley Hughes: In March 2005 the Government appointed Professor Al Aynsley-Green as England's first Children's Commissioner. From this point, the Commissioner worked on a part-time basis until he formally took up his post on 1 July 2005. The total cost of the Children's Commissioner for England in financial year 2004/05 was £113,018. The Commissioner will prepare a statement of his accounts for the financial year 2005/06 which will be laid before Parliament once the Comptroller and Auditor General have examined and certified the statements.

Dedicated Choice Advisers

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how the entitlement of access of the least well-off parents to the dedicated choice advisers referred to on page 8 of the White Paper, Higher Standards, Better Schools for All will be determined. [46435]

Jacqui Smith: We intend to publish guidance for local authorities on choice advice which will cover a range of issues including the role of the choice adviser, potential delivery models, and targeting the service. This guidance is currently in development and will be published shortly.

Dedicated Schools Grant

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) on what basis Wirral local education authority was allocated an average dedicated schools grant of £3,514 per pupil; [45857]

(2) on what basis the average Dedicated Schools Grant was £6,708 per pupil in the City of London. [45858]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 26 January 2006]:* The calculation of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) in 2006–07 and 2007–08 takes authorities' 2005–06 level of spending as the baseline, rather than their Schools Formula Spending Share (SFSS); it gives all authorities a minimum increase of 5 per cent. per pupil over the baseline in each of the next two years; and then distributes the remaining grant to reflect the Government's key priorities for education.

The Wirral's baseline spending in 2005–06 was £3,279 per pupil, which reflects its spending of 2 per cent. below SFSS. Given the 5 per cent. per pupil increase, in 2006–07 Wirral is receiving an additional £2.78 million to reflect the Government's key priorities for education, plus an additional £0.687 to help move its per pupil funding towards the level indicated by the funding formula. Its average guaranteed unit of funding in 2006–07 is therefore £3,514 per pupil. That gives the Wirral an indicative allocation of DSG in 2006–07 of £171.6 million.

In the City of London's case, its baseline spending in 2005–06 was £6,286 per pupil which reflects its spending of more than 75 per cent. in excess of SFSS in 2005–06. Given the 5 per cent. per pupil increase, plus an additional £27,000 to reflect the Government's key priorities for education, the City of London's average guaranteed unit of funding in 2006–07 is £6,708 per pupil. Its indicative allocation of DSG in 2006–07 is £1.7 million. Given that the City of London only has about 250 pupils, it is not possible to make meaningful comparisons between its unit costs and those of other authorities.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the annual expenditure on vehicles has been for *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39997]

Bill Rammell: The annual expenditure on vehicles for the Department for Education and Skills in each of the last three years is as follows.

	Amount (£)
2002–03	263,000.00
2003–04	416,250.00
2004–05	493,500.00

The increase in expenditure for the period 2003–04 was attributable to; The Department's continuation of the Private User Scheme (PUS), purchase of new vehicles and the number of vehicles over three years old with 60,000+ miles resulting in vehicles being less cost effective and costing more to run.

A similar expenditure for the period of 2004–05 saw the purchase of a number of new cars to replace older and less efficient vehicles within the fleet.

Planned expenditure for 2005–06 is £270,000.00.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will estimate the cost to her Department of sending Christmas cards in 2005. [46481]

Maria Eagle: The Department again sent electronic cards following the launch last year. A small number of printed cards were produced and sent via the governmental inter-departmental service or Royal Mail. No breakdown of the delivery methods is available which would enable an accurate assessment to be made.

All expenditure incurred in the purchase and dispatch of official Christmas cards is made in accordance with the departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on the principles set out in Government Accounting.

The cost of printing the Department's Christmas card this year was £2,324.

Printed Christmas cards are distributed to Ministers and senior officials on request. A central team was in place to avoid duplication of recipients.

Departmental Pensions Liability

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total pensions liability of the Department is. [39921]

Maria Eagle: The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme and individual departments' pension liabilities are not available. The Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation Resource Accounts for 2004–05 showed that the total pension liability at 31 March 2005 was £84.1 billion. As a result of a change in the discount rate used for calculating pension liabilities with effect from 1 April 2005, the total pension liability at 1 April 2005 increased by £10.6 billion to £94.7 billion.

Departmental Targets

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what national target she has set for *(a)* improving children's (i) communication skills and (ii) social and emotional development, *(b)* schools' development of anti-bullying accreditation schemes, *(c)* placing of children with adopters within 12 months of the decision that this was in their best interests and *(d)* increasing the proportion of leaders of integrated early years education and childcare settings with a Level 4 or above qualification. [45548]

Beverley Hughes: The Sure Start Public Service Agreement (PSA1) covering *(a)* and *(b)* is to improve children's communication, personal social and emotional development so that by 2008 50 per cent. of children reach a good level of development at the end of the foundation stage, and reduce inequalities between the level of development achieved by children in the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged areas and the rest of England.

There is no national target for schools' development of anti-bullying accreditation schemes.

The target for placing children with adopters was by 2004–05 to increase to 95 per cent. the proportion of looked after children placed for adoption within 12 months of the decision that adoption is in the child's best interests, up from 81 per cent. in 2000–01, and maintain this level (95 per cent.) up to 2006, by locally applying the timescales in the national adoption standards, taking account of the individual child's needs.

No target has been set for increasing the proportion of leaders of integrated early years education and childcare settings with a level 4 or above qualification. However, proposals in the Children's Workforce Strategy envisage a graduate level early years' professional in every Sure Start Children's Centre by 2010 and in every full day care setting by 2015.

Departmental Website

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost of maintaining her main departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46303]

Maria Eagle: The websites that the Department is responsible for are listed as follows, along with the number of visits to each for 2004 (the last whole year that stats are available for):

Website	Number of visits
www.dfes.gov.uk	10,859,230
www.teachernet.gov.uk	4,308,205
www.connexions-direct.com	1,388,251
www.surestart.gov.uk	1,050,171
www.aimhigher.ac.uk	932,165
www.parentcentre.gov.uk	881,819
www.governornet.co.uk	662,607
www.wavtolearn.co.uk	417,376
www.need2know.co.uk	274,571
www.skillsforemployers.gov.uk	119,324

Total number of visits: 20,893,719 (In the time given to answer this question, monthly breakdowns were not available).

The hosting cost of these sites was £1,235,500.

The Department currently has large numbers of sub-sites falling under the main sites listed in the response and these are developed by policy teams using their own

budgets. It would therefore be a difficult and time-consuming task to co-ordinate across all policy directorates and communications teams (for campaign sites) to assess overall costs.

The Department is working towards consolidation of these sites (which run into hundreds) into a small number of sites which specialise in delivering information and services to a particular audience, (e.g. for those working in schools). As well as this the new technical infrastructure, currently in procurement stage, will provide a centralised Content Management System (CMS) which means that more costs will be centralised, which will deliver better value for money.

Education Provision (Growth Communities)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions she has had with *(a)* organisations and *(b)* Government Departments about changes in pupil numbers and provision of school places in communities in which the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister intends to build additional houses; and if she will make a statement. [44452]

Jacqui Smith: The Government have announced, in the run-up to the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007, and in response to Kate Barker's review of housing supply, a cross-cutting review into supporting housing growth to effectively co-ordinate across Departments the strategic delivery of local and regional infrastructure necessary to support additional housing.

DfES are closely involved in the housing growth proposals, and working to translate forecasts into pupil numbers. Local authorities are responsible for planning school places in their areas and they take account of forecasts and proposed future housing developments as part of this process.

A DfES Minister will be nominated shortly to engage with the Minister for Communities and Local Government on the Thames Gateway.

Educational Attainment

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of pupils achieved five or more A* to C grades at GCSE in each local education authority area, excluding candidates sitting examinations at independent schools in the last period for which figures are available. [45384]

Jacqui Smith: The figures requested, which were published on the Research & Statistics Gateway on the DfES website on 18 January 2006, are included in the following table:

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving 5+ A-C grades at GCSE and equivalent[2] in 2005[3]*

Local authority[4,5]	*2005[3] (Percentage)*
Camden	51.4
Greenwich	45.3
Hackney	47.2
Hammersmith and Fulham	58.9
Islington	44.1
Kensington and Chelsea	61.1
Lambeth	52.3
Lewisham	49.0
Southwark	47.1
Tower Hamlets	50.8

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving 5+ A-C grades at GCSE and equivalent[2] in 2005[3]*

Local authority[4,5]	*2005[3] (Percentage)*
Wandsworth	54.1
Westminster	46.3
Barking and Dagenham	50.1
Barnet	63.1
Bexley	57.4
Brent	57.1
Bromley	63.8
Croydon	54.2
Ealing	59.4
Enfield	51.5
Haringey	47.6
Harrow	61.3
Havering	61.1
Hillingdon	50.5
Hounslow	57.6
Kingston upon Thames	66.4
Merton	46.8
Newham	51.1
Redbridge	69.7
Richmond upon Thames	54.8
Sutton	67.7
Waltham Forest	48.9
Birmingham	56.4
Coventry	46.3
Dudley	53.4
Sandwell	42.9
Solihull	64.1
Walsall	46.3
Wolverhampton	54.6
Knowsley	44.4
Liverpool	49.0
St. Helens	55.6
Sefton	57.0
Wirral	56.6
Bolton	49.2
Bury	57.7
Manchester	43.7
Oldham	51.8
Rochdale	49.1
Salford	45.4
Stockport	54.4
Tameside	51.7
Trafford	70.1
Wigan	51.7
Barnsley	45.3
Doncaster	44.5
Rotherham	48.9
Sheffield	46.6
Bradford	46.3
Calderdale	54.6
Kirklees	50.8
Leeds	49.2
Wakefield	56.4
Gateshead	65.3
Newcastle upon Tyne	52.1
North Tyneside	54.2
South Tyneside	51.6
Sunderland	51.5
Isles of Scilly	79.2
Bath and NE Somerset	63.0
Bristol	36.1
North Somerset	57.2
South Gloucestershire	55.4
Hartlepool	51.8
Middlesbrough	45.2
Redcar and Cleveland	48.2
Stockton on Tees	54.8
Kingston-upon-Hull	44.1
East Riding of Yorkshire	61.0
North East Lincolnshire	42.4
North Lincolnshire	50.8
North Yorkshire	62.4
York	59.8
Bedfordshire	53.4
Luton	49.9
Buckinghamshire	67.3

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving 5+ A-C grades at GCSE and equivalent[2] in 2005[3]*

Local authority[4,5]	*2005*[3] *(Percentage)*
Milton Keynes	51.9
Derbyshire	55.2
Derby	53.5
Dorset	60.5
Poole	63.9
Bournemouth	51.8
Durham	51.2
Darlington	56.6
East Sussex	54.5
Brighton and Hove	55.0
Hampshire	60.7
Portsmouth	45.9
Southampton	47.0
Leicestershire	56.8
Leicester City	45.2
Rutland	66.2
Staffordshire	54.4
Stoke on Trent	48.1
Wiltshire	57.7
Swindon	49.8
Bracknell Forest	54.0
Windsor and Maidenhead	59.2
West Berkshire	60.5
Reading	45.8
Slough	56.3
Wokingham	60.5
Cambridgeshire	58.5
City of Peterborough	53.5
Cheshire	60.0
Halton	49.1
Warrington	61.2
Devon	55.6
City of Plymouth	54.6
Torbay	53.1
Essex	56.3
Southend	61.2
Thurrock	48.8
Herefordshire	56.7
Worcestershire	55.7
Kent	59.6
Medway	51.9
Lancashire	56.4
Blackburn with Darwen	46.8
Blackpool	40.7
Nottinghamshire	46.9
Nottingham City	41.6
Shropshire	62.9
Telford and The Wrekin	53.6
Cornwall	55.6
Cumbria	56.8
Gloucestershire	62.3
Hertfordshire	61.4
Isle of Wight	45.0
Lincolnshire	58.6
Norfolk	52.4
Northamptonshire	51.9
Northumberland	58.7
Oxfordshire	53.6
Somerset	56.5
Suffolk	58.1
Surrey	60.8
Warwickshire	57.2
West Sussex	55.9

[1] The figures shown relate to pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year.

[2] Figures include GCSEs and other approved qualifications.

[3] 2005 figures are revised.

[4] Local authority figures include all maintained schools and exclude independent schools, non-maintained special schools and independent special schools.

Failing Schools

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the 242 schools deemed at the start of January to be failing, which are referred to on page 15 of the White Paper, "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All". [46421]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested has been placed in the House Libraries.

Fire Sprinklers

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many responses to the consultation on 'Building Bulletin 100—Designing and Managing Against the Risk of Fires in Schools' were in favour *(a)* of the proposals in respect of the fitting of fire sprinklers in school buildings and *(b)* of strengthening the proposals. [46328]

Jacqui Smith: The first question in the consultation on Building Bulletin 100 asked whether respondents agreed with the proposal that risk assessment should be used as the basis for designers to make their choices, rather than following a purely prescriptive approach that may preclude many of those choices. There were a further 11 questions, of which two concerned sprinkler installations:

"Do you agree with the proposal that sprinkler systems should be installed if indicated by the risk assessment?"

"Do you agree that the guidance on sprinklers is adequate?"

The analysis of the responses is not yet complete, but should be finalised before the end of March.

Foundation Stage Profile

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many and what proportion of children scored *(a)* scale score six or more and *(b)* scale score eight or more in all assessments in the Foundation Stage profile; [45991]

(2) how many and what proportion of children scored *(a)* scale score six or more and *(b)* scale score eight or more in (i) mathematical development, (ii) communication, language and literacy and (iii) the mathematical development and communication language and literacy assessments combined in the Foundation Stage Profile. [45993]

Beverley Hughes: My Department will be releasing final statistics for the Foundation Stage Profile (FSP) 2005 in a Statistical First Release on 16 February 2006. These figures will be available on my Department's website http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/index.shtml.

I will write to the hon. Member and provide him with the information he has requested by the end of February.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether it is her policy that the child centred approach to learning as set out in the Foundation Stage should be applied to the reception year of primary school. [45992]

Jacqui Smith: The Foundation Stage is already applied to the reception year of primary schools. The Foundation Stage is a distinct phase of education focusing on the needs of children aged three to the end of the reception year of primary school, when some children will be almost five and others almost six.

Free Trade Goods

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department is taking to encourage the purchase of free trade goods. [43081]

Jacqui Smith: Fair Trade products including tea, coffee, chocolate and biscuits are offered for sale in all DfES head office restaurants. We are currently in discussions with our catering supplier with a view to increasing the amount of Fair Trade products sold.

Grouping/Setting

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in how many subjects she envisages more grouping and setting referred to on page 10 of the White Paper, "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All". [46438]

Jacqui Smith: It is for schools to use their own professional judgment to decide which subjects to group or set pupils by ability. We will continue through the National Strategies and our Gifted and Talented programme to offer advice and guidance to schools on classroom practice so that they can make decisions about how to use pupil setting as part of their overall commitment to personalising and tailoring learning to meet the needs of all their pupils.

Head Teachers

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to promote the recruitment of head teachers. [46407]

Jacqui Smith: We are doing more than ever before to provide the incentives, pay and professional development to attract and retain effective head teachers.

The top of the leadership group pay spine in England and Wales has risen by 35 per cent. since 1997 to £93,327 now, with nearly £100,000 available in inner London. Schools and LAs have greater flexibility to award recruitment and retention incentives and they can set a head teacher's salary above the top of the pay spine. Vacancy rates for head teachers are low—0.8 per cent. in 2005.

Through the National College for School Leadership (NCSL), we will continue to develop strong school leaders with the necessary skills to help us achieve our objective of raising standards for every pupil in every school. Since 2001, over 14,000 candidates have completed the National Professional Qualification for Headship, which prepares aspiring heads to take up headship posts in schools.

And we have also asked the NCSL to consider how it can help schools make more effective succession planning arrangements and to work with governor associations and other key partners, including local authorities, to develop advice to governors on recruitment, selection and succession planning.

Home Education

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many parents in Milton Keynes are educating their children at home. [45430]

Jacqui Smith: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given on 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1915–916W.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many parents in Coventry, South are educating their children at home. [42783]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given on 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1915W.

Independent Schools

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils aged 11 years in each local education authority transferred to independent secondary schools in each of the last 20 years for which figures are available from *(a)* local authority schools and *(b)* grant maintained schools. [46424]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of children of compulsory school age in each local education authority area attended independent schools in the last year for which figures are available. [46494]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is shown in the table.

Number and percentage of pupils in independent schools January 2005—by local authority and Government office region in England

	Pupils of compulsory school age[1]		
	Number of pupils in all schools[2]	Number of pupils in independent schools	Percentage of pupils in independent schools[3]
England	6,913,400	434,750	6.3
North East	348,260	10,380	3.0
Darlington	14,108	605	4.3
Durham	65,534	1,586	2.4
Gateshead	25,372	662	2.6
Hartlepool	13,506	0	0.0
Middlesbrough	19,814	21	0.1
Newcastle upon Tyne	34,382	3,740	10.9
North Tyneside	25,851	778	3.0
Northumberland	41,327	546	1.3
Redcar and Cleveland	20,654	0	0.0
South Tyneside	20,540	0	0.0
Stockton-on-Tees	27,504	1,465	5.3
Sunderland	39,665	973	2.5
North West	976,710	43,000	4.4
Blackburn with Darwen	24,490	2,721	11.1
Blackpool	19,982	872	4.4
Bolton	41,219	2,521	6.1
Bury	26,638	1,761	6.6
Cheshire	95,434	6,737	7.1
Cumbria	66,775	2,552	3.8
Halton	16,975	4	0.0
Knowsley	22,113	20	0.1
Lancashire	158,271	4,803	3.0

Number and percentage of pupils in independent schools January 2005—by local authority and Government office region in England

	Pupils of compulsory school age[1]		
	Number of pupils in all schools[2]	Number of pupils in independent schools	Percentage of pupils in independent schools[3]
Liverpool	62,067	2,003	3.2
Manchester	60,260	4,790	7.9
Oldham	35,641	1,249	3.5
Rochdale	30,565	354	1.2
Salford	30,417	1,874	6.2
Sefton	40,764	2,391	5.9
St. Helens	24,873	649	2.6
Stockport	40,301	3,807	9.4
Tameside	32,039	160	0.5
Trafford	31,476	1,801	5.7
Warrington	27,580	6	0.0
Wigan	43,086	34	0.1
Wirral	45,740	1,887	4.1
Yorkshire and the Humber	705,620	25,700	3.6
Barnsley	29,937	108	0.4
Bradford	73,001	2,908	4.0
Calderdale	29,777	1,075	3.6
Doncaster	41,708	432	1.0
East Riding of Yorkshire	44,015	1,210	2.7
Kingston Upon Hull, City of	35,343	1,143	3.2
Kirklees	55,937	1,624	2.9
Leeds	95,810	4,081	4.3
North East Lincolnshire	23,277	336	1.4
North Lincolnshire	22,228	153	0.7
North Yorkshire	79,358	4,868	6.1
Rotherham	38,525	250	0.6
Sheffield	66,661	2,369	3.6
Wakefield	47,415	3,316	7.0
York	22,629	1,826	8.1
East Midlands	596,070	25,190	4.2
Derby	33,782	936	2.8
Derbyshire	101,655	3,506	3.4
Leicester	42,462	2,401	5.7
Leicestershire	86,634	4,095	4.7
Lincolnshire	91,739	3,431	3.7
Northamptonshire	94,218	4,499	4.8
Nottingham	35,980	2,574	7.2
Nottinghamshire	103,816	2,421	2.3
Rutland	5,781	1,327	23.0
West Midlands	765,120	31,440	4.1
Birmingham	152,599	5,682	3.7
Coventry	42,760	2,240	5.2
Dudley	43,944	240	0.5
Herefordshire	22,889	1,516	6.6
Sandwell	41,739	10	0.0
Shropshire	39,249	3,608	9.2
Solihull	33,794	1,531	4.5
Staffordshire	112,438	3,468	3.1
Stoke-on-Trent	31,555	181	0.6
Telford and Wrekin	24,575	644	2.6
Walsall	40,214	837	2.1
Warwickshire	70,606	4,674	6.6
Wolverhampton	33,950	1,235	3.6
Worcestershire	74,805	5,569	7.4
East of England	766,950	49,240	6.4
Bedfordshire	57,468	4,269	7.4
Cambridgeshire	74,095	5,816	7.8
Essex	184,861	8,959	4.8
Hertfordshire	158,191	17,096	10.8
Luton	28,207	476	1.7
Norfolk	102,813	4,899	4.8
Peterborough	24,719	355	1.4
Southend-on-Sea	23,949	1,121	4.7
Suffolk	92,279	6,247	6.8
Thurrock	20,370	0	0.0
London	969,380	94,200	9.7
Inner London	343,450	44,770	13.0
Camden	21,849	5,360	24.5
City of London	1,634	1,465	89.7

Number and percentage of pupils in independent schools January 2005—by local authority and Government office region in England

	Pupils of compulsory school age[1]		
	Number of pupils in all schools[2]	Number of pupils in independent schools	Percentage of pupils in independent schools[3]
Hackney	25,886	4,665	18.0
Hammersmith and Fulham	17,436	3,937	22.6
Haringey	29,220	1,468	5.0
Islington	19,513	365	1.9
Kensington and Chelsea	16,215	7,589	46.8
Lambeth	24,721	1,626	6.6
Lewisham	30,310	1,498	4.9
Newham	41,372	516	1.2
Southwark	34,116	3,781	11.1
Tower Hamlets	30,680	875	2.9
Wandsworth	29,762	6,472	21.7
Westminster	20,739	5,151	24.8
Outer London	625,920	49,430	7.9
Barking and Dagenham	25,183	0	0.0
Barnet	42,236	4,695	11.1
Bexley	34,440	542	1.6
Brent	33,118	1,591	4.8
Bromley	42,458	3,595	8.5
Croydon	48,886	5,512	11.3
Ealing	38,316	4,316	11.3
Enfield	41,933	1,298	3.1
Greenwich	31,140	2,067	6.6
Harrow	28,989	3,557	12.3
Havering	32,730	698	2.1
Hillingdon	36,627	2,845	7.8
Hounslow	28,999	798	2.8
Kingston upon Thames	19,528	2,902	14.9
Merton	21,571	2,790	12.9
Redbridge	37,819	3,053	8.1
Richmond upon Thames	24,006	6,482	27.0
Sutton	26,254	1,313	5.0
Waltham Forest	31,689	1,379	4.4
South East	1,116,520	110,690	9.9
Bracknell Forest	14,821	1,932	13.0
Brighton and Hove	29,169	3,070	10.5
Buckinghamshire	69,158	6,532	9.4
East Sussex	64,896	5,681	8.8
Hampshire	170,767	12,819	7.5
Isle of Wight	17,484	685	3.9
Kent	195,945	14,165	7.2
Medway	38,611	1,099	2.8
Milton Keynes	31,279	837	2.7
Oxfordshire	83,677	11,135	13.3
Portsmouth	24,729	2,530	10.2
Reading	15,709	2,249	14.3
Slough	17,034	533	3.1
Southampton	27,223	1,459	5.4
Surrey	148,929	28,546	19.2
West Berkshire	22,935	2,183	9.5
West Sussex	101,434	8,698	8.6
Windsor and Maidenhead	20,479	4,262	20.8
Wokingham	22,244	2,274	10.2
South West	668,780	44,930	6.7
Bath and North East Somerset	24,798	3,178	12.8
Bournemouth	19,304	1,175	6.1
Bristol, City of	46,930	6,119	13.0
Cornwall	66,027	2,047	3.1
Devon	91,516	6,475	7.1
Dorset	52,227	4,181	8.0
Gloucestershire	80,677	6,332	7.8
Isles of Scilly	232	0	0.0
North Somerset	25,164	773	3.1
Plymouth	33,684	900	2.7
Poole	17,175	730	4.3
Somerset	70,788	6,965	9.8
South Gloucestershire	35,576	286	0.8
Swindon	25,732	49	0.2
Torbay	16,770	564	3.4
Wiltshire	62,183	5,154	8.3

[1] Solely registered pupils aged 5 to 15.
[2] Includes maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools, direct grant nursery schools, special schools, pupil referral units, independent schools, city technology colleges and academies.
[3] The number of pupils in independent schools expressed as a percentage of the number of pupils in all schools.
Note:
National and regional totals have been round to the nearest 10. There may be discrepancies between the sum of constituent items and totals as shown.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Junior Schools

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the average amount of time taken by junior schools to complete the relevant application forms for local education authorities in order to hold *(a)* a nativity play and *(b)* other similar events in schools. [46041]

Jacqui Smith: If the forms in question were about health and safety, then we would recommend that local education authorities should not require schools to seek clearance from the authority for on-site events that involve no particularly hazardous activities. Schools can, and do, manage these themselves.

Languages

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the availability of teaching of each of the 20 languages most used in London. [39878]

Jacqui Smith: The Department does not hold data centrally on languages spoken by schoolchildren in London. A survey undertaken in 2000 by Philip Baker for the School of Oriental and African Studies[1] indicated that there are over 300 languages spoken in London and that the 20 most common first languages are, in descending order of number of speakers, English, Bengali/Silheti, Panjabi, Gujerati, Hindi/Urdu, Turkish, Arabic, English based Creoles, Yoruba, Somali, Cantonese, Greek, Akan (Ashanti), Portuguese, French, Spanish, Tamil, Farsi, Italian and Vietnamese.

The medium of instruction in maintained schools is English and all pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL) should be supported to acquire English. The Government's 'Aiming High' strategy for raising achievement of pupils learning EAL advocates that schools should make use of pupils first language in the classroom, where appropriate, as a tool for learning alongside learning English.

[1] Baker. P and Eversley, J (eds) (2000) Multilingual Capital, London: Battlebridge

The Department does not hold data centrally on the provision of mother tongue teaching in London, however, it is known from local authority data, where available, that there is widespread provision for teaching community languages through supplementary schools. For example, supplementary schools in Croydon provide teaching in 23 languages and supplementary schools in Islington provide teaching in 30 languages. These schools are usually run by local communities and respond directly to local demand.

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the Prime Minister's answer of 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 839, what definitions she uses of *(a)* aptitude and *(b)* academic ability in modern languages. [45351]

Jacqui Smith: 'Ability' is defined in statute by section 99(5)*(b)* of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as 'either general ability or ability in any particular subject or subjects'. Paragraph 7.11 of the statutory School Admissions Code of Practice defines a pupil with aptitude as 'one who is identified as being able to benefit from teaching in a specific subject, or who demonstrates a particular capacity to succeed in that subject'.

Admission authorities of schools have been able to select up to 10 per cent. of their intake based upon applicant's aptitude in certain prescribed subjects, which includes modern foreign languages. We allow this limited flexibility so that pupils with a relevant aptitude can gain access to particular schools with relevant specialist provision where they might not otherwise have been able to do so.

Learning and Skills Councils (London)

Jon Cruddas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total budget of London's learning and skills councils was in each year since 2001; and how much was spent on *(a)* school sixth forms, *(b)* the further education sector, *(c)* work-based training for young people, *(d)* workforce development, *(e)* adult and community learning, *(f)* information and advice for adults, *(g)* education-business links and *(h)* administrative costs in each year. [46429]

Bill Rammell: I have overall responsibility for the LSC; however the operations of the LSC are managed and overseen by Mark Haysom, the LSC's chief executive. The Grant Letter and Priorities for Success sets the LSC budget for the year including a breakdown of school sixth forms, further education, work-based learning, and PCDL (ACL). Allocations within these overall categories to regional and local levels are a matter for the LSC. Mark Haysom will write to the hon. Gentleman with further information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

The following table shows the total spend by the Greater London Region between 2001–02 and 2004–05 taken from the LSC's published accounts. Note that the LSC did not have responsibility for the funding of school sixth forms in 2001–02.

£000

	Greater London programme expenditure	*Total programme expenditure*
2001–02	843,690	5,133,291
2002–03	1,226,159	7,356,739
2003–04	1,446,923	8,569,725
2004–05	1,512,792	9,011,547

Jon Cruddas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to make London's learning and skills councils more accountable

to the people who use their services as part of the Government's commitment to devolve decision-making to the lowest appropriate level. [46431]

Bill Rammell: The LSC is currently undergoing a radical restructuring exercise which will enable it to work even more effectively with local partners and stakeholders in identifying and responding to London's learning and skill needs. The existing local office structure will be replaced by a number of specialist local Partnership and Economic Development teams made up of experienced education and training professionals. They will work closely with local partners and stakeholders to ensure that properly funded education and training is available that meets the needs of learners and employers in the London area. These changes are in keeping with the Government's wider public sector reform agenda, which seeks to move responsibility for local delivery closer to the frontline. Each of the local LSC councils in London continue to include representatives from a wide range of local interests, including employers, local authorities and the voluntary and community sector.

The LSC's proposals are currently out to consultation with staff and unions until the end of January, and the final agreed changes will take effect from summer 2006. We will also want to consider in due course the outcomes of the current consultation on the powers and responsibilities of the Greater London Authority.

National Complaints Service

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the proposed powers of the National Complaints Service from Ofsted referred to on page 9 of the White Paper, "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All". [46447]

Jacqui Smith: Subject to the passage of legislation, we intend to give Ofsted the power to investigate complaints by parents about matters which fall within Ofsted's inspection remit. Ofsted will consider complaints which concern the work of a school as a whole, rather than individual pupils or staff, and will expect parents to have previously sought resolution at a local level. In pursuance of an investigation, the school and the local authority may be required to provide information to Ofsted, and the school may be required to arrange a meeting between parents and inspectors. Ofsted will determine, in the light of its investigation, whether further action is necessary. This may include bringing forward a scheduled school inspection or carrying out an inspection without notice.

National Remodelling Team

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the work of the National Remodelling Team. [46583]

Jacqui Smith: The National Remodelling Team (NRT), part of the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), works with my Department and the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG) to support schools in implementing the provisions of the National Agreement on Raising Standards and Tackling Workload that was signed in January 2003 by the Government, employers and the majority of school work force unions.

The NRT has also been supporting the pilots of the extended schools programme and is now supporting the national roll-out.

National Training Programme

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how the national training programme, referred to on page 10 of the White Paper, "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All", will be funded. [46439]

Jacqui Smith: Through our existing National Strategies Programme, we will be delivering a national training programme free of charge to schools, to train leading professionals to help develop personalised learning in schools.

In addition, we will be investing £565 million by 2007–08 to support personalisation in primary and secondary schools and a further £60 million in each of the next two years to provide effective one-to-one and small group tuition for the lowest attaining pupils in targeted schools.

Neighbourhood Nurseries

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which *(a)* private, *(b)* voluntary sector and *(c)* public sector organisations participated in the delivery of (i) Neighbourhood Nurseries, (ii) the extended schools programme, (iii) children's trusts and (iv) early excellence centres in each year for which information is available. [43934]

Beverley Hughes: The Department works closely with all sectors and maintains strong links with local authorities, schools, Primary Care Trusts, and other public sector bodies, as well as a wide range of private and voluntary organisations. This enables us to establish and sustain high quality provision that meets children's needs, and offers parents real choice and diversity. We also encourage organisations from different sectors to act together, pooling resources and expertise.

Data are not available on the private, voluntary and public sector organisations that have been involved in the delivery of Neighbourhood Nurseries, the extended schools programme, children's trusts and Early Excellence Centres.

New School Providers

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills who will be authorised to approve or reject the establishment of new schools as proposed in the White Paper, "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All". [46443]

Jacqui Smith: We propose that the decision-maker for proposals for new schools should normally be the local authority in its modernised role as the commissioner, rather than direct provider, of education. There will however be a range of circumstances in which proposals may be referred to schools adjudicator for decision.

North Somerset

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to increase the average funding per schoolchild in North Somerset to the average level of funding in *(a)* the West Country and *(b)* England. [46173]

Jacqui Smith: The level of funding per pupil received through the dedicated schools grant (DSG) reflects the characteristics of children in each authority: authorities receive more funding if they have higher numbers of children living in deprived circumstances. That is because pupils from more deprived backgrounds are likely to have additional educational needs, and to require additional help if they are to have an equal chance to succeed. North Somerset's average level of funding per pupil mainly reflects the authority's lower than average level of deprivation. The Government will review the operation of a number of aspects of the new school funding arrangements, including the DSG distribution, but in doing so it will continue to aim to give all pupils an equal opportunity in life.

One-to-One Tuition

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of pupils she estimates will be eligible for targeted one-to-one tuition in *(a)* English and *(b)* mathematics; and what estimate she has made of the cost of the proposed provision. [46445]

Jacqui Smith: Our recent White Paper—Higher Standards, Better Schools for All—sets out this Government's determination to ensure every child masters the basics of literacy and numeracy. There will be an extra investment of £565 million by 2007–08 to support personalisation in primary and secondary schools, focusing particularly on helping children who have fallen behind in English and mathematics. A further £60 million will be available in each of the next two years to provide effective one-to-one and small group tuition for the lowest attaining pupils in targeted schools.

It will be for each school, with support from the National Strategies, School Improvement Partners and other local authority school improvement staff, to decide the type and pattern of provision they need to meet the learning needs of their pupils, and how to make the best use of small group and one-to-one tuition.

Overcrowded Housing

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the impact of overcrowded housing conditions on the educational prospects of children. [42915]

Maria Eagle: A research review commissioned by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2003 found some indication that there is a relationship between overcrowding and children's educational attainment, and between overcrowding and children's social and emotional development. However, the research evidence on the effects of overcrowding on attainment is limited. It is also hard to separate any direct effect of overcrowding from the effect of other associated factors, such as poverty and degree of parental involvement in education. Current evidence suggests that any direct effect of overcrowding on attainment is likely to be small.

Parent Councils

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will prescribe the powers of parent councils in *(a)* trust schools and *(b)* non-trust schools. [46448]

Jacqui Smith: We will require foundation schools with a foundation (trust schools), where the trust appoints the majority of governors, to establish a parent council. Parent councils will have a consultative and advisory role. We will encourage other schools to have a parent council but will not require them to do so.

Parenting Contracts/Orders

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many parenting *(a)* contracts and *(b)* orders have been applied in schools in each of the last five years. [46626]

Jacqui Smith: My Department started to collect data regarding parenting contracts and parenting orders (in cases of non-attendance and exclusions from school) from September 2004. The data are provided at local authority level.

Between September 2004 and 31 July 2005 local authorities in England reported that 6,135 education-related parenting contracts were agreed with parents and 427 education-related parenting orders were imposed by the courts. Data for autumn 2005 will be published in March 2006.

Pension Contributions

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39999]

Maria Eagle: The actual cost of the employer pension contributions incurred by the Department for Education and Skills and their Non-Departmental Public Bodies for the last three financial years is set out in the following table:

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
DfES (SE, NW, S.Yorks)	15,573,000	17,497,000	17,535,000
Adult Learning Inspectorate (E. Mids)	1,418,000	1,610,000	1,646,000
Higher Education Funding Council for England (SW)	906,000	1,016,000	1,073,000
Learning and Skills Council (E.Mids)	15,744,000	16,109,000	16,413,000

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Partnership for Schools (SE)	—	—	81,000
Qualification and Curriculum Agency (SE)	2,213,000	2,337,000	2,506,000
Training and Development Agency For Schools (SE)	701,000	911,000	1,020,000
Sector Skills Development Agency (S.Yorks)	90,000	267,000	348,000
General Teaching Council (E. Mids)	—	—	538,000

For 2005–06, employers' contributions are payable to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) at one of four rates in the ranges 16.2 per cent. to 24.6 per cent. of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The Scheme Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation; last carried out as at 31 March 2003. The contribution rates reflect the cost of benefits as they accrue (net of employee contributions), not the costs as they are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

The planned estimated costs for 2005–06 are:

	Amount (£)
DfES	18,549,000
All	2,212,000
HEFCE	1,566,000
LSC	22,525,000
P4S	104,000
QCA	4,000,000
TDA	1,271,000
SSDA	358,000
GTC	692,000

Post-16 Education

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the *(a)* further and *(b)* higher education participation rate was in each ward in each local authority area, broken down by region, for the last year for which figures are available: [46067]

(2) what the staying-on rates were for 16-year-olds in full-time education in each local authority area in 2005. [46071]

Bill Rammell: Participation rates, as a percentage of the local population are not available at ward level. Participation rates for those aged 16 and 17, in schools, FE colleges, LSC funded work-based learning and part-time education are available for local education authorities (LEAs) in England. The latest available figures are for 2003 and these were published in the Statistical First Release "Participation in education and training by 16 and 17-year-olds in each local area in England"—SFR11/2005 on 31 March 2005.

The publication is accessible on the DfES website via the link, http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000568/index.shtml.

LEA detail is available through the link: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000568/SFR11-2005tables_lea.xls.

Participation rates for young people in higher education are available for LEAs and for parliamentary constituencies in England, Wales and Scotland. The latest available figures are for 2000 and were released alongside the report "Young Participation in Higher Education" by HEFCE in January 2005.

The publication is accessible on the HEFCE website via the link, http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05_03/.

LEA detail is available through the link, http://www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/polar/extra/lea/.

Primary Schools

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on subsidies for primary schools in the Bournemouth area for daily school milk. [44844]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have been asked to reply.

The EU funds a scheme which subsidises the provision of milk to primary and nursery schools. In England the Government supplements the EU subsidy for primary schools by payment of an annual maximum of £1.5 million in national aid. Participation in the scheme, which is administered by the Rural Payments Agency, is entirely a matter for schools or local education authorities. Bournemouth Borough Council is on the Agency's register of subsidy claimants.

Protection of Children Act

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many checks against the Protection of Children Act list were made in the last year for which figures are available; and what the average time taken to respond to each check was in the last period for which figures are available. [44897]

Andy Burnham: I have been asked to reply.

The Criminal Records Bureau's Standard and Enhanced Disclosures will include a check against the Protection of Children Act (POCA) list where this is requested on the application form. The total number of Disclosures issued in 2005 containing a check against the POCA list was 2,005,205. There are no figures available to determine the average time taken to process a POCA check because the check forms part of the overall internal CRB Disclosure process and figures are not collated centrally.

Pupil Referral Units

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many places have been provided in off-site pupil referral units in each of the last five years. [46440]

Jacqui Smith: The Department does not collect data on the number of places that pupil referral units (PRUs) have available. However, we collect data on the number of pupils who were being educated in PRUs at the time

of the annual school census. The table sets out the number of pupils who were attending PRUs only at the time of the census, as well as those who were attending both a PRU and another educational institution for their education.

	Number of pupils attending PRUs only	*Number of pupils attending a PRU and another institution*
2001	9,290	4,990
2002	9,960	4,970
2003	12,010	5,520
2004	13,040	7,290
2005	14,470	8,010

Note:
Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Annual schools' census—Pupil Referral Units.

School Admissions

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many and what percentage of secondary school places were allocated at age 11 years on the basis of aptitude tests in each of the last 20 years for which figures are available in *(a)* local authority schools and *(b)* grant maintained schools; [46422]

(2) how many secondary school places in each London borough were allocated at age 11 years on the basis of aptitude tests in each of the last 20 years for which figures are available in *(a)* local authority schools and *(b)* grant maintained schools. [46423]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is not collected centrally.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the schools and academies that use banding in their admissions policies. [46436]

Jacqui Smith: Until 1998, admission authorities for schools were not required to seek approval of statutory proposals to introduce banding arrangements. Therefore, we have no data on the number of maintained schools that introduced banding pre-1998, and who continue to operate it. Since 1998, the following 13 maintained schools have introduced banding to their admission policies:

Kingsthorpe Community College
Duston Upper School
Trinity School
Western Favell Upper School
Lings School
Northampton School for Girls
Mereway Upper College
Kings College
The Central Technology College
Holland Park School
Northolt High School
Hull Trinity House School
Cardinal Pole Roman Catholic School

At present, 10 academies include banding in their admission policies. These are:

The Business Academy Bexley
The City of London Academy (Southwark)
The Academy at Peckham
Walsall Academy
Mossbourne
Haberdashers' Aske's Knights Academy
Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham College Academy
Dixons City Academy
The Macmillan Academy
Unity City Academy

School Leavers

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of pupils left secondary school with no qualifications in each London borough in each year since 1997. [40808]

Jacqui Smith: The figures requested are included in the following table.

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving no passes at GCSE and equivalent[2]: 1997–2005[3]

	No passes at GCSE and equivalent[2]								
Local authority[4]	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005[2]*
Camden	8.6	6.4	6.9	5.9	4.1	6.1	4.8	3.9	3.4
Greenwich	12.2	10.0	9.7	6.9	7.4	6.8	6.5	4.6	5.0
Hackney	7.9	6.9	7.3	6.8	6.9	8.7	5.1	2.5	3.6
Hammersmith and Fulham	8.1	6.5	4.5	0.6	3.9	2.7	3.7	3.0	3.2
Islington	13.5	9.8	9.1	8.3	11.4	11.6	5.1	4.4	4.4
Kensington and Chelsea	4.5	7.5	6.8	6.7	3.8	4.7	5.6	4.7	3.3
Lambeth	5.9	5.8	4.5	3.0	4.5	3.6	4.0	2.5	3.2
Lewisham	8.2	5.9	5.3	6.0	7.1	4.3	5.2	3.7	2.8
Southwark	7.6	6.2	5.3	2.0	4.7	4.4	5.2	5.0	4.2
Tower Hamlets	9.3	5.0	4.2	2.4	3.5	1.9	3.9	3.0	3.8
Wandsworth	6.6	6.7	5.0	3.0	4.8	4.2	7.2	4.6	3.7
Westminster	12.4	12.7	8.4	5.3	6.1	5.9	4.9	4.1	3.8
Barking and Dagenham	8.7	7.3	5.5	3.0	4.9	7.1	5.1	4.2	3.6
Barnet	6.4	6.5	6.9	4.8	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.1	3.5
Bexley	4.3	4.2	3.6	4.5	4.5	3.4	3.4	2.6	1.7
Brent	4.7	5.8	5.1	1.5	3.8	3.8	4.1	3.2	2.5
Bromley	4.8	3.5	4.1	3.4	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.1	2.1
Croydon	6.6	5.8	4.6	3.2	4.0	3.9	4.6	3.1	2.4
Ealing	7.1	5.7	4.4	1.5	1.8	0.8	3.4	2.5	2.2
Enfield	6.7	5.4	3.5	2.9	3.2	4.2	4.5	3.5	3.5
Haringey	11.4	7.8	7.4	7.0	7.9	8.1	9.8	7.0	5.5
Harrow	4.6	4.3	4.3	3.3	3.3	2.6	4.3	2.7	3.5

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving no passes at GCSE and equivalent[2]: 1997–2005[3]

	No passes at GCSE and equivalent[2]								
Local authority[4]	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005[2]*
Havering	4.2	4.2	2.6	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.2	2.3	2.3
Hillingdon	8.3	6.7	6.6	4.8	3.8	5.3	6.4	5.9	4.2
Hounslow	6.7	4.6	5.4	4.2	4.3	4.5	4.9	3.6	2.8
Kingston upon Thames	7.5	7.5	5.6	6.9	6.0	8.3	5.1	3.3	3.0
Merton	9.8	7.7	8.1	7.4	6.3	8.7	7.8	6.4	4.9
Newham	4.9	3.2	3.5	0.0	2.4	0.6	2.0	1.8	1.4
Redbridge	2.8	2.3	1.4	0.8	2.1	1.4	2.2	2.1	2.2
Richmond upon Thames	6.5	3.6	4.2	4.4	5.8	6.6	3.4	2.9	3.6
Sutton	5.0	4.5	3.2	3.5	4.0	3.3	3.6	2.9	2.8
Waltham Forest	8.0	7.7	6.7	6.5	6.4	4.8	6.4	6.5	5.3

[1] The figures shown relate to pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year.
[2] Figures for 1997 to 2003 include GCSE and GNVQs only. Figures for 2004 and 2005 include GCSEs and other approved qualifications.
[3] 2005 figures are revised. Figures for 1997 to 2004 are finalised.
[4] Local authority figures include all maintained schools and exclude independent schools, non-maintained special schools and independent special schools.

School Maintenance

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on *(a)* repairing and *(b)* rebuilding schools in the Ruislip-Northwood constituency in each year since 1992. [45842]

Jacqui Smith: Capital allocations to local authorities and schools are higher than ever before. In 2005–06 they are £5.5 billion and they are planned to rise to £6.3 billion in 2007–08, an increase from £683 million in 1996–97.

Central records on capital expenditure are held from 1996–97. Allocations are made directly to local authorities and schools and not at constituency level. Capital allocations made to Hillingdon local authority and its schools since 1997 are set out in the following table:

	£ million
1996–97	3.9
1997–98	2.8
1998–99	23.1
1999–2000	5.5
2000–01	10.9
2001–02	8.7
2002–03	25.6
2003–04	14.8
2004–05	18.9
2005–06	12.3

Note:
1998–99 and 2002–03 figures include Private Finance Initiative credits of £18.4 million and £14.6 million respectively.

We expect local authorities and schools to take decisions locally on allocating funds on school repairs and rebuilding schools in accordance with their local asset management plan. Accordingly, records of these categories of capital expenditure are not held centrally.

School Staff (Checks)

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how long foreign nationals may work as teachers in a school before having to register with the General Teaching Council. [44738]

Jacqui Smith: Overseas trained teachers can teach in England for up to four years without Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). If they wish to continue to work in maintained schools for longer than four years they must gain QTS via the appropriate TDA approved route and register with the General Teaching Council (GTC).

Directive 89/48EEC facilitates the free movement of any national of an EEA member state (MS) wishing to pursue a regulated profession in a host MS. Therefore a migrant teacher with the relevant qualification is given automatic recognition under the directive and they are awarded Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) following an application to the GTC. Again, once they have gained QTS they will have to register with the GTC to teach in a maintained school.

School Transport

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will ask the Children's Commissioner to undertake a review of local authority tendering processes for school transport to ensure vulnerable children are protected. [45172]

Jacqui Smith: The Department for Education and Skills advises that employers should carry out criminal record checks on anyone working with children, and is actively considering whether more guidance is needed in relation to child protection and school transport. At the moment, we have no plans to involve the Children's Commissioner.

The Children's Commissioner is independent of Government and free to look at any issue he considers relevant in promoting awareness of the views and interests of children. If the Secretary of State asks the Children's Commissioner to look at a particular matter, unless it involves holding an enquiry into the case of an individual child, he is free to decline.

Schools (Extended Hours)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools offer extended hours from 8 am to 6 pm; and if she will make a statement. [41302]

Beverley Hughes: Many schools are open before and after normal schools hours offering child care and study support type activities. We know, through a baseline survey of extended services in schools published in September 2005 that 40 per cent. of primary schools and 61 per cent. of secondary schools are providing some

before school child care or activities, and that 87 per cent. of primary schools and 95 per cent. of secondary schools are providing some after school child care or activities, though only a small number, 2 per cent. of primary schools and 0.5 per cent. of secondary schools, provided access to the 8 am to 6 pm child care all year round.

We have committed £840 million to developing extended services, including high quality 8 am to 6 pm all year round child care, study support, and before and after school clubs so that they are accessible through all our schools by 2010. We have also appointed the National Remodelling Team to provide support to schools and local authorities in developing extended services. Good progress is being made with 4,400 schools, thus far, indicating their willingness to work on developing extended services.

Schools Finance

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the level was of local authority spending on education *(a)* in total and *(b)* per student in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in (i) 2004–05 and (ii) 2005–06; what the dedicated schools grant proposed (A) in total and (B) per student in Newcastle-upon-Tyne is for 2006–07; and what the cash spending increase is (1) in total and (2) per pupil between 2005–06 and 2006–07. [44597]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* Total education spending by Newcastle-Upon-Tyne local authority in 2004–05 was £185 million, including spending on provision outside schools. The Department is currently working on figures for spending on school provision for 2004–05 that are comparable with the Dedicated Schools Grant, on both a cash and per pupil basis, and will place them in the Library as soon as they are available.

The Dedicated Schools Grant 2005–06 baseline per pupil for Newcastle-Upon-Tyne is £3,390. In 2006–07 the guaranteed per pupil unit of funding is £3,640, an increase of 7.3 per cent. The total DSG allocation will not be finalised until May 2006 when the January 2006 pupil figures are finalised. In addition, while authorities must apply the whole of their allocation of DSG to their Schools Budget, they are free to add to it from their own resources. Final figures for total budgeted expenditure per pupil for 2006–07 may therefore be higher than the authority's allocation of DSG per pupil for that year.

Shropshire

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the adequacy of the level of direct support grant allocated to those Shropshire schools with deficits for the next financial year. [46272]

Jacqui Smith: The Department for Education and Skills pays dedicated schools grant (DSG) to local authorities, to provide for those items that are included in each local authority's schools budget, which consists of the delegated budgets allocated to individual schools, and a budget for other provision for pupils which local authorities fund centrally. Each local authority then decides, in consultation with its Schools Forum, on the distribution of funding between its schools. The national formula for distribution of DSG does not take account of the level of deficit at an authority's schools and, normally, local authority formulae for distributing funding do not do so either. However, it is open to an authority to distribute additional funding to a school which is in financial difficulties. Where a school is in deficit, it should agree a plan with its local authority to eliminate the deficit over a three-year period.

Skills for Life

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much the Government have allocated to the Skills for Life campaign in each year since its inception; and if she will make a statement. [46315]

Phil Hope: I refer the hon. Member to table 13 of the NAO's report "Skills for Life: Improving adult literacy and numeracy", 15 December 2004, which sets out estimated actual spend on Skills for Life from 2000–01. Copies of this report have been placed in the House Libraries. Confirmed spend for 2004/05 is not yet available.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will increase funding *(a)* for the skills strategy and *(b)* to assist those young people who do not have adequate skills in communication, numeracy and literacy. [46081]

Jacqui Smith: The Skills for Life Strategy to address adult literacy, language and numeracy skills, which forms part of the wider Skills Strategy, covers all young people and adults aged 16 and above. Therefore young people aged 16–19, who for whatever reason, have not gained the literacy and numeracy skills they need for life and work, are included in the strategy. Around 39 per cent. of Skills for Life learners are 16–18 year olds. Since 2001, the Government have invested £3.7 billion to develop an infrastructure, put in place standards, curriculum and qualifications and help millions of young people and adults to improve their skills.

As part of the forthcoming comprehensive Spending Review, the Department is actively considering the future resource needs to meet the ambitious Skills for Life aims and the objectives of the wider Skills Strategy.

Special Educational Needs

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many cases have been referred to the academies special educational needs dispute resolution service; and from which academies. [45392]

Jacqui Smith: The Academies Special Educational Needs Dispute Resolution Service is an independent service, which Academy Principals can choose to access. As such, no cases are referred to the service, and as an independent resource, information on which academies have called on it is not held centrally.

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what budget she has allocated for the academies special educational needs dispute resolution service; for what period of time; and if she will make a statement. [45393]

Jacqui Smith: The Academies SEN Dispute Resolution Service has a budget of £81,500 for the period 1 December 2004 to 30 November 2006. The Academies SEN Dispute Resolution Service was introduced to facilitate timely decisions made at local level about the naming of an Academy in a child's statement of SEN.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent on the provision of special needs education in each local authority area *(a)* in real terms and *(b)* at today's prices in each of the last 20 years. [46073]

Jacqui Smith: The available information has been placed in the House Libraries. We do not have comparable data prior to 2000–01.

Sure Start

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total Sure Start budget was in each year since its inception; and what the projected budget is in each of the next three years. [46074]

Beverley Hughes: Details of actual and planned expenditure on Sure Start, child care and nursery education from 1999–2000 to 2007–08 are published in Table 12.2 of the Department for Education and Skills' Departmental Report (Cm 6522). To reflect the increasing integration of services for young children and families, from 2003–04 funding for child care and nursery education was merged into Sure Start:

£ million

Financial year	*Sure start*	*Child care*	*Nursery education*	*Total*
1999–00	7	56	150	213
2000–01	56	65	247	368
2001–02	134	109	224	467
2002–03	216	158	306	680
2003–04		721		721
2004–05[1]		927		927
2005–06		1,140		1,140
2006–07		1,696		1,696
2007–08		1,809		1,809

[1] Outturn in DfES Resource Accounts 2004–05 (HC 686)

Teachers

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching posts were vacant in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Milton Keynes in each year since 1997; and what the average vacancy rate for local education authorities in England was in each year. [45428]

Jacqui Smith: The following table provides the number of full-time teacher vacancies in maintained nursery, primary, and secondary schools in Milton Keynes local authority and vacancy rates for Milton Keynes and England in each January since 1997.

Milton Keynes local authority was created from within the former Buckinghamshire local authority on 1 April 1997. Therefore, no figures are available for January 1997.

Full-time teacher vacancy numbers[1] and rates[2] in maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools in Milton Keynes and England, January 1997 to 2005.

	Milton Keynes				*England*	
	Nursery/Primary		*Secondary*		*Nursery/Primary*	*Secondary*
	Vacancy numbers	*Vacancy rates (Percentage)*	*Vacancy numbers*	*Vacancy rates (Percentage)*	*Vacancy*	*Vacancy rates (Percentage)*
1997	..	..	..	..	0.6	0.4
1998	5	0.6	0	0.0	0.8	0.6
1999	8	0.9	2	0.3	0.8	0.5
2000	6	0.7	1	0.1	0.8	0.7
2001	11	1.3	8	1.2	1.2	1.4
2002	9	1.0	2	0.3	1.0	1.3
2003	9	1.0	2	0.3	0.6	1.1
2004	7	0.7	9	1.2	0.5	0.9
2005	8	0.8	13	1.7	0.4	0.8

[1] Advertised vacancies for full-time permanent appointments (or appointments of at least one term's duration). Includes vacancies being filled on a temporary basis of less than one term.
[2] Vacancies as a percentage of teachers in post i.e. full-time regular teachers in maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools, plus full-time regular divided service, peripatetic, advisory and miscellaneous teachers.
Source:
DfES annual survey of teachers in service and teacher vacancies, (618G).

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers of *(a)* Australian, *(b)* New Zealand, *(c)* South African, *(d)* Malawian, *(e)* Ghanaian, *(f)* Namibian, *(g)* Kenyan and *(h)* Nigerian nationality are working in schools in the UK. [45543]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what financial support her Department has offered to trainee teachers since 1997. [45890]

Jacqui Smith: Since September 2000, we have provided £6,000 bursaries to PGCE trainee teachers in a range of priority subjects. From September 2005, the bursary for mathematics and science trainees rose to £7,000, and from September 2006 it will increase to £9,000 for all priority subject trainees.

We have provided Golden Helios to those who go on to teach priority subjects since 1998 when £5,000 Golden Helios were introduced for postgraduate trainees in mathematics and science. New style £4,000 Golden Helios, paid after induction is completed, were

introduced in 2000/01 for those who trained and teach priority subjects, maths, science, modern languages and technology. For those training in maths and science from September 2005, Golden Helios increased to £5,000. In June 2005, I announced Golden Helios from 2006/07 of £5,000 for maths and science trainees and £2,500 for other priority subjects, including extending Golden Hello payments to trainees in RE and Music.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to reduce the level of violent incidents against teachers. [45893]

Jacqui Smith: The great majority of schools are safe and orderly places, but we are determined to reduce the risk of violence to an absolute minimum. To achieve that we are:

legislating to give heads, teachers and other school staff a clear statutory power to discipline pupils, to reaffirm their statutory right to use reasonable force in certain circumstances and to give them a new power to search pupils for weapons;

developing specific violence reduction advice and training, in co-operation with associations representing heads and other school staff.

In addition we have:

given every secondary school access to high-quality behaviour management training materials and expert advice from behaviour management consultants;

funded extra support for schools facing the greatest challenges through our Excellence in Cities and Behaviour Improvement Programmes;

provided £120 million for school security improvements since 1997;

given schools a legal toolkit on how to ban aggressive parents from the site and have them removed and prosecuted if they flout the ban; and

helped to establish over 400 Safer Schools Partnerships that base police officers in schools.

Also, we are:

giving every primary school access to high-quality training and curriculum materials for developing pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills and developing similar materials for secondary schools.

The Department has confirmed that it is committed to backing head teachers' authority when pupils' behaviour warrants exclusion. We have made clear that heads can permanently exclude pupils who are very disruptive or violent even where this is a first or 'one off' offence. Guidance for exclusion appeal panels makes clear that an exclusion should not normally be overturned in a range of circumstances, including where there has been violence or the threat of violence. For less extreme offences head teachers may exclude pupils for a fixed period or may impose detention.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers in maintained schools in England have left the profession in each year since 1998. [46444]

Jacqui Smith: Information on the number of teachers leaving service is published on the department's website at the following URL:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/VOL/v000633/index.shtml

Table C1c refers. They are also available in the House of Commons Library.

Although the numbers of teachers leaving service has risen since 1998 the number of new entrants has shown a greater increase. As a result the number of teachers in service has risen continually since 1998 and the full-time equivalent number of teachers in service is now 32,700 higher than in 1997. Between 2004 and 2005 the increase was 4,200. Teacher numbers are now at their highest level since 1981.

The numbers of early retirements reduced in 1998–99 following changes in the Teachers' Pensions Regulations and this is reflected in the table.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* full-time teachers and *(b)* teaching assistants were employed in the Shropshire local education authority area in each year since 1997. [44975]

Jacqui Smith: The following table provides the number of full-time regular teachers and the full-time equivalent number of teaching assistants employed in Shropshire local authority in each January since 1997. Teaching assistant data can only be provided on a FTE basis. The FTE of regular teachers has been provided for consistency.

Telford and Wrekin local authority was created from within the former Shropshire local authority on 1 April 1998. Figures have been provided for this authority for comparison purposes.

Full-time regular teachers and full-time equivalent number of teaching assistants in Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin local authorities.

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Teachers[1]									
Full-time									
Shropshire	3,080	3,090	1,760	1,860	1,890	1,920	1,880	1,850	1,810
Telford and Wrekin	n/a	n/a	1,250	1,230	1,290	1,300	1,340	1,320	1,280
FTE									
Shropshire	3,330	3,350	1,940	2,050	2,110	2,140	2,110	2,110	2,080
Telford and Wrekin	n/a	n/a	1,360	1,340	1,410	1,420	1,470	1,450	1,420
Teaching assistants[2,3]									
FTE									
Shropshire	520	560	360	390	490	590	760	800	780
Telford and Wrekin	n/a	n/a	260	280	370	390	480	530	580

n/a = Not applicable.

[1] DfES annual survey of teachers in service and teacher vacancies, 618g.

[2] Annual school census.

[3] Includes non maintained special schools.

Truancy

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether her proposed fines for parents of unsupervised children during school hours will apply to parents in receipt of income support and jobseeker's allowance. [46442]

Jacqui Smith: Yes. The proposed offence will require the parents of pupils who have been excluded from school to ensure that their child is not in a public place during normal school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of exclusion.

Failure to do so could result in a penalty notice. Failure to pay the penalty will result in prosecution which could lead to a fine of up to £1,000. Courts must take ability to pay into account in setting the level of any fine.

University Places

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the likely effects of the introduction of top-up fees on the level of applications for university admissions in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07; and if she will make a statement. [41450]

Bill Rammell: Latest figures published by Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) show that accepted applicants from England to full-time undergraduate courses rose by 9 per cent. in 2005/06. This was a larger than usual increase. We might therefore expect a slight fall in application numbers for the 2006 entry and then a return to a long-term upward trend, as experienced in 1997 and 1998 when the last major change to student support arrangements was introduced.

Latest figures for 2006/07, covering students who applied by mid-October to Oxbridge or to medical and dentistry courses, show that applicants from the UK were down by 2 per cent. However, these are early figures and only give a partial picture. The first major milestone in the application cycle is mid-January, which is the advisory closing date for applications from UK domiciled students. Figures for the number of students who had applied by this point will be published by UCAS in mid-February, and these will give a more reliable indication of trends.

Year 12 Pupils

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of year 12 pupils left school before the end of the academic year in the latest year for which figures are available. [46498]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is not collected centrally.

Young Parents (Education)

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what national target she has set for increasing the number of *(a)* pregnant teenagers and *(b)* parents aged 16-to-18 years in learning. [45524]

Phil Hope: The teenage pregnancy strategy includes a target—shared with the Connexions service—to increase the proportion of teenage mothers aged 16-to-19 in education, employment or training (EET) to 60 per cent. by 2010.

Youth Clubs

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will estimate how many youth clubs were available for young people in *(a)* the constituency of Ruislip-Northwood, *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon, *(c)* Greater London and *(d)* England in each of the last 10 years. [46356]

Maria Eagle: Youth clubs are delivered locally by local authority youth services and national and local voluntary youth organisations. Information is not held centrally on the number of youth clubs run by each individual local authority.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Artists Resale Levy

Ms Gisela Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1760W, on the artists' resale levy, what independent economic research is referred to; and what aspects of this research differ from previous research on this subject. [46123]

Barry Gardiner: The economic research referred to is the 'Scoping Study: Artist's Resale Right' published on the Patent Office website. This was an independent study commissioned to consider the impact of resale right on a range of parties. It considered the number of sales affected, the number of UK artists likely to benefit from resale right and the costs of administering the right. This study was based on the most recent figures available and was able to take in a wider range of data than had previously been possible. The authors of this study spoke to representatives of both the art market and the artists.

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* staff and *(b)* students were employed at the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology stations in each year since 1996; and if he will make a statement. [43894]

Barry Gardiner: The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) is wholly owned by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC). NERC science budget allocation has doubled since 1997 to £334 million for this year, demonstrating our commitment to maintaining the quality of environmental research in the UK. NERC is currently consulting widely with stakeholders on proposals on how best CEH can contribute on a sustainable basis to this. I have asked the Chief Executive of NERC to write to my hon. Friend with details of staff and student numbers at CEH.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what areas of scientific research will be *(a)* reduced and *(b)* discontinued following the proposed Centre for Ecology and Hydrology closures. [44852]

Barry Gardiner: The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) science budget allocation has doubled since 1997 to £334 million for this year, demonstrating our commitment to maintaining the quality of environmental research in the UK. NERC has published a business plan for the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) for consultation. This is available at http://www.nerc.ac.uk/consult/ceh/ceh-businessplan.pdf It contains details of the proposals for the future of CEH, which reflect NERC's consideration of its scientific priorities, and how best CEH can contribute to these on a sustainable basis.

Under the proposed new structure, CEH would continue to deliver its current six science programmes. Final decisions on specific areas of research that would be reduced or discontinued await the outcome of the public and staff consultation processes and subsequent decision by NERC Council.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* domestic awards have been won, *(b)* international science awards have been won and *(c)* papers have been published in *Nature* by scientists working at the laboratories which will be closed under the proposed restructuring of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. [42555]

Alan Johnson: It will take some time for the Natural Environmental Research Council to collate this data, and I have asked the chief executive of NERC to write to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many endangered species in the UK the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology has been credited with saving from extinction. [44853]

Barry Gardiner: The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) carries out research on, and monitoring of, various aspects of the natural environment, including endangered species. The research findings are used by Government Departments and others in forming policy and taking action, including on endangered species.

Research by CEH or its precursor organisations has contributed to the development of species action plans (SAPs) for at least six plant species, and improved understanding of the lifecycle requirements of, or the impact of human activities on, several vulnerable or threatened animal species including 15 butterfly species, two fish species, the otter, smooth snake, peregrine, sparrowhawk, golden-eagle, capercaillie, black grouse, Scottish crossbill and bullfinch.

The CEH business plan (www.nerc.ac.uk/consult/ceh/businessplan.asp) indicates that research in biodiversity (which includes these areas of research) would be expected to continue following the proposed restructuring.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many environmental research projects Government Departments and agencies have commissioned the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology to undertake in each year since 1997; [44862]

(2) how much funding the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology received in each year since 1997; and what the proposed funding totals are for the next five years. [44863]

Barry Gardiner: The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) is wholly owned by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC). The science budget allocation to NERC has doubled since 1997, demonstrating our commitment to maintaining the quality of environmental research in the UK. NERC is currently consulting widely with stakeholders on proposals on how best CEH can contribute on a sustainable basis to this.

NERC has been asked to collate data on projects commissioned at CEH from Government Departments and agencies, and on funding of CEH. I shall ask the chief executive of NERC to write to the hon. Member on these points.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the impact which the proposed Centre for Ecology and Hydrology closures will have on schools, colleges and universities with which it has educational and training links. [44864]

Barry Gardiner: The Government provide funding to the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) to support research and related postgraduate training in environmental sciences in the UK. NERC has published a business plan for the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) for consultation. This proposed plan used the output from a strategic review which included information concerning links with schools, colleges and universities. In particular, collaborative research links with universities were one of many factors analysed to inform the proposed retained-site locations.

Although the proposed closure of sites would inevitably affect some local links, particularly with schools, CEH and NERC would continue to support educational outreach activities and interaction with academic and other partners.

Departmental Research

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research projects commissioned by his Department are being undertaken; and what the publication arrangements are in each case. [33001]

Alan Johnson: A trawl of DTI Directorates and its Agencies has identified some 50 research projects. These are being collated into a table and I will write to the hon. Member with the details very shortly and place copies of my letter in the Libraries of both Houses. Published reports are listed on the Department's website http://www.dti.gov.uk/publications/.

Electricity Generation

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research has been *(a)* commissioned

and *(b)* evaluated by the Department into the potential for using waste heat from the chemical industry to produce electricity. [36984]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has commissioned no specific research. However, the Carbon Trust has launched Project Bolt to examine the potential for the commercialisation of projects linking providers and purchasers of waste heat.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will take steps to ensure that new EU rules on coal-fired power stations do not lead to a fall in electricity generated from coal. [45699]

Malcolm Wicks: In consultation with industry and with their support, we have done everything possible to ensure that coal fired power stations have been given that maximum degree of flexibility in how they meet EU regulations. For example, the Government have been successful in securing Commission agreement to our proposed implementation of the large combustion plants directive, thereby ensuring that coal-fired power stations which opt in to compliance with the LCPD and invest in flue gas desulphurisation are not subject to an absolute cap on the amount of electricity they generate.

It is, however, for the owners of coal-fired power stations to decide whether to opt in and make the investment, and how much electricity to generate from those stations.

Energy Imports

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much *(a)* coal and *(b)* gas was imported during the last year for which figures are available, broken down by country of origin. [46823]

Malcolm Wicks: Imports of coal and other solid fuels by country of origin during 2004 are shown in the table. In the same year 95,363GWh of gas were imported from Norway and 37,670GWh were imported via the Zeebrugge to Bacton interconnector. It is not possible to identify where gas imported through the interconnector was physically sourced.

Imports of coal and solid fuel by country of origin 2004

Thousand tonnes

2004	*Steam coal*	*Coking coal*	*Anthracite*	*Other solid fuel*
European Union				
Belgium/Luxembourg	6	—	5	18
Denmark	—	—	—	1
Estonia	—	—	22	—
France	32	—	18	8
Germany	8	—	5	49
Irish Republic	34	—	6	8
Italy	—	—	—	37
Latvia	—	—	11	5
Netherlands	183	—	10	38
Poland	1,205	—	3	18
Portugal	8	—	—	—
Spain	24	—	—	—
Sweden	—	—	—	19
Total European Union	1,500	—	80	199
Australia	2,035	4,140	—	25
Canada	25	715	—	18
Colombia	3,630	—	—	53
Indonesia	1,458	—	—	—
Norway	138	—	—	2
People's Republic of China	190	—	43	432
Republic of South Africa	10,105	—	39	—
Russia	9,776	148	8	142

Imports of coal and solid fuel by country of origin 2004

Thousand tonnes

2004	*Steam coal*	*Coking coal*	*Anthracite*	*Other solid fuel*
United States of America	717	1,342	2	—
Venezuela	39	—	—	—
Vietnam	—	—	23	—
Other countries	—	—	—	179
Total all countries	29,614	6,345	194	1,051

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the peak import rate of gas into the United Kingdom via the Bacton Interconnector has been to date in winter 2005–06; and what the average rate was for the 10 highest days. [46855]

Malcolm Wicks: In the period 1 October 2005 to 24 January 2006, the highest daily import of natural gas through the Bacton-Zeebrugge Interconnector was 379 GWh; this occurred on 9 January. The average rate for the ten highest consecutive days was 310 GWh per day (359 GWh per day based on absolute days).

EU Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which other EU countries have not yet implemented the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive. [42295]

Malcolm Wicks: Currently, I understand that Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland and Spain have not yet fully implemented the requirements of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive.

Food Retail Sector

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what policies his Department has put in place to promote and support small businesses in the food retail sector. [41427]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have been asked to reply.

Defra provides a wide range of support for small businesses in the food sector, including food retail. For example, in 2004–05, the Department provided an additional £2 million to the Business Link Network to support projects designed to look at different approaches to increase the uptake of advice to small businesses in economically underperforming rural areas. The Department supports the retention of shops in small settlements. In line with this, the Government have assisted local services by extending mandatory rate relief at 50 per cent. to include sole village public houses, petrol stations and village food shops under the village shop scheme. Planning guidance has also been provided to local authorities to adopt a positive approach to planning proposals designed to improve the viability, accessibility or community value of existing services and facilities such as village shops. The Department also provides a range of trade development, consumer awareness and business competitiveness initiatives, as well as funding under various grant schemes, to regional and local food businesses, including assisting small producers to gain access to markets. The Department also currently devotes just under £4 million per year on

schemes to encourages innovation in the food sector and pays particular attention to dissemination of research and development results to small and medium sized food and drink companies through, for example, a network of Regional Technology Transfer Centres.

Gas Supply

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to his answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2328W, on gas supply, whether the planned investment in liquid natural gas import projects includes a facility on Canvey Island; and if he will make a statement. [45683]

Malcolm Wicks: Development of import infrastructure is a commercial matter for market participants. Calor Gas Ltd. submitted planning applications in January 2006 to Castle Point borough council for conversion of the existing LPG (liquid petroleum gas) terminal to a LNG (liquefied natural gas) terminal on Canvey Island. Further details can be found at the website: http://www.canveylng.co.uk/.

Green Ministers

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what work his Department's Green Minister has undertaken during the last 12 months in an official capacity in that role. [16238]

Malcolm Wicks: Following the general election in May, the Cabinet Sub-Committee of Green Ministers (ENV(G)) was replaced by the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development in Government (EE(SD)) whose members are departmental Sustainable Development Ministers.

As the Minister of State for Energy, I was appointed as our departmental Sustainable Development Minister in June 2005. In July, I attended a breakfast seminar for Sustainable Development Ministers to discuss the sustainable development strategy and Ministers role in delivering it.

Manufacturing Jobs

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many manufacturing jobs have been lost in Beverley and Holderness in each year since 1997. [39251]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 9 January 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about manufacturing jobs in Beverley and Holderness. I am replying in her absence. (39251)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes in numbers of jobs from year to year.

The attached table shows the information requested, relating to net change in manufacturing jobs in Beverley and Holderness, from 1997 to 2004; the latest year for which information is available.

These estimates are from the Annual Business Inquiry and the Annual Employment Survey and, as with any sample survey, are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Change in employee jobs in manufacturing in Beverley and Holderness: 1997–2004

	Number of employee jobs	*Net change*
1997	5,200	—
1998	4,900	−300
1999	4,600	−300
2000	4,500	−100
2001	3,600	−900
2002	4,100	+500
2003	3,900	−200
2004	3,600	−300

Source:
Rescaled AES (1997) and ABI (1998–2004)

Miners Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many miners' compensation claims have been submitted for Bassetlaw constituents by *(a)* Raleys, *(b)* Moss, *(c)* AMS Law, *(d)* Wake Smith, *(e)* Beresfords, *(f)* BRM, *(g)* Graysons, *(h)* Thompsons, *(i)* Vendside, *(j)* Kidd Spoor Harper, *(k)* Robinson King and *(l)* Stanton Croft solicitors. [45739]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of claims submitted by the listed representatives for Bassetlaw constituents is as follows:

Solicitor	*COPD*	*VWF*	*Total*
Raleys	463	239	702
Moss	461	515	976
AMS	391	514	905
Wake Smith	288	6	294
Beresfords	1,387	735	2,122
BRM	252	0	252
Graysons	636	617	1,253
Thompsons	138	30	168
Vendside	9	1	10
Kidd Spoor	334	164	498
Robinson King	14	19	33
Stanton Croft	0	2	2

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what advice he has issued to claimants on the practice of solicitors passing miners' compensation cheques directly to claims handlers. [45740]

Malcolm Wicks: No such advice has been issued. The Department is not aware that this is happening. The majority of all damages cheques raised by Capita are made payable to the claimant, but sent to his representative. The exception to this rule is where the claimant provides a form of authority specifically requesting his damages cheque is made payable to his representative.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the solicitors who have been deducting fees from claimants' compensation in respect of coal mining injuries notwithstanding that they are already remunerated by his Department under the British Coal Claims Handling Agreement. [9906]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department does not have a list of solicitors who have been found to be double charging. The supervision of solicitors is a matter for the Law Society who I have written to.

Mining Industry (Nottinghamshire)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry with which agencies dealing with mining industry issues, with an address, staff or telephone number base in Nottinghamshire his Department has had discussions in the last 12 months. [45909]

Malcolm Wicks: The only agencies based in Nottinghamshire the Department has had discussions with in the last 12 months are the Union of Democratic Mineworkers, Vendside and their legal advisors.

Nuclear Power

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2255W, on nuclear power, whether he has now received the strategy proposals from the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority for the decommissioning and clear up of its sites; and whether it remains his intention to consider and come to a decision on the proposed strategy by 31 March. [45730]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 26 January 2006]:* Scottish Ministers and I have received the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority's proposed strategy and will reach a decision on the document before 31 March.

Parliamentary Questions

Gordon Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he will reply to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Ochil and South Perthshire on 16 November 2005, reference 30608, on Scottish Coal. [46383]

Malcolm Wicks: I answered my hon. Friend's question on 26 January 2006.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he will reply to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Na h-Eileanan an Iar on 27 June 2005 reference 8552, on offshore staff registration. [46390]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I answered the hon. Member's question on 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2174W.

Post Office

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans his Department has to secure the future of the post office network; and if he will make a statement. [45578]

Barry Gardiner: The DTI is backing the efforts of the management of Post Office Ltd. to turn the business around and create a network fit for the 21st century. We have invested over £2 billion in total since 1999 to help them to do so.

We want to see a post office network that meets the needs of today and the future and not those of 20 or 30 years ago. The DTI are discussing with other Government Departments and Post Office Ltd. how we can best achieve this.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* rural and *(b)* urban sub-post offices there were in (i) England and (ii) the UK in each year since 1979; and if he will make a statement. [45583]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. and the chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many customers used the Post Office Card Account in each quarter from 2002 to 2006; and if he will make a statement. [45576]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. (POL) and the chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the economic impact on the Royal Mail of the loss of the Department of Work and Pensions' card account contract in 2010; what the value of the contract to the Post Office is in 2005–06; and what the estimated percentage income for *(a)* rural and *(b)* urban post offices arising from the card account contract is for 2005–06. [45946]

Barry Gardiner: The Post Office Card Account contract will generate revenues of at least £1 billion for Post Office Ltd. between 2003 and 2010. Discussions between Post Office Ltd. and Department of Work and Pensions on what accounts, other than the Post Office Card Account, will be available after 2010 are on-going. The value of the contract to Post Office Ltd. in 2005–06 depends on the numbers of customers using it and customers are able to use their Post Office Card Accounts at any post office branch whether rural or urban.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people are using the Post Office Card Account; how many withdrawals of *(a)* pensions and *(b)* other benefits from Post Office Card Accounts there were in each of the last two years (i) in each region, (ii) in rural areas and (iii) in urban areas; and what the total value of such withdrawals was in (A) rural and (B) urban areas. [46058]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. (POL) and the chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department plans to take to minimise the impact of the loss of the Post Office Card Account contract on the Post Office network. [46061]

Barry Gardiner: We have always been clear that Government will fund the Post Office Card Account until 2010. Discussions between the Department of Work and Pensions and Post Office Ltd. are continuing about how they take things forward after 2010.

Regional Aid Guidelines

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when his Department will begin its consultation on Article 87 (3) of the Regional Aid Guidelines; and which areas he expects will be included. [46124]

Alun Michael: The European Commission adopted the Regional Aid Guidelines on 21 December 2005. I will be consulting shortly on the best way for the UK's discretionary coverage to be applied.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what support his Department is providing in 2005–06 to research into the development of tidal power; and at what locations tidal power is being piloted. [46193]

Malcolm Wicks: For the financial year 2005–06 the DTI has provided funding to tidal power research totalling £2.56 million.

At present one prototype tidal power research device is located in the sea, near Lynmouth in Devon and another is under construction in Strangford Lough in Northern Ireland. In the next year it is anticipated that at least two more prototypes will be installed at the European Marine Energy Centre in Stromness, Orkney and one prototype in the Humber Estuary at Hull.

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessments he has commissioned of the potential for exploiting micro-hydro power generation in Wales as part of the energy review. [46573]

Malcolm Wicks: No assessment has been commissioned on the potential for exploiting micro-hydro generation in Wales as part of the energy review. However, the DTI did commission a report looking into the costs and benefits of a range of micro generation technologies including micro-hydro. This report was published on 12 December 2005 and can be found at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/consultations/pdfs/microgeneration-est-report.pdf

Scottish Coal

Gordon Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much Scottish Coal received from the Coal Aid Scheme in each month of 2001; and whether any of this assistance was ring-fenced for redundancy assistance. [46542]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 26 January 2006.

Small Business Research Initiative

Kitty Ussher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the timescale is for making it mandatory for Government departments to implement the Small Business Research Initiative; how that will be enforced; and if he will make a statement. [45285]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 26 January 2006]:* The Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) was launched in April 2001 as a cross-departmental Initiative. It is designed to stimulate and increase the demand for research and development (R and D) from high tech small firms and give them the opportunity to demonstrate that they have the ability to undertake and deliver high quality R and D to the public sector. The participating government departments agreed to a target of purchasing at least 2.5 per cent. of their extramural R and D from SMEs by 2004–05. The Research Councils are also participating in their own arrangements.

The Chancellor mandated departments with extramural R and D budgets to take part in the Initiative in his Budget on 16 March 2005, at which time the implementation process commenced.

Compliance with the mandatory requirement is monitored by the DTI's Small Business Service. The present focus is on making a success of the relatively newly introduced mandatory option. To this end, in order to improve access for small firms, departments will be required to use the Supplier Route to Government (CSRG29) website to offer Government R and D contract opportunities, when it is launched shortly.

Until the 16 March Budget participation was voluntary. We aim to publish the voluntary phase performance figures for 2003–04 and 2004–05 under SBRI as soon as possible.

In future, we will publish performance figures on an annual basis. Apparent poor performance by individual departments will be investigated initially by the Small Business Service and Ministers will decide what action to take in order to bring about an improvement.

VAT (Pendle)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses *(a)* registered and *(b)* deregistered for VAT in Pendle in each year since 1997. [45929]

Alun Michael: The number of businesses registering and de-registering for VAT in the Pendle constituency, are shown in the table for the period 1997 to 2004. Data for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006.

VAT registrations and de-registrations in Pendle constituency 1997 to 2004

	Registrations	*De-registrations*
1997	170	195
1998	180	185
1999	185	170
2000	225	170
2001	215	185
2002	190	160
2003	230	205
2004	205	190

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2004, Small Business Service, available from the Libraries of the House and also at http://www.sbs.gov.uk/vats

VAT registration and de-registration data do not capture all business activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 4.3 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2004.

Telephone Preference Service

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 291–92W, on the Telephone Preference Service, with which regulations the 925 complaints received were concerned. [46011]

Alun Michael: The 925 complaints referred to in the reply as having been considered by the Information Commissioner were complaints under the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 regarding alleged breaches of Regulation 21, which relates to unsolicited direct marketing telephone calls.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2212, on waste electrical and electronic equipment, if he will provide an estimate of the range of unit costs involved in compliance with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive; and what the Department's estimate is for compliance over the next three years. [46523]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested by the hon. Member can be found in the WEEE Directive partial impact assessment. This is available on the Department of Trade and Industry's website at:

http://www.dti.gov.uk/sustainability/weee/WEEERIA_July_2004.pdf

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what regulations the Government plan to implement to transpose the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive 2002/96/EC into domestic law; and when he will publish such regulations. [34119]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 2 December 2005]:* On 14 December 2005, I announced a review of proposals for implementing the waste electrical and electronic equipment directive in the UK. A new timetable for implementation will not be set until the review is concluded.

Wave Power

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding his Department allocated for *(a)* demonstration and *(b)* pre-commercial trials of wave power in the UK in each of the last five years. [43313]

Malcolm Wicks: During the five-year period between January 2000 and the present approximately £9.95 million has been committed to a total of 27 wave energy R&D projects concerning all stages of technology development from initial proof of concept to full scale demonstration. This is broken down by year as follows:

£

Year in which project started	*Total funding endorsed*
2000	3,061,108
2001	1,289,987
2002	1,968,591
2003	2,934,822
2004	44,780
2005	659,271

A further £50 million 'Marine Renewables Deployment Fund' has been allocated to support the continued development of wave and tidal-stream technologies of which £42 million is for direct support to early-stage pre-commercial trials.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Airspace (Extraordinary Renditions)

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2468W, on airspace (extraordinary renditions) what media report first caught *(a)* his and *(b)* his officials' attention; and on what date. [43481]

Dr. Howells: Press reports and correspondence from Members of Parliament brought these allegations to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) attention in the summer of 2004. I cannot say with certainty precisely which press report first caught the attention of FCO ministers and officials.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2839W, on airspace (extraordinary rendition) in which category of *(a)* records and *(b)* data renditions should be listed. [43601]

Dr. Howells: Cases of rendition would not be recorded in either such records or such data because the Ministry of Defence records neither the purpose of civil flights using military airfields nor transit passengers on civil flights using military airfields, except VIPs, and because neither national air traffic services data nor the British Airports Authority records include information about passengers or, beyond very broad category types, the purpose of flights.

Information about requests for the use of UK airspace or airfields for the purposes of rendition would be held in the records of the policy branches which provided advice on those requests to Ministers in the Departments concerned.

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the US Administration about the obligations in relation to the rendition of terrorist suspects under *(a)* the European Convention on Human Rights and *(b)* the UN Convention on Torture. [45320]

Dr. Howells: I refer the hon. Member to my written answer to the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent (Peter Law) on 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 969W.

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what account he has taken of the UK's obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights when *(a)* considering requests for the rendition of terrorist suspects through UK airspace and *(b)* making reference to the US Secretary of State's statement on the legality of such renditions.

Dr. Howells: I refer the hon. Member to my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary's written answer to the right hon. Member for North East Fife (Sir Menzies Campbell) on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1643W.

In her statement on 5 December 2005, the US Secretary of State said,

> "in conducting such renditions, it is the policy of the United States . . . to comply with its laws and comply with its treaty obligations, including those under the Convention Against Torture".

The United States is not bound by the European Convention on Human Rights, to which it is not a party.

Mr. Burrowes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 151–52, in what circumstances the Government would assist another state in a rendition operation. [45892]

Dr. Howells: I refer to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent (Peter Law) on 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 969W.

Arms Trade Treaty

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will begin negotiations within the UN General Assembly for an arms trade treaty. [45554]

Dr. Howells: We are working to build support for the launch of a UN based process to take forward the initiative for an international treaty on the arms trade. In 2005, support was secured from both the EU and the Commonwealth. We will continue to build further support during 2006 with the aim of securing the start of a formal process at the earliest opportunity.

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1430W, on audible fire alarms, what plans he has to extend audible fire alarm coverage in his Department's buildings. [45682]

Dr. Howells: Although 91 per cent. of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) UK estate is covered by audible fire alarms featuring voice instructions via a public address system or similar, all of the FCO UK estate is covered by automated audible alarm systems. The FCO carries out regular assessments of its fire precautions and seeks to implement any recommendations arising from these assessments. These may include improvements to existing fire alarm systems.

Burma

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what representations he has made to the Government of Burma about the confiscation of Muslims' farmlands, including Waqf properties, in Arakan; [45551]

(2) what representations he has made to the Government of Burma about the building of Buddhist pagodas and monasteries on mosque land in Arakan state; [45556]

(3) what representations he has made to the Government of Burma about the prohibition of repairs, renovation and construction of mosques in Arakan state; [45558]

(4) what representations he has made to the Government of Burma about movement restrictions imposed on the Rohingya people; [45559]

(5) what representations he has made to the Government of Burma about the treatment of the Rohingya people. [45804]

Ian Pearson: The UK co-sponsored the latest resolution on human rights abuses in Burma at the UN General Assembly in December. This highlighted the ongoing systematic violation of the human rights including violations of the right to an adequate standard of living, discrimination and violations suffered by persons belonging to ethnic nationalities, women and children. This includes forced relocation; forced labour, including child labour; denial of freedom of assembly, association, expression and movement; wide disrespect for the rule of law, and the confiscation of arable land, crops, livestock and other possessions.

We believe that some of the most serious of these human rights abuses are suffered by the Rohingya population in Northern Rakhine State, and in particular their freedom of religion.

Embassy staff have raised the situation of the Rohingya with Government officials during regular visits to Northern Rakhine State. They also draw the attention of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees representatives in Burma to reports of abuses and encourage them to raise them in their contacts with the local authorities.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Burma about the detention of National League for Democracy Vice Chairman U Tin Oo. [45734]

Ian Pearson: The UK co-sponsored a highly critical Resolution on Burma at the UN General Assembly in December which called for the release of U Tin Oo.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the private banking sector in Burma. [45736]

Ian Pearson: The domestic banking crisis of February 2003, and subsequent restrictions imposed by the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) on banking transactions have led to problems in the banking sector, with a knock-on effect on the private sector economy. We welcome the SPDC's investigations into money-laundering which have led to the closure of certain banks, but believe that the reports of these investigations should be made public.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Burma about the administrative detention of *(a)* Kyaw Hsan, *(b)* Htwe Myint and *(c)* Thu Wai. [45793]

Ian Pearson: Htwe Myint and Thu Wai are no longer in detention. We are aware of three political prisoners called Kyaw Hsan; we have not raised any of these individual cases with the Burmese Government.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Burma about the continued imprisonment of the Buddhist nuns Ma Than Htay and Ma Thin Thin Oo. [45797]

Ian Pearson: We have made no representations to the Burmese regime about Ma Than Htay and Ma Thin Thin Oo.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of *(a)* the effectiveness of EU sanctions on Burma, *(b)* the effects EU sanctions are having on (i) the Junta and (ii) ordinary Burmese citizens and *(c)* the role EU sanctions are playing to bring about the freedom of Aung San Suu Kyi. [46321]

Ian Pearson: We consider that the best interests of the people of Burma continue to be served by a twin-track common position of targeted measures against members of the regime, and humanitarian support to the poorest and most vulnerable. The targeted measures are intended to exert pressure on the regime to enact democratic reforms. We would expect the release of Aung San Suu Kyi to be among the first steps in such a process.

Chad

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he had with the African Union on helping to expedite the return of the former Chadian leader Hissène Habré to stand trial. [46050]

Ian Pearson: There have been no discussions between the Government and the African Union (AU) regarding Hissène Habré. The AU discussed the extradition request for Mr. Habré, submitted by the Belgian authorities to Senegal, at their summit of 16–24 January. The summit agreed to set up a committee of eminent African jurists to consider the case. The European Union has called on the AU to ensure that any decision is in line with the fight against impunity and that the crimes of which Mr. Habré is accused will be judged by a court.

Civil Service (Complaints)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs for what reasons responsibility for procedures for handling complaints against senior staff were transferred to the Civil Service Commission; what responsibilities *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* the Permanent Secretary retain in this regard; when these changes were decided upon; and by whom. [45906]

Dr. Howells: Responsibility for procedures for handling complaints against senior staff has not been transferred to the Civil Service Commissioners. The Foreign and Commonwealth (FCO) complaints procedure encourages any staff member who has a complaint about a work issue to raise this with their line manager in the first instance. Staff also have access to the FCO's Grievance Procedure which is in line with best practice.

If a member of staff believes they are being required to act in a way which is inconsistent with the Civil Service Code, there is a separate procedure to follow which could involve the Civil Service Commissioners. They should raise this in the first instance with their line manager, or one of the FCO's Nominated Officers or Human Resources. They may also approach the Director General for Corporate Affairs or the Permanent Under-Secretary. Staff can also contact the Civil Service Commissioners if they consider the response received is not a reasonable one or if they do not wish to use any internal channels.

Colombia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the human rights situation in Colombia. [45561]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Leeds, West (John Battle), on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1646W.

The human rights situation in Colombia remains grave. While we acknowledge that there has been a reduction in recent years in some human rights abuses, there is still a lot that needs to be done to improve the situation. During the visit to the UK by Vice-President Santos in late November 2005, my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), Lord Triesman of Tottenham, raised human rights issues. We have made it plain to the Government of Colombia that we are willing to work with them to help bring an improvement to the situation in the country, either as a bilateral partner or through our EU membership. We will continue to look for ways to bring about change, working with other partners such as the UN and civil society, to achieve this goal.

In addition, a Colombian trade union delegation will be visiting the UK in February at FCO expense. FCO officials will meet the delegation to discuss human rights and hear their views on how the Government can best support civil society in Colombia to improve the human rights situation.

Congo

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on the capture of members of the Lord's Resistance Army in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC); and if he will make a statement on the deaths of UN peacekeepers in the DRC. [45819]

Ian Pearson: My noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, issued a statement on 24 January to express his sadness at the deaths of the eight Guatemalan peacekeepers. He has also offered the Guatemalan Government the UK's condolences. The UN Security Council has also issued a presidential statement condemning the killings.

Foreign and Congolese armed groups operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) pose a daily threat to vulnerable civilians and to the delicate peace process. We fully support the United Nations' robust action to tackle the threat posed by all of these groups, and in particular the Lord's Resistance Army contingent, based in the DRC. The UK is also determined that there will be no impunity for war crimes or grave human rights abuses. We support the International Criminal Court's efforts to bring to justice the perpetrators of such abuses.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from buildings occupied by his Department in the past 12 months. [43434]

Dr. Howells: The following items have been recorded as lost or stolen from Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) buildings in the UK over the past 12 months:

A digital camera was stolen from an FCO department in January 2005.

An official telephone was reported lost by an FCO department in May 2005.

An FCO team lost four official phones in June 2005.

An official laptop was stolen from a hotel in London in June 2005.

An official laptop was stolen from an FCO department in May 2005.

Two official blackberries were stolen from FCO departments in May and June 2005.

Various bottles of alcohol have been reported stolen by FCO departments over the 12-month period.

Although records of items reported stolen or lost at overseas posts are not held centrally, the following thefts have been reported:

£279 worth of drinks was stolen from the ambassador's residence in Algiers.

A digital camera was stolen from the British embassy at Caracas in May 2005.

To collate detailed information on thefts and losses at all of our overseas posts would incur disproportionate costs.

Diplomatic Missions (Congestion Charge)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which countries' diplomatic missions have *(a)* indicated to his Department that they will not pay the London congestion charge and *(b)* have failed to pay this charge since 1 September 2005. [46025]

Dr. Howells: The Swiss embassy and the African Union Group have informed the Foreign and Commonwealth Office that, as a matter of policy, they do not pay the congestion charge. The US embassy has also informed us that they ceased paying the charge in July 2005. No other missions have indicated to us that they have failed to pay since September 2005.

Transport for London's records indicate outstanding Penalty Charge Notices incurred by individual members of diplomatic missions. These figures, up to 10 November 2005, were reported in my ministerial statement issued on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 127WS. The following list, provided by Transport for London, updates these figures to 20 January this year.

	Fines outstanding	*Amount in £*
United Arab Emirates	5,003	469,100
Angola	4,675	441,800
Sudan	3,298	314,370
Nigeria	2,262	216,070
Tanzania	1,691	159,180
Sierra Leone	1,550	147,040
South Africa	1,492	140,440
USA	1,224	107,150
Zimbabwe	1,092	103,640
Kenya	1,088	97,110

Diplomatic Service Appeals Board

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether recent changes in the mandate of the Diplomatic Service Appeals Board affect the right of departmental employees to appeal to the board in cases of complaints against senior management; what steps have been taken to ensure the independence of the board's secretariat in relation to the Department's human resources and management function; and if he will make a statement. [45903]

Dr. Howells: Changes to the mandate of the Diplomatic Service Appeal Board (DSAB) took place in early 2003. Following a review of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Misconduct Procedure and in consultation with the Trade Unions, it was agreed that the DSAB would hear appeals against dismissal and not lesser penalties. This amendment brought the DSAB into line with the Civil Service Appeal Board and provided similar rights of appeal for Diplomatic Service and Home Civil Service staff within the FCO.

The FCO's Grievance Procedure is available for any member of staff to use if they wish to pursue a formal complaint against a colleague. It is in line with statutory requirements and best practice.

The role of Secretary to the Board was transferred in early 2005 within the Human Resources Directorate from the FCO's Conduct Adviser to the Employee Relations Adviser. The latter has no involvement in conduct or disciplinary matters.

Early Retirement

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many departmental staff have been required to take compulsory early retirement on structural grounds under the provisions of FCO Circular 754/01; and if he will make a statement. [45895]

Dr. Howells: Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Circular 754/01, issued in December 2001, gave guidance to FCO employees at senior management level

on their options if they were unable to pick up jobs at the relevant appointment board. This included their eligibility to leave the FCO on compulsory early retirement (CER) terms. In order to help achieve the FCO's efficiency targets, in particular the decision to reduce substantially the number of staff in the senior management structure, these provisions were extended to a wider range of senior officers in September 2004, using funding from the Treasury's Efficiency Challenge Fund. This exercise enabled some officers not eligible for CER (i.e. those aged under 50) to leave on compulsory early severance (CES) terms. The numbers taking CER or CES in each of the last five years is as follows:

Number

	CER	*CES*
2001	8	—
2002	7	—
2003	11	—
2004	15	2
2005	23	7

Egypt

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the *(a)* transparency and *(b)* legitimacy of the recent elections in Egypt. [33924]

Dr. Howells: International election observers were not invited to the presidential or parliamentary elections in 2005, and as such it is difficult for us to comment on the transparency of legitimacy of the elections.

We welcomed the holding of the first multi-candidate presidential elections which took place on 7 September, as an important step in the political reform process.

The European Union issued a statement on 9 December 2005 about the parliamentary elections, noting concern about reports of widespread violence, but welcoming the decision to allow domestic groups to monitor the elections. This is available at:

http://www.eu2005.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1115146994806&a=KArticle&aid=1133773133659&date=2005-12-09.

Embassies and Consulates

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the financial and other benefits of running each embassy and consulate. [41407]

Mr. Straw: There is an inherent difficulty in ascribing a financial value to most foreign policy activity. The performance of the UK's Posts and Consulates are measured against each mission's annual objectives. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) reports against its objectives and public service agreements (PSAs) as set out in the Department's Annual Report (Command paper 6533). The contribution of posts is reflected in the performance monitoring against the FCO's PSAs.

Eritrea/Ethiopia (Arms Embargo)

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps have been taken to monitor the acquisition of weapons by *(a)* Eritrea and *(b)* Ethiopia since the lifting of the arms embargo of May 2001. [46211]

Dr. Howells: As there is no arms embargo in force, there are no formal mechanisms for monitoring arms acquisitions by Ethiopia and Eritrea, but we monitor closely developments in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

EU Constitution

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the EU constitution initiative and the prospects for its revival *(a)* in whole and *(b)* in part. [46273]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Following the French and Dutch 'no' votes in referendums on the EU constitutional treaty, EU Heads of State and Government agreed on the need for a period of reflection with a view to coming back to the matter during the first half of 2006. The Government will participate constructively in these discussions, but it would not be sensible to pre-empt now where the discussions might end up. In the coming months we need to focus on the EU's policy agenda, including follow-up to the issues discussed at Hampton Court.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 13 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 137W, on Iraq, what progress has been made with his inquiries with the United States Administration. [28367]

Dr. Howells *[holding answer14 November 2005]:* I apologise for the delay in providing a substantive answer to the hon. Member's questions on this matter. This is because the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), to whom the Special Rapporteur's letter was addressed, was dissolved at the end of June 2004. An additional difficulty is that the incident to which it refers is alleged to have happened in February 2004, when there was a great deal of militia activity of this type in Iraq. We are working with the United States Government, via whom the letter was passed to the CPA, to ascertain whether they have any record of what happened to the letter and what action was taken on it. They are still researching the archives.

Given the delay in providing a substantive reply, we will continue to pursue with the US authorities and, exceptionally, I will write to the hon. Member when we have more information, and will place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Israel

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs from what date the UK Government have raised concerns about respect to international humanitarian law with the government of Israel; on how many occasions; and what assessment he has made of the impact of these representations on Israel's human rights record under international law. [42756]

Dr. Howells: We have frequently made clear our concerns with the Israeli Government about respect for international humanitarian law over a number of years. Our Ambassador in Tel Aviv last raised house demolitions, route of the barrier, establishment of new settlements and the expansion of existing settlements in Arab neighbourhoods on 19 December 2005. Israel's respect for international humanitarian law still remains a concern and we will continue to raise these matters.

Madagascar

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received from non-governmental organisations on the closure of the British embassy in Madagascar. [45610]

Ian Pearson: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has received representations from 13 non-governmental organisations about the closure of the British embassy in Madagascar. Most express concern about Madagascar's continued development and the conservation of its wildlife.

Somalila

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent visits have been made to *(a)* Somaliland and *(b)* Somalia by British officials; and what organisations they met whilst there. [44456]

Ian Pearson: Officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Department for International Development (DFID) visited Somaliland on numerous occasions during 2005 and had meetings with the Somaliland authorities, local non-governmental organisations, the UN agencies operating there and the Somaliland Scouts veterans' association. Most recently, a DFID official took part in a joint needs assessment as part of the UN Development Programme aid co-ordination from 16 to 18 January 2006.

Officials from the FCO and DFID have visited Somalia and Puntland on a few occasions during 2005, as part of UN organised and protected missions, for meetings with the Transitional Federal Authorities in Jowhar, the National Aids Commission in Puntland and to assess conditions in the drought affected southern region. A DFID official working under the auspices of the World Food Programme assessed the humanitarian situation in Southern Somalia from 14 to 19 January 2006.

UK Ambassadors

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on which dates during the period from 2000 to 2004 the appointments board selected candidates to serve as ambassador in *(a)* Beijing, *(b)* Brasilia and *(c)* Mexico City. [45896]

Dr. Howells: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office selection board for senior appointments considered candidates for the three posts as follows:

In March 2000 it granted an extension to the then incumbent in Beijing. His successor was appointed following the board's meeting in January 2001.

In November 2001, it granted an extension to the then incumbent in Brasilia. His successor was appointed following the board's meeting in March 2003.

The board recommended a new ambassador in Mexico City for appointment at its meeting in July 2001.

UN Convention Against Corruption

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the UK's planned timetable is for ratification of the UN Convention Against Corruption. [46376]

Ian Pearson: The Government will ratify the United Nations Convention Against Corruption imminently. The instrument of ratification has been sent to New York to be deposited with the UN Secretary General, in accordance with article 67 of the Convention.

United States

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his reply of 20 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 746W, on US inquiries, whether he has received a reply from the relevant United States Government officials. [45378]

Dr. Howells *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* I refer to the reply I gave the hon. Member today (UIN 28367).

Visitor Visas

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what definition his Department uses of a family member in relation to visitor visas. [46876]

Dr. Howells: A family visitor is defined, under the Immigration Appeals (Family Visitor) Regulations 2000, as a person who applies for entry clearance to come to the United Kingdom in order to visit his/her:

husband, wife, civil partner, father, mother, son, daughter, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or first cousin;

mother, father, brother or sister of his/her husband or wife/civil partner;

husband or wife/civil partner of his/her son or daughter;

his/her stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother or stepsister;

a person with whom he/she has lived as a member of an unmarried couple for at least two of the three years before the day on which his/her application for entry clearance was made.

Yugoslavia

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the risks posed to United Kingdom security interests by *(a)* terrorist cells and *(b)* the former Yugoslav army material in the former Yugoslavia. [46654]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Our risk assessments—including those in the former Yugoslavia—are informed by the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC). JTAC analyses all intelligence relating to international terrorism, and produces threat assessments for Government Departments and agencies. It is Government policy not to comment on specific risk assessments and threat levels for security reasons: such information could be extremely useful to terrorists.

The risks posed by former Yugoslav army material is predominantly from undiscovered caches, and as such is difficult to quantify. UK troops are trained to respond appropriately to abandoned material: when ordnance is found, appropriate measures are taken to destroy it safely. UK troops also participate in Operation Harvest carried out by the EU Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina, EUFOR, to discover and collect illegal ordnance. In a typical three month period, EUFOR collect some 500 small arms, 200,000 rounds of ammunition, 2,500 hand grenades and over 250kg of explosives. The UK is also currently contributing over £500,000 to destroy surplus stockpiles of small arms, light weaponry and ammunition in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This project includes an initial target of 250,000 small arms and an additional overall aim of 10,000 tonnes of ammunition.

Zimbabwe

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what consideration he has given to requesting the Security Council to refer cases arising from the situation in Zimbabwe to the International Criminal Court. [45845]

Ian Pearson: The grave situation in Zimbabwe is a direct consequence of the policies pursued by the Mugabe regime. We have been active in securing international scrutiny for Zimbabwe's actions, including by the UN Security Council. The report of the United Nations Secretary General's Special Envoy, Anna Tibaijuka, on the recent clearance of housing in Zimbabwe noted that these human rights violations could come under the remit of the International Criminal Court (ICC). However, we judge that there is most unlikely to be agreement in the UN Security Council to refer Zimbabwe to the ICC at present and that failure to secure agreement would constitute a reverse.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of *(a)* the effectiveness of EU sanctions on Zimbabwe and *(b)* the effects of EU sanctions on (i) President Mugabe's Government and (ii) ordinary Zimbabwean citizens in the last two years. [46323]

Ian Pearson: EU sanctions against leading figures in the Zimbabwe Government continue to place real and significant pressure on the regime. They have the support of the Zimbabwean political opposition and non-governmental organisations, and they send a firm message that the EU is concerned at human rights abuses, but as we have made clear on many previous occasions, the measures we have in place are targeted specifically against the regime. We do not believe it is right to pursue sanctions which would hurt innocent Zimbabweans already suffering from the misrule by the Mugabe regime.

NORTHERN IRELAND

0870 Telephone Numbers

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Northern Ireland Departments used 0870 prefixed telephone numbers for use by the public during 2005. [43629]

Angela E. Smith: The Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency (DVTA) currently uses an 0870 prefixed telephone number for booking driving theory tests by text phone. In addition, an 0870 prefixed number was briefly used by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development during 2005 when the Stage One Appeals element of Single Farm Payments was being administered from Regus House in Clarendon Dock.

Broadband Access

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of homes in Northern Ireland had broadband access by December 2005. [46651]

Angela E. Smith: 100 per cent. of homes in Northern Ireland had access to broadband by December 2005 should they wish to take advantage of it. This is available at speeds of at least 512 kilobits per second. The most recent Government survey in October 2005 indicates that 29 per cent. of households have a broadband connection using either ADSL, cable, radio or satellite technology.

Child Abuse

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2093W, on child abuse, which further meetings have taken place involving the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and senior representatives of the Roman Catholic Church; what information was provided in relation to each diocese fully within Northern Ireland; what information was provided in relation to each diocese that straddles the border with the Republic of Ireland; when he expects to make recommendations; and whether he plans to initiate an independent public inquiry. [46465]

Mr. Woodward: Since 14 December 2005, officials from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) and representatives of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNT) met with senior representatives of the Roman Catholic Church on 20 December 2005. DHSSPS and PSNI are scheduled to meet jointly with senior representatives of the Roman Catholic Church again on 6 February 2006. Since 14 December 2005, DHSSPS also met separately with PSNI on 17 January 2006 and PSNI met separately with legal representatives of the Roman Catholic Church on 17 January 2006.

The Roman Catholic Church has undertaken to supply relevant information relating to allegations of child abuse against clergy to PSNI.

On completion of current consultations, all possible options will be considered including the need for an independent public inquiry and recommendations will be made.

Christmas Cards

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the cost to his Department of sending Christmas cards in 2005. [45922]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Office (NIO), excluding its agencies and NDPBs, bought 5,900 cards for Christmas 2005 at a total cost of £6,120. The number actually used is not recorded but should not vary greatly from the number bought. Costs for postage are also not recorded as the cards are distributed by a mixture of Royal Mail and internal courier services.

All expenditure on Christmas cards is made in accordance with normal departmental financial procedures and principles based on those set out in Government Accounting.

Community Restorative Justice

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 23 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1984W, on community restorative justice, when he expects to write to the hon. Member for South Down with the findings of his Department's research. [46834]

Mr. Hanson: I replied to the hon. Gentleman on 19 January 2006.

Community Safety Partnership

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much was spent on Community Safety Partnership strategies in Northern Ireland in 2005. [44891]

Mr. Hanson: Strategies developed by Community Safety Partnerships were launched in June last year. £677,750 was made available to CSPs for the 2005–06 financial year to enable them to develop projects to reduce crime, the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour in line with their local strategies.

Crosshill Quarry

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 3 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1369W, on Crosshill Quarry, what the terms of reference were for the Health and Safety Executive's investigation into the dismantling of railway carriages in Crosshill Quarry, Crumlin; and what the findings were of that investigation. [46616]

Angela E. Smith: The Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland investigated the dismantling of disused railway carriages at Crosshill Quarry as a result of a complaint made by a representative from the Crumlin Against Asbestos action group that these carriages had been crushed.

The investigation revealed that the carriages had been cut by hydraulic shears into sections to facilitate movement and there was no evidence to indicate that there was any contravention of health and safety at work legislation on the part of the site operators. It was concluded that the movement of these carriages did not pose a health risk to either the operators concerned or members of the public in the vicinity of the quarry.

Dentistry (Special Needs Treatment)

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the waiting lists for special needs treatment at the School of Dentistry, Royal Victoria hospital, Belfast are as a result of a shortage of *(a)* dental surgeons, *(b)* anaesthetists and *(c)* other reasons. [46519]

Mr. Woodward: The current waiting list for learning disabled patients requiring dental treatment under general anaesthesia is largely as a result of unavailability of anaesthetists and suitable facilities to treat this group of patients.

Departmental Finance

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what measures have been taken by the Northern Ireland Office to implement the 2004 spending review settlement. [44515]

Mr. Woodward: Following the 2004 spending review settlement, the NIO undertook a detailed consultation exercise across its directorates and allocated funding accordingly. Extensive work has also been undertaken to ensure that the Department achieves the efficiency targets set out in the settlement.

Disability Living Allowance

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were in receipt of disability living allowance in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [46331]

Mr. Hanson: The figures requested are shown as follows.

	Number of people
2001	141,451
2002	146,979
2003	153,791
2004	162,529
2005	167,369

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many homeowners in Northern Ireland received grant assistance to install *(a)* energy efficiency measures and *(b)* solar panels in 2005. [46790]

Mr. Hanson: *(a)* In 2005 just over 10,000 households received assistance to install energy efficiency measures through the Warm Homes Scheme, the Replacement and Renovation Grants Schemes and the Disabled Facilities Grant Scheme.

(b) In 2005 approximately 55 households received grant assistance to install solar thermal panels and 15 for the installation of solar photovoltaic panels.

Fishing Fleet

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to assist the new build and modernisation of the Northern Ireland fishing fleet; and how much has been allocated to this in 2006–07. [46781]

Angela E. Smith: In 2006–07 the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development plans to allocate around £1 million towards safety and quality improvements for the Northern Ireland fleet. There is no provision for assistance to new build in the fleet.

In addition, the South Down Fishing Taskforce has allocated £125,000 in 2006–07 to enable the Northern Ireland fleet to upgrade and modernise accommodation on-board fishing vessels.

Guns

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many guns were reported missing in Northern Ireland in each year since 1997 by *(a)* the armed forces, *(b)* the police and *(c)* members of the public with licensed weapons, broken down by the type of weapon. [43749]

Mr. Woodward: The Chief Constable is unable to provide an answer in the form requested as it would involve a manual trawl of files which could be carried out only at disproportionate cost. The total number of firearms reported missing in Northern Ireland since 1997 is 1,228. 22 by the police and 1,206 by civilians (including five reported missing by members of the Ulster Defence Regiment/Royal Irish Regiment who held personal protection weapons on a firearms certificate issued by the Chief Constable). The yearly totals are shown in Table A. The breakdown of the total by firearm type is shown in Table B. A yearly breakdown of the firearm type figures is not available. The MOD is unable to supply information about the armed forces at present and I will write to the hon. Member when the information becomes available.

Table A

	Number of firearms
1997	128
1998	165
1999	132
2000	117
2001	151
2002	166
2003	150
2004	108
2005	108
2006	3
Total	1,228

Table B

Firearms type	*Number of firearms*
Shotguns	768
Air Rifles	171
Rifles	123
Pistols	90
Revolvers	55
Humane Killers	11
Sub Machine Guns	3
Signalling Device	1
Starting Pistol	1
Air Pistols	5

Healthier Lifestyles

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to promote a healthier lifestyle among people aged 40 and over in Northern Ireland. [46647]

Mr. Woodward: The Investing for Health Strategy provides a framework within which the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has developed population strategies and programmes on issues such as, physical activity, smoking and food and nutrition, to promote healthier lifestyles, including to those aged 40 and over.

Public information campaigns developed by the Health Promotion Agency on smoking have been targeted at adult smokers aged 30+ and the "Get a Life—Get Active" campaign has aimed, in particular, to encourage 40 to 60-year-olds to undertake regular physical activity. The "Eating Well in Winter" grants programme and "A Guide to Healthier Eating for the over 60s" were both recently launched by the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland to encourage and support older people to eat more healthily.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to promote a healthier lifestyle among children in Northern Ireland whom health professionals consider overweight. [46648]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Priorities and Budget 2005–08 report includes a cross-departmental target to stop the increase in levels of obesity in children by 2010. In August 2004, a taskforce was established under the aegis of the Ministerial Group on Public Health to examine options for tackling overweight and obesity in children and young people and to make recommendations on how to stop the rise in levels of obesity in children. Recommendations will be published in February 2006 and will inform revised strategies and action plans on food and nutrition and physical activity.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is working with other Departments and agencies, including local health and social services boards and trusts, to deliver a range of initiatives to support children in schools and nurseries to adopt healthier lifestyles. These include programmes which aim to promote healthy eating and physical activity as well as programmes that offer direct support to parents and children. Later this year the Health Promotion Agency will launch a new public information campaign, targeted at the parents of young children, to encourage participation in regular physical activity.

Incapacity Benefit

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many incapacity benefit recipients there have been in Northern Ireland in each of the last eight years. [46330]

Mr. Hanson: The figures requested are shown as follows.

	Number of people
1998	74,870
1999	71,053
2000	70,176
2001	71,333
2002	71,252
2003	72,208
2004	70,608
2005	69,682

Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Review

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the timescale is for the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Review; what the estimated cost is; and how much has been spent to date. [45787]

Mr. Woodward: I understand that the Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability aims to complete its task by summer 2006. The estimated cost of the review is around £1.2 million. To date, just over £1 million has been spent.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Review sub-groups which have completed reports; and when he expects the remainder to complete reports. [45788]

Mr. Woodward: To date, the review has published two reports: from its Adult Mental Health Services Working Committee, and from its Learning Disability Working Committee. I understand that the remaining reports should be completed by summer 2006.

Office Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines (i) his Department, (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) each English region and (2) Northern Ireland owned in (x) 2003–04 and *(y)* 2004–05. [40148]

Mr. Hain: Information from Department records indicate that number of personal computers, laptops, servers, printers and scanners are as shown in the following table:

Number

	Personal computers		*Laptops*		*Servers*		*Printers*		*Scanners*	
	NI	*London*	*NI*	*London*	*NI*	*London*	*NI*	*London*	*NI*	*London*
2003–04										
NIO core	650	120	36	—	105	12	278	12	2	0
Executive agencies[1]	900	—	36	—	50	—	316	—	2	0
2004–05										
NIO core	678	132	57	—	75	7	318	45	29	3
Executive agencies[1]	987	0	60	0	46	0	334	0	20	0

[1] The Northern Ireland Office's four Executive agencies are the Compensation Agency for Northern Ireland, Forensic Science for Northern Ireland, The Northern Ireland Prison Service and the Youth Justice Agency. It is not possible to isolate the number of pieces of equipment each agency owned except at disproportionate cost.

Photocopiers are leased and not owned. Information on small items such as fax machines is not held centrally and could not be provided except at disproportionate cost.

Information in respect of each non-departmental public body could not be provided except at disproportionate cost.

Police

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many members of the Garda Siochana have been *(a)* seconded and *(b)* transferred to the Police Service of Northern Ireland in each year since the implementation of the Patten report. [44748]

Mr. Woodward: I am advised by the PSNI that since the signing of relevant protocols, one member of the Garda Siochana has taken part in a mutual personnel exchange (without policing powers) with the PSNI.

Prisons (Drug Finds)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many drug finds there have been in Northern Ireland's prisons in each of the last three years; and of what quantities. [46650]

Mr. Woodward: The following table details all drugs found within Northern Ireland prisons in the last three years (January 2003 to December 2005) and the quantities and type of each substance:

	Drug finds		
Drug	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Cannabis	921g	779g	775g
Amphetamines	2 tablets, 1 wrap plus 0.7g	65 tablets plus 19.9g powder	5 tablets
Syringes	16	10	7
Steroid liquid	35	7	6
Steroid Tablets	1,911	672.5	244
Ecstasy	40	90	16
Heroin	2.6g	0	32.6
Prescription Tablets	985	366	460.5
Diazepam	454	312.5	447
Needles	17	34	10

Drug	Drug finds 2003	2004	2005
Cocaine	0.3g	10	1g
Valium	6	9	1
Tamazepam	74	122	59.5
Unknown Tablets	476 plus 4.4g	488	355.5
Barbiturates	7g	0	29g
LSD	0	2	0
Opium based tablets	0	0	2
Viagra	0	21	0
Total drug finds	244	344	226

Public Body Vacancies

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what guidance Northern Ireland departments give to public bodies on the handling of senior post vacancies and recruitment pending implementation of the Review of Public Administration; and whether *(a)* Equality Commission and *(b)* legal advice is sought on such guidance. [45187]

Angela E. Smith: The standard guidance issued to the Northern Ireland departments is detailed in the Cabinet Office publication 'non-departmental public bodies: A Guide for Departments.' That guidance states:

'A non-departmental public body's ability to employ and manage staff is an important element of its relative independence from Ministers. While the sponsor department must be careful not to detract from a non-departmental public body's independence, it does have a responsibility to assist a new non-departmental public body in making a sound start in its management policies. The sponsor department should encourage non-departmental public bodies to adopt Human Resource management practices which meet at least the minimum standards expected of public service employers.'

The Department of Finance and Personnel also issued 'Guidance on Codes of Practice for Board Members of Public Bodies' in March 1997. That stated that departments should ensure that executive non-departmental public bodies adopt new or revised codes based on the new guidance.

The guidance states:

'The board should ensure that the body's rules for the recruitment and management of staff provide for appointment and advancement on merit on the basis of equal opportunity for all applicants and staff. In filling senior staff appointments, the board should satisfy itself that an adequate field of qualified candidates is considered, and should always consider the merits of full and open competition. In recruiting external candidates, this should normally be used'.

No guidance has been issued which makes particular reference to the implementation of the Review of Public Administration and no further legal advice or advice from the Equality Commission has been sought.

Schools (Employment of Offenders)

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) whether anyone with a conviction for a sexual offence is working in a school in Northern Ireland; [43555]

(2) how many teachers in Northern Ireland have *(a)* convictions, including spent convictions, and *(b)* police cautions; how many such convictions and cautions were in respect of sexual offences; and if he will make a statement. [43557]

Angela E. Smith: On 13 January I asked the employing authorities (that is the Education and Library Boards, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, and schools which employ their staff directly) to check their records and inform me whether there is any person currently in employment in any capacity in a grant-aided school who is required to notify their details to the Police Service as a sex offender, or who has a history of sex offending. They have confirmed that that there are three persons, none of them teaching staff, with a conviction for a sexual offence who are currently working in schools; none of these persons is on a sex offenders register as all the offences were committed over 15 years ago. In one case the offence was against a minor and involved a girl who was just under age; in the other two cases the offences were against adult females. In each case the employing authority knew of the conviction through the pre-employment check and took professional advice. The advice was, in each case, that the person was not a risk to children, and so employment was offered. The employing authorities remain satisfied that these persons do not pose a risk to children.

I have also asked for similar information from Independent schools and await their replies.

Vetting against all sources is done by a single agency, the PSNI Criminal Records Office (CRO). The CRO checks individuals who apply to work with children, either as employees or those engaged as volunteers, against both List 99 and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's list of people who are disqualified from working with children, as well as carrying out a full criminal background check. Employers are informed of all convictions, spent and unspent, including cautions and bind-over orders, no matter when the offence was committed, and non-conviction information which CRO considers to be reliable. These are all made available to the employing authority and are taken into account in the decision on whether to offer employment. The CRO has also confirmed, however, that their pre-employment checks on persons applying to work in schools have not identified any individual on a sex offenders register since the introduction of registration in 1997.

I am unable to confirm the number of teachers who have other types of offences (and this would include, for example, driving offences) as employers' records will show only those who had these convictions at the point at which they were vetted.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people *(a)* convicted of and *(b)* having received a caution regarding sexual involvement with children have been employed in schools in Northern Ireland over the last 10 years. [43620]

Angela E. Smith: On 13 January I asked the employing authorities (that is the Education and Library Boards, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, and schools which employ their staff directly) to check their records and inform me whether there is any person currently in employment in any capacity in a grant-aided school who is required to notify their details to the Police Service as a sex offender, or who has a history of sex offending. They have confirmed that that there are three persons, none of them teaching staff, with

a conviction for a sexual offence who are currently working in schools; none of these persons is on a sex offenders register as all the offences were committed over 15 years ago. In one case the offence was against a minor and involved a girl who was just under age; in the other two cases the offence was against an adult female. In each case the employing authority knew of the conviction through the pre-employment check and took professional advice. The advice was, in each case, that the person was not a risk to children, and so employment was offered. The employing authorities remain satisfied that these persons do not pose a risk to children.

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Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* auxiliary staff who are on the Sex Offenders Register are employed in schools in Northern Ireland. [45026]

Angela E. Smith: The employing authorities for teaching and non-teaching staff in the grant-aided sector have confirmed to me that there is no-one currently in employment in any capacity in a grant-aided school who is required to notify their details to the Police Service under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

My Department has also written to schools in the independent sector asking for confirmation of their position as regards the employment of persons who are registered sex offenders or who have a history of sex offending.

I will write to the hon. Gentleman with this information.

Sexual Health

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many young people in Northern Ireland aged *(a)* 16, *(b)* 15, *(c)* 14, *(d)* 13 and *(e)* under 13 years have attended Brook Advisory Clinic for contraceptive treatment in each of the last five years. [46459]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of young people in Northern Ireland attending the Brook Advisory Clinic is not collected centrally.

Sexual Offences Review

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what is the publication date for the Sexual Offences Review consultation document; and what is the time scale for the review. [45789]

Mr. Hanson: I have asked officials to resume work on a review of the law on sexual offences, with the aim of publishing a paper for consultation before Easter. Although it is too early to be specific, I would like to see legislation in place early next year for a new body of law on sexual offences.

Smoking Ban

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the likely improvement in the health of adults in Northern Ireland within two years of the smoking ban in public places being introduced. [46649]

Mr. Woodward: The introduction of smoke-free legislation will protect employees and the public in general from the increased health risks associated with exposure to second-hand smoke such as lung cancer, ischaemic heart disease, stroke, asthma and other circulatory and respiratory diseases. Experience elsewhere suggests that comprehensive controls also help reduce smoking prevalence.

The draft Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order will be issued for public consultation in February and will be accompanied by a draft Regulatory Impact Assessment, which will address both the health and economic implications of tobacco control measures.

Social Security

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total administration costs associated with the delivery of social security benefits in Northern Ireland were in 2004–05; how many staff are employed in social security administration in Northern Ireland; and what administrative costs per benefit recipient were in 2004–05. [46145]

Mr. Hanson: Information on the cost of administrating social security benefits and the number of staff involved is available from the Social Security Agency Annual Report and Accounts 2004–05. It was published on 31 October 2005 and a copy placed in the Library.

Information on the costs per benefit recipient of administration in 2004–05 is not available.

Special Advisers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list *(a)* the special advisers in his Department, *(b)* their specific areas of expertise and *(c)* the total cost of employing them in the latest year for which figures are available. [8818]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister to him on 4 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 36W.

Strabane Fire Station

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many part-time fire-fighters in Strabane Fire Station applied to become full-time fire-fighters in each of the last five years; and how many of those applications were successful. [45874]

Mr. Woodward: In the last five years there have been three full-time recruitment exercises carried out within the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service. The number of retained (i.e. part-time) fire-fighters from the Strabane Fire Station who applied for full-time fire-fighter posts was as follows:

Date of recruitment exercise	*Applied*
January 2001	3
September 2003	7
November 2005	5

In order to comply with current equality legislation, applicants from the Retained Service are required to undergo exactly the same selection process for posts within the full-time fire-fighting service as all other candidates. None of these applicants was successful in that process.

Transport Links

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans are in place to improve transport links *(a)* between Northern Ireland and Great Britain and *(b)* within Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [43758]

Mr. Woodward: Air and sea links between NI and GB are market driven and are generally satisfactory. Consequently, the only area Government is currently seeking to improve, through the Scottish Executive and the Northern Ireland administration, is the Ballycastle/Campbeltown ferry service.

The Regional Transportation Strategy 2002–12 for Northern Ireland is the basis upon which all land based transportation initiatives are now taken forward. This is supported by three transport plans, which contain the detailed programmes of major schemes, and transport initiatives that the Department for Regional Development wants to carry out to achieve the Northern Ireland's transportation objectives. Transport plans for the Belfast Metropolitan Area and the Regional Strategic Transport Network were published last year and are available from the Commons Library. The third "sub regional" transport plan that covers the other urban areas and the rural area not covered by the previous two plans will be published later this year.

Treatment Provision

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what arrangements are in place for patients in Northern Ireland to be treated in Scotland to ensure speedier treatment and surgery. [46791]

Mr. Woodward: By March this year no-one should be waiting more than 12 months for inpatient or day case treatment; six months for cardiac or cataract surgery; and nine months for major joint replacement surgery.

When a trust is unable to treat a patient within the agreed time, arrangements are in place to transfer patients to another provider for treatment. This may be at a hospital within Northern Ireland, elsewhere in the United Kingdom, including Scotland, or further afield if necessary.

TREASURY

Census

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the accuracy of census figures for *(a)* houses in multiple occupation and *(b)* caravan parks; and if he will make a statement. [45668]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 30 January 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question concerning what assessment has been made of the accuracy of census figures for *(a)* houses of multiple occupation and *(b)* caravan parks. I am replying in her absence. (45668)

An assessment of the accuracy of Census figures for *(a)* houses of multiple occupation and *(b)* caravan parks was not undertaken as part of the *Census 2001 Quality Report for England and Wales.*

However houses in multiple occupation would be included in the accommodation type 'part of a converted or shared house' and caravan parks in 'a caravan or other mobile or temporary structure' Page 86 of the Census Quality Report refers to the accuracy of responses to the question on accommodation type. The extent of imputation (the proportion of people or households added to the Census count to allow for non-response, so as to provide complete coverage of the population) of each accommodation type by local authority can be found at www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/imputation_rates_by_variable.asp

A copy of the quality report is available in the House of Commons Library, alternatively it can be found on-line at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk = 14212

Central Government (Administration Costs)

John Bercow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the costs of central Government administration have been in each year since 1998. [46224]

Mr. Des Browne: Outturn against the administration costs limits of central Government Departments is published each year at tables 4 and 5 of the Public Expenditure Outturn White (PEOWP) Paper. The 2004–05 edition of PEOWP (Cm 6639) has been placed in the Library along will all previous editions.

Charitable Status (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many charitable institutions in Northern Ireland have had their charitable status withdrawn in the last 10 years. [46792]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs does not maintain records of the number of charities in Northern Ireland who have had their charitable status withdrawn.

Employment (Denbighshire)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* private sector jobs in (i) agriculture,

(ii) manufacturing and (iii) the service sector and *(b)* public sector jobs there were in (A) Vale of Clwyd constituency and (B) Denbighshire in each of the last 20 years. [46078]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 30 January 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about private and public sector employment. I am replying in her absence. (46078)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics for the United Kingdom of public sector employment from a quarterly survey of public sector organisations. However, estimates at local area level are not available.

Information at local area level is available from the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS) of individual people in households. However, in this source the categorisation of employment in the public or private sector depends upon the responses from the individuals interviewed. As reported by ONS in October 2005 in the publication "Public Sector Employment Trends", some individuals tend to misreport private sector employment as being in the public sector hence leading to overestimates of the share of public sector employment.

With this reservation about the data quality, Table 1 shows the number of persons in private sector employment, by the specified splits, and for the public sector for people resident in the Denbighshire Unitary Authority as shown by the annual local area LFS for the 12 month periods ending February 1999 to February 2004. Table 2 shows similar data for persons resident in the Vale of Clwyd Parliamentary Constituency. Data for earlier years are not available.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Table 1: Persons in employment resident in the Vale of Clwyd Parliamentary Constituency by private-public sector split[1]

Thousand

	Private Sector					
12 months ending	*Agriculture*	*Manufacturing*	*Services*	*Other industries*[2]	*Public Sector*	*Total*
February 1999	1	3	10	5	6	25
February 2000	1	4	10	4	8	27
February 2001	1	3	13	4	8	29
February 2002	1	4	13	3	8	28
February 2003	—	4	12	3	9	27
February 2004	—	3	13	3	9	29

[1] Public/private sector split based on responses from individuals responding to the annual local area Labour Force Survey—generally overestimate public sector employment.
[2] Other industries are Agriculture, Fishing, Energy and Water and Construction.
Note:
Estimates are subject to sampling variability. Changes from year to year should be treated with particular caution.
Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey.

Table 2: Persons in employment resident in the Denbighshire Unitary Authority by private-public sector split[1]

Thousand

	Private Sector					
12 months ending	*Agriculture*	*Manufacturing*	*Services*	*Other industries*[2]	*Public Sector*	*Total*
February 1999	3	4	15	8	8	38
February 2000	3	6	13	5	10	37
February 2001	4	6	16	5	12	43
February 2002	2	7	18	4	11	41
February 2003	1	6	18	4	12	40
February 2004	1	5	19	5	13	42

[1] Public/private sector split based on responses from individuals responding to the annual local area Labour Force Survey generally overestimate public sector employment.
[2] Other industries are Agriculture, Fishing, Energy and Water and Construction.
Note:
Estimates are subject to sampling variability. Changes from year to year should be treated with particular caution.
Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey.

Film Industry

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1495W, on the film industry, if he will give details of the specific tax reliefs available for film production in each year since 1997; and what the cost of those reliefs was in each year. [46391]

Dawn Primarolo: Details of the specific tax reliefs for film production can be found in Chapter 3 of the Treasury consultation document "Reform of film tax incentives: Promoting the sustainable production of culturally British films" (July 2005).

Regarding the costs of these reliefs, I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave on 13 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1823W.

Financial Ombudsman Service

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many complaints have been received by the Financial Ombudsman Service in relation to the sale of *(a)* critical illness insurance, *(b)* payment protection insurance, *(c)* term life assurance and *(d)* income protection in each of the last five years. [45470]

John Healey: The Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) assumed its powers under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 on 1 December 2001, and record data for cases received by product type. The following table shows the number of cases received in the requested product categories by the FOS in each full financial year since year ending 31 March 2001.

Numbers of new cases received by product type

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Loan protection	513	803	802	833
Income protection	523	726	820	980
Term assurance	376	468	519	504
Critical illness	408	492	582	717

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many of the complaints referred to the Financial Ombudsman Service in the last five years related to the suitability of the product purchased; and how many of those complaints were upheld in each year. [45471]

John Healey: The Financial Ombudsman Service records complaint numbers in relation to product type. Unfortunately, as they do not record data (or sub-categorise) by complaint type, figures for complaints received about the suitability of products purchased are not available.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many complaints have been referred to the Financial Ombudsman Service in each of the last five years; and how many were upheld in each year. [45472]

John Healey: The Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) assumed its powers under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 on 1 December 2001.

The following table shows the number of new inquiries and investigated cases that the Financial Ombudsman Service has received for each year since 31 March 2001. The table shows the percentage breakdown of cases upheld (either wholly or in part) in the consumers favour, for each year that data is available for.

Total number of new inquiries and new cases converted.

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Number of front line inquiries	388,239	462,340	548,338	614,148
Number of cases	43,330	62,170	97,901	110,963
Percentage of cases upheld (either wholly or in part)	n/a	34	32	40

n/a = not available.

Fuel Duty

John Hemming: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the level of fuel duty for a liquid fuel produced from *(a)* biomass and *(b)* waste cooking oil that is (i) diesel quality and (ii) not diesel quality. [45897]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2265W.

General Insurance Regulations

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment his Department has made of the effects on consumers of the general insurance regulations introduced in 2005; [45468]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the overall regulatory cost burden on insurance intermediaries following the introduction of general insurance regulation in January 2005. [45469]

John Healey: The FSA commenced regulation of the selling of general insurance in January 2005. The FSA will begin a review of the effectiveness of the general insurance regime in April 2006. This will include seeking feedback from firms and consumer research.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* scope and *(b)* timescale is of the forthcoming Financial Services Authority's effectiveness review of general insurance regulation. [45473]

John Healey: The FSA will begin a review of the effectiveness of the general insurance regime in April 2006. Findings are expected to be available towards the end of 2006.

The review will focus on how far the FSA conduct of business requirements for general insurance firms are delivering the intended outcomes for consumers.

Pre-Budget Report

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effects on Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency of measures in his pre-Budget report. [45694]

John Healey: The pre-Budget report set out a range of measures to build a strong economy and a fair society for all constituencies in the UK, including Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland. The Government set out the impact of the PBR on the North East in 2005 pre-Budget report: 'What the Pre-Budget Report means for the North East'. This is available on the HM Treasury website.

Tax Credit

Mr. Francois: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the latest estimate is of the amount of tax credit payments which were fraudulently obtained via the HM Revenue and Customs website; and if he will make a statement. [44799]

Dawn Primarolo [holding answer 23 January]: HMRC are currently undertaking a programme of work on finalised 2003–04 awards—the first year of working tax credit and child tax credit—to provide more information on the level of claimant error and fraud. This is due to be completed in spring 2006.

HMRC use a number of sophisticated tools to help detect fraudulent claims made for tax credits. Whenever possible this is aimed at stopping fraudulent claims from being paid but they also monitor payments to detect known traits of organised fraud.

I also refer the hon. Member for Rayleigh (Mr. Francois) to the answer I gave on 18 January, *Official Report*, column 1357.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on tax credit fraud using Network Rail employees' identities. [46413]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member for Yeovil to the statement I made on 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1357W in response to his earlier question.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many awards of tax credits have been stopped because of suspicion of fraud in each month since 2003–04. [38557]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 557–58W. Figures by month could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit claimants appealed *(a)* successfully and *(b)* unsuccessfully to (i) the Adjudicator, (ii) the parliamentary ombudsman and (iii) by judicial review an unsuccessful appeal through the HM Revenue and Customs complaints procedure against a decision to change the amount paid in each year for which figures are available, broken down by (A) type of tax credit and (B) region. [43751]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs' (HMRC) tax credits appeals procedure is explained in its leaflet WTC/AP "How to appeal against a tax credits decision or award". The Department's complaints procedure is explained in its Code of Practice 1 "Putting things right—How to complain". The Adjudicator's leaflet AO1 also explains that her office does not look at matters which can be considered on appeal or complaints that have been, or are being, investigated by the ombudsman.

(i) The Adjudicator cannot become involved in appeals against tax credits decisions. For the number of tax credits referrals to the Adjudicator's Office, I refer the hon. Member to the Adjudicator's Office Annual Report for 2005.

(ii) The parliamentary ombudsman, Ann Abraham, is an independent office-holder. She operates under the provisions of the Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1967 (as amended). The parliamentary ombudsman publishes information about the number of investigate complaints she has received in her annual report to Parliament. Her 2004–05 Annual Report, HC 348, was published on 20 July.

(iii) An appeal is a separate matter to a judicial review as described in HMRC guidance available at www.hmrc.gov.uk/manuals/immanual/im5201.htm

Three tax credit claimants have issued proceedings in the Administrative Court. All had been in, but had not exhausted, HMRC's complaints process before issuing proceedings. One was settled by consent, one was withdrawn and one was settled in part and the remainder withdrawn.

Travel Insurance

Annette Brooke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received about age discrimination in the pricing of travel insurance by UK companies; and if he will make a statement. [46386]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: HM Treasury has received a small number of representations from organisations working on behalf of older people. Officials have also discussed this issue with the Association of British Insurers.

The Government does not prescribe the terms and conditions that insurance companies may set when offering insurance. It does not intervene in the decisions of insurance companies when determining whether or not to offer cover. As a rule, insurers use their claims experience and other industry-wide statistics to set the terms on which they offer insurance cover.

Unemployment

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the rate of *(a)* unemployment, *(b)* long-term unemployment, *(c)* youth unemployment and *(d)* economic inactivity was in (i) Denbighshire and (ii) Vale of Clwyd constituency in each of the last 20 years. [46069]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 30 January 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment and economic inactivity. I am replying in her absence. (46069)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment and economic inactivity for local areas from the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions.

Table 1 shows rates and levels for all persons unemployed and youth (aged 16 to 24) unemployed resident in the Denbighshire Unitary Authority from the annual local area LFS for each 12 months ending February 1995 to February 2004. Table 2 shows similar data for persons resident in the Vale of Clwyd Parliamentary Constituency. Sample numbers are insufficient to provide estimates of long-term unemployment.

Table 3 shows the rates and levels of economically inactive persons of working age resident in the Denbighshire Unitary Authority and resident in the Vale of Clwyd constituency from the annual local area LFS for each 12 months ending February 1995 to February 2004.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

ONS also compiles statistics for local areas of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). Table 4 shows the annual average number of ISA claimants, and as a proportion of the resident working age population, those claiming for over 12 months and claimants aged 18 to 24, resident in the Denbighshire Unitary Authority since 1986. Table 5 shows similar data for claimants resident in the Vale of Clwyd constituency since 1996. Proportions for the 18 to 24 age group are not available for parliamentary constituencies.

Table 1: Unemployed persons resident in Denbighshire Unitary Authority

12 months ending	All (16+) Level (thousand)	All (16+) Rate[1] (percentage)	Youth (aged 16 to 24) Level (thousand)	Youth (aged 16 to 24) Rate[1] (percentage)
February 1995	4	11	1	22
February 1996	5	12	1	28
February 1997	2	6	1	19
February 1998	2	5	1	14
February 1999	2	6	[2]	[2]
February 2000	4	9	2	25
February 2001	3	6	1	15
February 2002	2	4	1	13
February 2003	2	4	1	12
February 2004	2	4	1	10

[1] Percentage of the economically active resident population.
[2] Estimate not available, sample size less than three could be disclosive.
Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey.

Table 2: Unemployed persons resident in the Vale of Clwyd Parliamentary Constituency

12 months ending	All (16+) Level (thousand)	All (16+) Rate[1] (percentage)	Youth (aged 16 to 24) Level (thousand)	Youth (aged 16 to 24) Rate[1] (percentage)
February 1995	3	10	1	16
February 1996	4	15	1	40
February 1997	2	8	1	30
February 1998	2	7	1	23
February 1999	2	8	[2]	[2]
February 2000	3	9	1	23

Table 2: Unemployed persons resident in the Vale of Clwyd Parliamentary Constituency

12 months ending	All (16+) Level (thousand)	All (16+) Rate[1] (percentage)	Youth (aged 16 to 24) Level (thousand)	Youth (aged 16 to 24) Rate[1] (percentage)
February 2001	2	6	[2]	[2]
February 2002	1	5	1	16
February 2003	1	5	1	14
February 2004	1	4	1	11

[1] Percentage of the economically active resident population.
[2] Estimate not available, sample size less than three could be disclosive.
Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey.

Table 3: Economically inactive persons of working age resident in the Denbighshire Unitary Authority and resident in the Vale of Clwyd Parliamentary Constituency

12 months ending	Denbighshire UA Level (thousand)	Denbighshire UA Rate (percentage)	Vale of Clwyd PC Level (thousand)	Vale of Clwyd PC Rate (percentage)
February 1995	11	23	10	25
February 1996	10	22	8	21
February 1997	11	24	9	28
February 1998	12	23	10	29
February 1999	13	26	12	31
February 2000	14	26	11	28
February 2001	13	23	11	27
February 2002	12	23	9	25
February 2003	13	25	10	27
February 2004	12	22	9	24

Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey.

Table 4: JSA claimants resident in the Denbighshire Unitary Authority

Annual averages	All Level	All Proportion[2] (percentage)	Long-term (claiming over 12 months)[1] Level	Long-term (claiming over 12 months)[1] Proportion[2] (percentage)	Youth (aged 18 to 24)[1] Level	Youth (aged 18 to 24)[1] Proportion[2] (percentage)
1986	5,359	n/a	1,675	n/a	1,685	n/a
1987	4,832	n/a	1,480	n/a	1,450	n/a
1988	3,974	n/a	1,050	n/a	1,195	n/a
1989	2,868	n/a	595	n/a	900	n/a
1990	2,347	n/a	400	n/a	765	n/a
1991	2,971	n/a	535	n/a	1,000	n/a
1992	3,413	7	820	2	1,155	16
1993	3,578	7	1,020	2	1,170	16
1994	3,404	7	1,030	2	1,095	15
1995	3,210	6	955	2	1,035	16
1996	3,217	6	975	2	975	15
1997	2,304	4	725	1	680	11
1998	1,854	4	395	1	535	9
1999	1,847	4	315	1	515	8
2000	1,589	3	305	1	430	7
2001	1,447	3	305	1	415	7
2002	1,221	2	255	0	340	5
2003	1,142	2	180	0	355	5
2004	1,056	2	145	0	335	5
2005	1,123	2	150	0	370	5

n/a—not available
[1] Computerised claims only. Data rounded to nearest 5 for disclosure control.
[2] Proportion of the resident working age population.
Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system

Table 5: JSA claimants resident in the Vale of Clwyd Parliamentary Constituency

Annual averages	All Level	All Proportion[2] (percentage)	Long-term (claiming over 12 months)[1] Level	Long-term (claiming over 12 months)[1] Proportion[2] (percentage)	Youth (aged 18 to 24)[1] Level[3]
1996	2,584	7	775	2	800
1997	1,874	5	600	2	570
1998	1,541	4	330	1	465
1999	1,563	4	255	1	450
2000	1,338	3	260	1	380
2001	1,207	3	255	1	365
2002	1,009	3	215	1	295
2003	951	2	155	0	305
2004	904	2	125	0	285
2005	946	2	130	0	315

[1] Computerised claims only. Data rounded to nearest 5 for disclosure control.
[2] Proportion of the resident working age population. Denominators based on 2001 Census data adjusted to be consistent with 2001 mid-year population estimates for focal authorities.
[3] Proportions for 18 to 24 group are not available for parliamentary constituencies.
Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative System

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the rate of *(a)* unemployment, *(b)* long-term unemployment and *(c)* youth unemployment was in Milton Keynes in each year since 1997; and how many individuals this represented in each case. [45427]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell dated 30 January 2006.

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your parliamentary question about unemployment. (45427)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment for local areas from the annual local area labour force survey (LFS) following international labour organisation definitions.

Table 1 shows rates and levels for all persons unemployed and youth (aged 16 to 24) unemployed resident in the Milton Keynes unitary authority from the annual local area LFS for each 12 months ending February 1998 to February 2004 and from the annual population survey for the 12 months ending March 2005. However, for the Milton Keynes unitary authority sample numbers are insufficient to provide estimates of the levels of long-term unemployment.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

ONS also compiles statistics for local areas of people claiming jobseeker's allowance (ISA). Table 2 shows the annual average number of ISA claimants, and as a proportion of the resident working age population, and the annual average number of ISA claimants aged 18 to 24, and as a proportion of the resident population aged 18 to 24 and the annual average number of those claiming for over 12 months in the Milton Keynes unitary authority since 1997.

Table 1: Unemployed persons resident in the Milton Keynes unitary authority.

12 months ending	All Level (Thousand)	All Rate (Percentage)	Youth (aged 16 to 24) Level (Thousand)	Youth (aged 16 to 24) Rate (Percentage)
February 1998	9	8	4	19
February 1999	7	7	2	8
February 2000	5	4	[1]	[1]
February 2001	4	3	1	7
February 2002	4	3	2	9
February 2003	6	5	3	14
February 2004	6	5	2	8
March 2005	6	5	3	14

[1] Estimate not available, sample size less than three could be disclosive.
Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey; Annual Population Survey.

Table 2: JSA claimants resident in the Milton Keynes unitary authority

Annual Averages	All Level	All Proportion[2] (Percentage)	Youth[1] (aged 18 to 24) Level	Youth[1] (aged 18 to 24) Proportion[3] (Percentage)	Long-term[1] (claiming over 12 months) Level[4]
1997	3,610	3	1,030	6	830
1998	2,591	2	690	4	470
1999	2,358	2	595	3	290
2000	2,085	2	480	3	240
2001	1,976	1	460	2	165
2002	2,337	2	550	3	180
2003	2,678	2	660	3	305
2004	2,590	2	615	3	375
2005	2,683	2	675	4	395

[1] Computerised claims only. Data rounded to nearest five for disclosure control.
[2] Proportion of the resident working age population.
[3] Proportion of the resident population aged 18 to 24.
[4] Data for claimants of job seeker's allowance is provided as a 12-month average (January to December) for each year from 1997 to 2005. Proportions for long-term claimants are not provided as for all but one year, the proportion is less than 0.5 per cent. and thus rounded to zero.
Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Caravans (Theft)

Hywel Williams: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will review the law relating to the theft of caravans. [42660]

Hazel Blears: I have been asked to reply.

The Government sees no need for a review of the law in this area. Theft of caravans is already a criminal offence and carries a maximum penalty of seven years imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. We continue to review ways of reducing this type of crime, working with key stakeholders through the Leisure Sector Theft Action Group, a sub group of the Vehicle Crime Reduction Action Team.

Child Contact Arrangements

Margaret Moran: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if the Government will seek to legislate to require the family courts to be satisfied that contact arrangements will be safe for children. [44663]

Ms Harman: The Government are committed to supporting positive contact arrangements following parental separation where it is in the best interests of, and is safe for, the child.

Under the Children Act 1989, when making any decision pertinent to a child's upbringing, his or her welfare must be the court's paramount consideration.

Furthermore, with the introduction in January 2005 of "Gateway" forms, it is now easier for those suffering from domestic violence to bring it to the courts' attention at the start of contact and residence proceedings.

The courts are required by the Children Act to consider any harm that a child may suffer before making a contact order. The definition of "harm" was expressly clarified by Section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, commenced 31 January 2005, to include harm caused to a child by seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person.

In addition, the Children and Adoption Bill, currently before this House, would place a duty on CAFCASS to conduct a risk assessment in any private law proceedings where they are involved. This duty applies not only in cases where issues of harm are raised, but also in cases where the CAFCASS officer suspects that harm may be an issue. The CAFCASS officer is required to inform the court of the results of the risk assessment. That Bill would also allow courts to direct parties in contact proceedings to attend a domestic violence perpetrator programme to address violent behaviour.

These measures, taken together, will ensure that the family courts are in a position to make decisions on what contact arrangements may be safe, based on all the facts, as early as possible in the proceedings.

Civil Legal Aid

Mr. Hands: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the availability of civil legal aid to people living in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. [45959]

Bridget Prentice: The Legal Services Commission contracts with service providers throughout England and Wales to provide a range of legal and advice services across different categories of law.

There are currently 19 service providers with a contract to undertake civil legal aid work in Hammersmith and Fulham. Service providers in Hammersmith and Fulham may help people who live outside the area, and people who live in Hammersmith and Fulham may visit a service provider in a different area.

Any person residing in England or Wales can access free quality legal advice and information through Community Legal Service Direct. This service is available direct to the public through a telephone line, website and information leaflets.

Criminal Justice System

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many offenders' cases *(a)* were brought to court and *(b)* adjourned; how many trials were cancelled because the defendants were absent in the last year for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [45206]

Ms Harman: Figures relating to how many offenders' cases *(a)* were brought to court and *(b)* adjourned; how many trials were cancelled because the defendants were absent in the last year for which figures are available; can be found in the following table.

January 2005 to December 2005	*Crown court*	*Magistrates court*[1]
Cases listed for trial	38,264	170,842
Total ineffective trials	5,261	97,104
Defendant not present	1,281	8,555
Reasons for defendant not present		
Defendant failed to attend	844	4,686
Defendant not produced by Prison Service	49	2,459
Defendant ill—trial stood out	388	1,410

[1] January 2005 to November 2005 for the magistrates

Departmental Staff

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many civil servants in her Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40296]

Ms Harman: My Department does not centrally monitor the number of staff who work from home. The total number of days worked from home could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate costs. My Department's Work Life Balance policy encourages home working through formal agreements, informal and 'ad-hoc' arrangements as part of a range of flexible working options available to all staff. My Department's Work Life Balance policy is considered an example of best practice by external organisations such as Opportunity Now, Working Families and Carers UK.

Deputy Lieutenants (Lancashire)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the appointment of three new deputy lieutenants for Lancashire. [45023]

Ms Harman: Deputy lieutenants are appointed by the Lord Lieutenant in accordance with section 2 of the Lieutenancies Act 1997, subject to confirmation that Her Majesty does not disapprove of their appointment. In November last year, my Department informed the Lord Lieutenant for Lancashire that Her Majesty did not disapprove of the appointment of six new deputy lieutenants. These appointments were subsequently gazetted on 16 December.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs who was consulted on the appointment of three new deputy lieutenants for Lancashire; which geographical area the three newly appointed deputy lieutenants come from; where the existing deputy lieutenants reside; and what steps are taken to ensure *(a)* that deputy lieutenants represent the geographical diversity of Lancashire and *(b)* that there is a political balance among the deputy lieutenants. [45024]

Ms Harman: Before appointing any deputy lieutenant, the lord lieutenant is required to satisfy himself that Her Majesty does not disapprove of the appointment. In December 2005, the Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire appointed six new deputy lieutenants. They are: John Barnett, Esq, MBE, 33 North Park Drive, Blackpool FY3 8NJ; Edwin John Booth, Esq, Sykes Farm, Osbaldeston, Blackburn BB2 7LS; Mrs. Davina Margaret Dickson, Pointer House Farm, Langley Lane, Goosnargh, Preston PR3 2JS; Lt. Col. Edward John Downham, MBE, Knight Stainforth Farm, Knight Stainforth, Settle BD24 ODP; David Andrew Jones, Esq, MD, FRCS, Sugarcroft, Vicarage Lane, Blackburn BB1 9HY and Thomas Woodcock, Esq, LVO, Whiteholme, Slaidburn, Clitheroe BB7 3AE.

The allocation of deputy lieutenants to particular geographical areas is a matter for the lord lieutenant and lord lieutenants take geographical location into consideration when appointing deputy lieutenants. Information on membership of political parties is are not held centrally. Deputy lieutenants are, of course, aware that their role is essentially non-political and impartial.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the deputy lieutenants for Lancashire, indicating of which political party those who hold such membership are members. [45025]

Ms Harman: I will place a list of the deputy lieutenants for Lancashire in the Library, shortly. My Department does not keep a record of the political affiliation, if any, of deputy lieutenants.

Government Information

Margaret Moran: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when she plans to introduce proposals for custodial sentences for the abuse and unauthorised sale of government information. [44741]

Ms Harman: Custodial sentences are already in place for the unauthorised disclosure of some types of government information, including tax and social security data. My Department, together with the Home Office, is currently considering whether custodial sentences would be an appropriate sanction for unauthorised disclosure of other types of personal information.

Judges (Part-time)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the part-time judges who sit for 20 days a year; and what factors she took into account when deciding not to update previously published lists of part-time judges. [45356]

Ms Harman: There are approximately 6,700 fee-paid judicial postholders. It is the Lord Chancellor's policy that fee-paid judicial post holders, in the majority of jurisdictions, are offered and expected to complete a minimum of 15 sitting days a year provided that the work is available. The number of sitting days completed by each fee-paid judicial office holder is managed and recorded locally (within the circuits/regions or by the tribunal/judicial heads). There is no central record. Since its creation in 2003, my Department has not published a comprehensive list of fee-paid judges.

Judicial Appointments

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the judicial appointments made since 1 January. [45444]

Ms Harman: In the period 1 January 2006 to 19 January 2006 my right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Chancellor made the following appointments:

	Number
District judges (magistrates courts)	2
Lay members of the Information Tribunal	15
Members of the Special Immigration Appeals Commission	20

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs in how many cases the Secretary of State has overturned the advice of officials concerning judicial appointments. [45447]

Ms Harman: None. Officials do not make decisions on judicial appointments.

Jury Service

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of hon. Members selected for jury service since the rules were changed to allow this. [45968]

Ms Harman: The employment of those summoned to jury service is not known. When an MP serves as a juror they do so as a private citizen so exact figures relating to the number of MPs called to jury service cannot be given. However, five MPs are known to have been called to jury service since section 321 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 came into force on 5 April 2004.

Legal Services Ombudsman

John Mann: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the most recent annual report of the Legal Services Ombudsman; and if she will make a statement. [45910]

Bridget Prentice: The Legal Service Ombudsman made an annual report to the Secretary of State which he laid before Parliament on 11 July 2005, as required by Schedule 3(5) of the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990.

The Government welcome the continued work of the Legal Services Ombudsman in investigating the complaints handling of the professional bodies. The Government also welcome the progress being made by the professional bodies in the service they provide to consumers, as reflected in the Ombudsman's annual report, and looks forward to further improvements in the future.

Mediation Services

Mr. Cox: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much funding the Government have allocated to mediation and dispute resolution services in each of the last two years. [45423]

Ms Harman: The Department spent a total of £287,922.59 during the financial year 2003–04 and £375,936.40 during the financial year 2004–05 on activities to promote the use of mediation and other alternatives to the court process.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much public money was spent on Mediation Awareness Week, on 24 to 31 October 2005. [45424]

Ms Harman: The Department has spent a total of £70,707.78 on the Mediation Awareness Campaign. The breakdown is as follows:

	£
Publicity/launch	66,516.89
Travel and local funding	4,190.89

Small Claims

Mr. Grieve: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the Government's *(a)* review of the small claims limit and *(b)* consultation paper on the small claims track will be published. [44939]

Ms Harman: The Government plan to publish a consultation paper on the small claims limit. No date has been set.

Voting Systems

Mr. Laws: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006 to question reference 41390, when the review of new voting systems began; who the members are of the review group; when their final report will be completed; whether the report will be published; and if she will make a statement. [44860]

Ms Harman: The review of voting systems began in February 2005. The review is being conducted by officials within my Department. Any decisions on any next steps, if necessary, will be taken in due course.

The review group is at official level within the purview of my Department and the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Electoral Policy. The Cabinet Sub-Committee's members are:

Deputy Prime Minister and First Secretary of State (Chair);

Secretary of State for Scotland;

Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Commons;

Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury and Chief Whip;

Secretary of State for the Home Department;

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Secretary of State for Wales;

Minister without Portfolio;

Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor;

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Minister for the Cabinet Office);

Chief Secretary to the Treasury;

Minister for Europe;

Minister of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Phil Woolas)

HEALTH

Agenda for Change Programme

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effects of the agenda for change programme in each grade of NHS staff in Gravesham constituency. [36953]

Caroline Flint: No assessment has been made of the effect of the agenda for change pay system by constituency. Local implementation of the system is a matter for the relevant local national health service organisations, subject to compliance with nationally agreed guidance.

Air Ambulances

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she plans to make an announcement on the funding of air ambulances. [44139]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* Air ambulances are funded by charities. Since 1 April 2002, the cost of clinical staff on air ambulances has been met by the national health service on a continuing basis. It is for NHS trusts to decide whether they provide any additional funding to air ambulance charities.

Ambulance Service (Sussex)

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received on the proposed plans for the restructuring of ambulance services in the Sussex area. [45795]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 26 January 2006]:* The consultation for the proposed configuration of national health service ambulance trusts in England is being led by strategic health authorities (SHAs). SHAs will co-ordinate consultation locally and ensure that relevant authorities and interested parties are able to express their views. A full analysis of the responses received by the SHAs and the Department will be undertaken at the end of the consultation. The consultation will conclude on 22 March 2006.

Barts and the London NHS Trust

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what meetings officials from her Department have had with representatives of the Barts and the London NHS trust; when such meetings took place; what discussions took place at such meetings; and if she will make a statement. [43456]

Jane Kennedy: Since September 2005 departmental officials have met with representatives of the Barts and the London national health service trust on the following dates:

22 September 2005;

26 September 2005;

30 September 2005;

3 October 2005;

17 October 2005;

20 October 2005;

26 October 2005;

7 November 2005;

28 November 2005;

2 December 2005;

7 December 2005;

21 December 2005;

3 January 2006; and

6 January 2006.

These meetings covered a range of general financial and operational issues, but principally the full business case for the trust's Private Finance Initiative project.

Birth Costs

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 111–12W, on birth costs, what the reference costs are for the three resource groups specified for each NHS trust providing maternity care in 2003–04. [42642]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 17 January 2006]:* The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Brain Tumours

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many brain tumour patients she estimates would benefit from the use of *(a)* carmustine implants and *(b)* temozolomide; and what the cost of such treatment would be. [42483]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are around 1,900 new cases of malignant glioma each year in England and Wales. The number of glioma patients who would benefit from treatment with carmustine implants or temozolomide will depend on tumour grading.

According to the British National Formulary (50th edition), the cost of one carmustine implant is £650.38, excluding value added tax. The cost of treatment will depend on the number of implants used and will vary in individual cases. Costs may vary in different settings because of negotiated procurement discounts.

The cost of temozolomide is £17.30 for 5 × 5 milligram tablets, £69.20 for 5 × 20 milligram tablets, £346.00 for 5 × 100 milligram tablets and £865 for 5 × 250 milligram tablets, excluding VAT. The cost of treatment may vary depending on individual circumstances, and in different settings because of negotiated procurement discounts.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the disparity in the availability of temozolomide treatment for brain tumour sufferers in different parts of England. [42485]

Jane Kennedy: In June 2004, Professor Mike Richards, the National Cancer Director published a report into variations in usage of cancer drugs approved by the then National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), including temozolomide for recurrent malignant glioma.

This report showed considerable variation in drug usage between cancer networks and set out a number of recommendations to address this. One of the recommendations was to ensure that action plans were developed to respond to the report findings.

The action plans were encouraging, confirming that the profile of implementing NICE appraisals has increased and that where problems have been identified they have been, or are in the process of being, addressed.

An update of Professor Richard's report will be published later this year to confirm if variations have been reduced as a result of these actions.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are being taken by her Department *(a)* to increase and *(b)* to speed up access to radiotherapy for brain tumour patients. [42486]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This Government are committed to the expansion of radiotherapy capacity. This will increase and improve access to radiotherapy services to all cancer patients. Much has been done already, for example:

the number of linear accelerators (linacs) installed in the national health service increased from 140 to 210 between 1997 and October 2005, an increase of 50 per cent.;

the number of trainee therapy radiographers has doubled and the workforce is now starting to expand; and

the number of radiographers has increased from 1407 in 1997 to 1753 in 2004, an increase of 25 per cent.

In addition, a national radiotherapy advisory group, chaired by the National Cancer director, is considering all aspects of planning and delivery of radiotherapy services including: streamlining service delivery; service quality; equipment requirements; training and workforce needs; and future developments. The group will advise Ministers on the development and delivery of high quality radiotherapy services later this year.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are being taken by her Department to improve the survival rates for people with brain tumours. [42488]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence is currently developing guidance on "Improving outcomes in brain and other central nervous system tumours".

This guidance, in conjunction with the significant improvements to cancer services resulting from the national health service cancer plan—such as improved waiting times, more cancer specialists, and more equipment to diagnose and treat cancers—will ensure that survival rates for brain tumour patients improve.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps are being taken by her Department to improve service delivery for brain tumour patients; [42489]

(2) what steps are being taken by her Department to reduce disparities in care within the UK, with particular reference to treatments for brain tumour patients. [42490]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) was formed on 1 April 2005, when the NICE took on the functions of the Health Development Agency to create a single excellence-in-practice organisation responsible for providing national guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of ill health.

NICE is currently preparing guidance on improving outcomes in brain and other central nervous system tumours for use in the national health service in England and Wales. This guidance will give advice on the service configuration for patients with these tumours to improve outcomes.

Implementation of NICE guidance is a developmental standard as set out in 'National Standards Local Action' published in July 2004. The Healthcare Commission is responsible for assessing progress of healthcare organisations towards achieving developmental standards.

Once published, the guidance will form the basis for measures for inclusion in the 'Manual for Cancer Services'. The 'Manual of Cancer Services' is an integral part of the NHS cancer plan and modernisation of cancer services. It supports quality assurance of cancer services and enables quality improvement.

Cancer (Herefordshire)

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients normally resident in Hereford have been treated for cancer in Herefordshire in the past 12 months. [42292]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of patients resident in the Herefordshire primary care trust area treated for cancer in Hereford Hospitals National Health Service Trust NHS hospitals in 2004–05 was 1,555.

For the same period the number of finished consultant episodes was 1,998.

Notes:

Finished Consultant Episode (FCE)

An FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.

Patient counts

Patient counts are based on the unique patient identifier HESID. This identifier is derived based on patient's date of birth, postcode, sex, local patient identifier and NHS number, using an agreed algorithm. Where data are incomplete, HESID might erroneously link episodes or fail to recognise episodes for the same patient. Care is therefore needed, especially where duplicate records persist in the data. The patient count cannot be summed across a table where patients may have episodes in more than one cell.

Diagnosis (Primary Diagnosis)

The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (7 prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.

Ungrossed Data

Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Health and Social Care Information Centre

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of NHS funding awarded to Herefordshire primary care trust is assigned to treating cancer patients in the county. [42293]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is for primary care trusts in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was in Herefordshire for a cancer patient from diagnosis to initial treatment in the last year for which figures are available. [42294]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available in the format requested.

The table shows the number of days waited from diagnosis to treatment for the most recent quarters available at Herefordshire Hospital National Health Service Trust.

		Waiting time from diagnosis to treatment (days)							
Reporting period	*Total referrals*	*31 and under*	*32–38*	*39–48*	*49–62*	*63–76*	*77–90*	*91–104*	*105+*
2004–05 Q3	148	141	3	2	2	0	0	0	0
2004–05 Q4	154	148	2	0	4	0	0	0	0
2005–06 Q1	148	144	3	1	0	0	0	0	0
2005–06 Q2	175	168	2	3	2	0	0	0	0
Total	625	601	10	6	8	—	—	—	—

Note:

96.2 per cent. of patients were treated within 31 days.

Source:

Cancer Waiting Times Database (CWT-Db), Department of Health.

Child Protection

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effect of forthcoming primary care trust mergers on the number of designated professionals who safeguard children *(a)* locally and *(b)* in England; and if she will make a statement. [27253]

Mr. Byrne: Strategic health authorities (SHAs) are making proposals about reconfiguration of primary care trusts (PCTs) in their areas. Regardless of the configuration, each SHA, PCT, NHS trust or NHS foundation trust will be required to link up with the local authority or authorities that cover the same areas in order to set up a local safeguarding children's board (LSCB) by April 2006. The guidance on safeguarding children, "Working Together to Safeguard Children" makes it clear that each LSCB must have access to appropriate expertise and advice.

Children's Hospices

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the funding of children's hospices in England. [37654]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* Primary care trusts working with their local partners and stakeholders remain best placed to decide the level and range of palliative care needed by the children and young people in their locality and are able to respond directly to their needs. We have made our manifesto pledge to increase funding for end of life care and this includes care for children and young people. We will make further announcements on this funding in the near future.

Consultants

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been paid by her Department to the consultants McKinseys in each of the last eight years. [34512]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 5 December 2005]:* The fees paid in the last five financial years to date are shown in the table. The amounts do not include work relating to Monitor, the statutory name of which is the independent regulator of national health service foundation trusts.

Years prior to this have been archived and the data could be extracted only at disproportionate cost.

Financial year	*Amount (£)*
2001–02	0
2002–03	0
2003–04	0
2004–05	240,000
2005–06	[1]1,274,875

[1] To date.

Correspondence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* letters from hon. Members, *(b)* letters from members of the public and *(c)* Parliamentary Questions from (i) hon. Members and (ii) Lords were dealt with by her Department in each year since 1995 in respect of the percentage her Department took (A) more than one month and (B) more than three months to provide a substantive answer; and if she will make a statement. [37387]

Jane Kennedy: The Cabinet Office, on an annual basis, publishes a report to Parliament on the performance of departments in replying to Members'/ Peers' correspondence. The Report for 2004 was published on 6 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 137–140WS. Reports for earlier years are available in the Library.

On letters from members of the public, the table shows the totals received since 1999 (we do not have earlier records) and shows, from 2002, the percentage of letters replied to within 20 days. To break that down further would incur a disproportionate cost.

	Letters received from members of the public	*Percentage of replies sent within 20 days*
1999	28,982	not held
2000	33,546	not held
2001	30,779	not held
2002	28,175	36
2003	32,584	61
2004	30,436	88
2005 to end November	48,335	98

On parliamentary questions, the information is in the following tables. Ministers endeavour to reply to all parliamentary questions within parliamentary deadlines where possible.

House of Lords

	Percentage of parliamentary questions answered more than 20 working days after receipt	*Percentage of parliamentary questions answered more than 60 working days after receipt*
2003	6.7	0
2004	7.3	0
2005	3.3	0

House of Commons

	Percentage of parliamentary questions answered more than 20 working days after receipt	*Percentage of parliamentary questions answered more than 60 working days after receipt*
2003	13.8	0.6
2004	11.1	0.3
2005	11.6	1.1

Notes:

1. Numbers reflect days taken from receipt, not days after the question was due for answer. Numbers include questions, where answers within a one month timeframe are not possible—for example, those tabled in July for answer in September or October.

2. 2005 figures as at 14 December.

Departmental Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines (i) her Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which her Department is responsible in each English region owned in (1) 2003–04 and (2) 2004–05. [40151]

Jane Kennedy: The Department has held asset information, across all asset types since September 2003. The actual number of assets in each category can vary month on month and therefore a snapshot of information shown in the table represents assets held for 2003–04 and 2004–05. The representative month in each year is September. The Department does not hold centrally asset information for non-departmental public bodies, executive agencies or for other public bodies for which it is responsible.

Asset type	September 2003	September 2004
Personal computers	6,766	6,291
Laptops	2,419	2,966
Servers	586	533
Printers	2,548	2,420
Scanners	202	202
Photocopiers	122	122
Fax machines	464	425

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the annual expenditure on vehicles by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39973]

Jane Kennedy: For details of expenditure on ministerial vehicles provided to the Department by the Government Car and Despatch Agency, I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 20 December 2005 from the chief executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker). Copies of this letter are available in the Library.

For the core Department, information is not collected on a consistent basis for the years requested. Nor is information on other public bodies collected centrally. This could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39975]

Jane Kennedy: Employer contributions for the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme are (to the nearest thousand) as follows:

2002–03—£20,022,000

2003–04—£21,096,000

2004–05—£14,985,000

Projected costs for 2005–06 are £13,500,000.

Departmental Research

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research projects commissioned by her Department are being undertaken; and what the publication arrangements are in each case. [32987]

Jane Kennedy: The Department funds research that provides a knowledge base for health and social care policy and, separately, to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the national health service. Details of the projects currently forming part of the Department's national research programmes[1] can be found on the National Research Register at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

National programme project findings are placed on the Research Findings Electronic Register (ReFeR) database that can similarly be found on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/research. The researchers concerned are also responsible in each case for publishing the results of the research they undertake. Some national programme co-ordinating centres have freestanding websites and use them separately to disseminate outputs from their programmes.

Details of other research commissioned by the Department are shown in the table.

[1] Policy Research, Health Technology Assessment, New and Emerging Applications of Technology, Service Delivery Organisation, Genetics, Forensic Mental Health, Patient Safety, Dental.

Project title	Means of publication
National prevalence survey of healthcare associated infections in acute hospitals	in peer reviewed journal
Development of a National Strategy for Surveillance of Antimicrobial Resistance in Primary Care	in peer reviewed journal
Bacteraemia in children caused by methicillin-resistant "Staphylococcus aureus" (MRSA)	in peer reviewed journal
National confidential study of deaths associated with healthcare associated infection	in peer reviewed journal
Development of an assessment tool to measure the elements of the in-patient environment associated with the quality of patient care	on the Estates and Facilities research and development programme page of the Department's website
What is the size and nature of the current need for single room isolation in hospital, and how does success or failure to isolate patients affect the control of methicillin-resistant "Staphylococcus aureus" (MRSA)	on the Estates and Facilities page of the Department's website
An evidence based model for establishing the performance of hospital ventilation systems	on the Estates and Facilities page of the Department's website
The effects of the interior environmental design on patients and staff in maternity facilities	on the Estates and Facilities page of the Department's website
Empirical review of NHS Estates ergonomic drawings	on the Estates and Facilities page of the Department's website
Evaluation of genetics service development projects	on the Department's website
Public perceptions and patient experience of the NHS: six-monthly survey	on the Department's website and MORI website six months after receipt in the Department
Public satisfaction with NHS, expectations and biggest problems: monthly survey	on the Department's website and MORI website six months after receipt (six month trends)
Public plain English workshops: quarterly focus groups	on the Department's website six months after receipt (summary report)

Project title	Means of publication
DH stakeholder survey: six-monthly mini-surveys	executive summary sent to key stakeholders; full report published on the Department's website no more than six months after receipt
National media evaluation: monthly reports	on the Department's website six months after receipt (summary report of coverage)
Regional media evaluation: monthly reports	on the Department's website six months after receipt (summary report of coverage)

Departmental Staff

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many civil servants in her Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40289]

Jane Kennedy: The Department has a formal home-working scheme under which the home is the employee's place of work for all or some of the working week. The Department's human resource information system currently records four staff as members of this scheme. However, the Department also provides a wide variety of other arrangements which allow staff to work flexibly, and thereby help to promote diversity and the achievement of a better work-life balance, while still ensuring its business is conducted effectively. These include initiatives such as a flexitime scheme, part-time working, job sharing, part-year appointments, which are particularly suitable for people wishing to work only during school term time, compressed hours, fitting the working week into less that five full days, and special leave arrangements to cope with a variety of circumstances.

The Department also allows staff to work at home on an occasional basis at management discretion. This is becoming more widespread with the greater use of information technology, which means staff can carry out more of their work away from the office.

Disability

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the initial activity undertaken by her Department in response to those recommendations in the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit Report, Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People, where lead responsibility was assigned to all Government departments. [37078]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has lead responsibility for recommendations primarily relating to increasing people's ability to live independently. Our first priority for action has been developing pilots for Individual Budgets. The idea behind Individual Budgets is to put people at the centre of the system that delivers their services and give them more choice and control over how resources are used to support their needs. The Department is working with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) to take this forward.

We are also working with DfES to take forward a number of recommendations relating to early years and family support and the transition to adulthood, such as pilots in 70 local authorities for year 9 transition reviews for children with learning disabilities.

The Department of Health has supported DWP in its launch of the Office of Disability Issues (ODI). We are working with DWP and the ODI to take forward recommendations on supporting disabled people to find and retain employment.

Drug Prices

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the price paid by the NHS for drugs and medicines compared with the European average; and if she will make a statement. [45490]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 25 January 2006]:* Prices for branded medicines in the United Kingdom are broadly comparable to those in Germany and Finland but higher than those in most other European countries, based on 2003 market exchange rates. Further details are available in the Eighth Report to Parliament on the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme.

Emergency Re-admissions

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to question 29552, on emergency re-admissions, if she will provide the figures for quarter 4 of 2004–05 and quarter 1 of 2005–06. [37503]

Mr. Byrne: Total figures by quarter (but not by age) are published in the "Chief Executive's Report to the NHS, Statistical Supplement-December 2005". The statistical supplement is available at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/43/03/04124303.pdf.

More detailed and more specific figures by appropriate age band will be published on the National Centre for Health Outcomes Development's (NCHOD) website www.nchod.nhs.uk in early 2006, though they will not cover the precise age bands as provided in the reply I gave on 17 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 762W.

There may be small differences between the various sources due to differences in coverage and definition.

Executive Agencies

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* targets, *(b)* advice and *(c)* guidance her Department has given to Executive agencies that fall under the remit of her Department on the reorganisation of their administrative functions on a regional basis; and if she will make a statement. [41643]

Jane Kennedy: In response to the Lyons Review, the Department has advised its Executive agencies and other arms length bodies (ALBs) that where opportunities arise, plans should be formulated to

relocate posts that are not involved in local service delivery to new locations outside London and the Greater South East. In formulating these plans, agencies are to take account of the guidance being produced by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on choice of location.

For the Department's Executive agencies this work is being taken forward as part of the change programme arising from the Department's ALB review of 2004.

Fake Prescription Drugs

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps are being taken to prevent fake prescription drugs entering the NHS supply chain; [43609]

(2) what procedures are in place to safeguard the supply of prescription drugs to the NHS; [43610]

(3) what research she has evaluated on the number of fatalities within the NHS due to fake medications. [43611]

Jane Kennedy: The Government body responsible for the regulation and licensing of medicines, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) operates a comprehensive anti-counterfeiting strategy, working with partners and stakeholders to ensure that the current safeguards work effectively and that vigilance against counterfeit medicines entering the legitimate United Kingdom supply chain is maintained. The key elements of this strategy include:

the operation of Europe's largest medicines surveillance scheme to spot-check medicines on the UK market and then undertake laboratory analysis to test for authentication;

increased checks by MHRA inspectors for counterfeits when inspecting pharmaceutical manufacturers and distributors;

collaborative international enforcement action and a training and education/awareness raising program amongst law enforcement agencies and pharmaceutical stakeholders, conducted domestically, at European level, and internationally between respective national medicines regulators.

This is a long-term strategy which is backed by investment and a significant commitment of resources to minimise the risk of counterfeit medicines reaching patients.

The supply and distribution of medicines is tightly controlled within the European community. All licensed wholesalers must comply with the community's agreed standards of good distribution practice and there exist strict licensing and regulatory requirements enshrined in UK domestic legislation to safeguard patients against potential hazards arising from poor distribution practices, for example, purchasing suspect or counterfeit products, poor storage, failing to establish the bona fides of suppliers and purchasers, inadequate record keeping, avoiding deterioration of the medicinal product, etc. The MHRA will take regulatory action where breaches are identified, which may take the form of revoking licenses or the instigation of criminal proceedings.

The MHRA is unaware of any fatalities within the UK directly attributable to counterfeit medicines, and does not conduct research into this issue.

Folic Acid

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information her Department distributes informing women of child bearing age about folic acid supplementation. [37685]

Caroline Flint: The Department has produced information for women on the benefits of taking folic acid supplementation through a leaflet called 'Folic acid what all women should know' for the national health service. Information on the benefits of folic acid supplementation is also included in the 'Pregnancy Book' for women planning a subsequent pregnancy and all communications on diet and nutrition for women of child bearing age. Mainstream verbal advice is also given by health professionals who come into contact with women who are pregnant or planning pregnancy.

Gene Therapy

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to provide further funding for the MDEX consortium gene therapy clinical trials. [45441]

Jane Kennedy: In 2004, the Department awarded £1.6 million to the muscular dystrophy campaign, headed by Professor Francesco Muntoni at Imperial College London for research on duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD). If successful, this research should lead to the first UK gene therapy clinical trial aimed at treating DMD. The Government will carefully monitor developments in this area in considering future funding needs.

Genetic Testing

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps she is taking to build capacity for genetic testing services in the NHS; [44781]

(2) what funding she has made available for expanding genetic testing services since 1997, broken down by area of expenditure. [44906]

Jane Kennedy: Genetic testing is one component of specialised medical genetics services. These are commissioned by specialised commissioning groups, funded by their constituent primary care trusts (PCTs) from PCTs' normal allocations to provide services for their local populations.

The Government have undertaken a number of initiatives since 2001 to strengthen genetic services. In 2002, nearly £11 million was awarded over up to three years across England to provide new laboratory equipment and pump-prime new substantive posts in both clinical and laboratory services. Over 40 clinical scientist and technical posts were funded.

The genetics White Paper, "Our Inheritance, Our Future—Realising the potential of genetics in the NHS" in June 2003 built further on this investment. Up to £3.5 million is being made available for a programme to increase the laboratory workforce. This will fund up to 90 new laboratory scientist trainees and the equivalent of 10 full time trainer posts. We have also invested £1.5 million so far in a scheme to train 50 new genetics counsellors over a period of five years.

The White Paper committed to £18 million to expand and modernise National health service genetic laboratory capacity. This investment, made during 2004–05 and 2005–06, will support genetics laboratories in delivering the genetics White Paper standards for making test results available more quickly.

We have also invested over 4 million to date on several initiatives, including two national genetics reference laboratories and staffing support for the UK Genetic Testing Network, that help laboratories make best use of their capacity.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which genetic tests are offered by NHS organisations in England; which providers offer genetic testing services; which conditions can be diagnosed by these genetic tests; and if she will make a statement. [44904]

Jane Kennedy: The UK Genetic Testing Network (UKGTN) is a network of the main national health service molecular genetic laboratories in the United Kingdom. It produces the 'NHS Directory of Molecular Genetic Testing' which lists molecular genetic tests available through NHS genetic services (www.ukgtn.org) as well as a database of all UKGTN laboratories and the tests that they offer. As many tests are rare and volumes are often low no laboratory offers all the tests listed but tests are sent to other laboratories as necessary.

In addition to these molecular genetic tests offered through the UKGTN some tests will be offered through other laboratories such as those serving haemophilia services and there are other types of genetic test provided for example through cytogenetics laboratories.

The services in England are shown in the following table; they deal with a wide range of genetic disorders, including inherited cancers. There is a further service at the Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust, which deals with inherited cancers only. In general the same trust is host to both the clinical and laboratory services.

Name of service and city	*Host trust*
West Midlands Regional Genetics Service Birmingham	Birmingham Women's Health Care NHS Trust
South Western Regional Genetics Service—Bristol, Bath, Somerset and Gloucestershire Bristol	United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust
East Anglian Medical Genetics Service Cambridge	Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
South Western Regional Genetics Service—Devon and Cornwall Exeter	Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust
Yorkshire Regional Genetics Service Leeds	Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS trust
Leicestershire Genetics Centre Leicester	University Hospital of Leicester NHS Trust
Merseyside And Cheshire Genetic Laboratories Liverpool	Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust
London (four main services)	
South East Thames Regional Genetics Service	Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
South West Thames Regional Genetic Centre	St George's Healthcare NHS Trust
North East Thames Regional Clinical and Molecular Genetics Service	Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust
North West Thames Regional Genetics Service	North West London Hospitals NHS Trust
University Dept Of Medical Genetics And Regional Genetic Service Manchester	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's NHS Trust
Northern Genetics Service Newcastle	Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust
Nottingham Centre For Medical Genetics Nottingham	Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust
Oxford Regional Genetics Service Oxford	Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust
Sheffield Regional Genetics Services Sheffield	Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust
Wessex Clinical Genetics Service Southampton	Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust
Associated laboratory service Wessex Regional Genetics Laboratory Salisbury	Salisbury Health Care NHS Trust

Good Hope Hospital

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons the contract with Secta at Good Hope Hospital Trust was terminated; and if she will make a statement. [42850]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* Birmingham and The Black Country strategic health authority reports that the board of Good Hope Hospital National Health Service Trust reviewed its strategic objectives in conjunction with its franchise partner, Tribal Secta, and decided that the best way to achieve foundation trust status by 2008 was to seek a local NHS partner to work with. As a result, the board has accepted interim management support from Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust and has given the new management team a specific remit to assess whether Good Hope Hospital NHS Trust can stand alone or should seek a merger partner. The contract with Tribal Secta, which was scheduled to run until August 2006, was therefore terminated by mutual agreement eight months early to facilitate the trust's new strategic objective of achieving foundation trust status.

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the out-turn against budget at Good Hope Hospital Trust has been in each month of the last five years. [42851]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* The information is not available in the format requested. The table shows the annual turnover and out-turn for Good Hope Hospital National Health Service Trust in each of the last five years.

£000

	Turnover	Surplus/deficit
2000–01	71,544	48
2001–02	82,551	53
2002–03	89,050	-839
2003–04	93,715	-5,014
2004–05	106,570	-3,576

Notes:
1. 'Turnover' is the sum of 'income from activities', and 'other operating income'.
2. 'Surplus/deficit' figures relate to the 'retained surplus/deficit for the year' of the trust, in each case.

Source:
Audited summarisation schedules of the Good Hope Hospital NHS Trust.

Greenwich District Hospital

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the change in methodology in the calculation of profit from the sale of the former Greenwich District Hospital site; and who has been affected financially as a consequence of this change. [44324]

Jane Kennedy: This is a local matter. However, the South East London Strategic Health Authority has advised that the methodology used in the calculation of profit of sale of the former Greenwich District Hospital site did not change. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Trust made a net £1.1 million surplus from the disposal of this site in 2004–05 arising from the difference between the net sale proceeds and the value of the asset in the trust's audited accounts. This benefit reduces the size of the deficit that the trust has to recover.

Home Oxygen Therapy

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average delivery time was for emergency oxygen deliveries to out-patients in the most recent year for which figures are available. [45382]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* These figures are not available centrally.

The new home oxygen service, which starts on 1 February 2006, specifically includes the provision of oxygen to patients at home on an emergency basis. Under the new arrangements, where clinical staff order this service, the supplier will deliver oxygen to the patient's home within four hours. The new service contract also includes arrangements for monitoring response times.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the implications of the changed arrangements for home oxygen therapy on *(a)* waiting times for service and *(b)* patient safety; and if she will make a statement. [45383]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* The new arrangements offer patients a wider range of modern equipment that will support them in the better management of their symptoms at home and help avoid the need for emergency admission to hospital, wherever possible. The new service contract also sets out specific delivery times for home oxygen, including where ordered on an emergency basis and where ordered to support a patient's discharge from hospital.

The new arrangements will continue to ensure that patients receive a safe and efficient home oxygen service. A detailed service specification emphasises the importance of arrangements to assess risks to patients using equipment and the contract makes provision for potential risks to supply. The new service is available on a 24 hours, seven days a week basis. A free phone service allows clinical staff to order the required service and seek advice at any time. Patients also have access to this service to provide support on any problems in using equipment or disruption to supply.

Hospital Admissions (Drug Misuse)

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital admissions with primary diagnoses of mental and behavioural disorders relating to drug misuse took place in each of the last five years. [44119]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Hospital admissions under mental illness specialties with a primary diagnosis of a mental or behavioural disorder and relating to drug misuse, in England between 2000–01 and 2004–05, are shown in the following table.

	Data year				
Type of drug	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*[1]	*2004–05*[1]
Pharm drugs	380	330	400	380	400
Heroin	3,620	3,520	3,310	3,120	3,110
Cocaine	100	160	190	220	190
Cannabis	490	580	590	710	710
Alcohol	12,130	11,470	11,870	11,280	10,910
Nicotine	10	10	10	10	10
Stimulants	240	310	360	310	280
Hallucinogen	70	80	70	80	70
All	17,020	16,460	16,780	16,110	15,670

[1] The figures for 2003–04 and 2004–05 have not yet been adjusted for shortfalls in data and/or clinical error and are ungrossed, and all figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Hospital Beds (North-East)

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the occupancy rates were for each hospital trust in the North East in the last three years for which figures are available. [44596]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the tables:

Occupancy rate of beds open overnight, trusts in Northumberland, Tyne and Wear SHA, 2002–03 to 2004–05

OrgID	*Name*	*2002–03 (Percentage)*	*2003–04 (Percentage)*	*2004–05 (Percentage)*
RLN	City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Trust	71.0	88.4	81.1
RR7	Gateshead Health NHS Trust	81.4	81.2	82.8
RNP	Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland Mental Health NHS Trust	83.1	83.9	84.3

Occupancy rate of beds open overnight, trusts in Northumberland, Tyne and Wear SHA, 2002–03 to 2004–05

OrgID	*Name*	*2002–03 (Percentage)*	*2003–04 (Percentage)*	*2004–05 (Percentage)*
RM6	Northgate and Prudhoe NHS Trust	97.4	85.9	83.8
RTF	Northumbria Health Care NHS Trust	79.6	79.5	79.3
RW9	South of Tyne and Wearside Mental Health NHS Trust	75.9	82.9	83.3
RE9	South Tyneside Health Care NHS Trust	75.2	75.3	77.9
5KG	South Tyneside PCT	—	—	85.6
5KL	Sunderland Teaching PCT	49.2	63.4	78.6
RTD	The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust	82.0	82.2	81.6

Notes:
Revised 7 December 2005 following refresh of dataset in line with Department of Health revision policy.
Source:
Department of Health form KH03

Occupancy rate of beds open overnight, trusts in County Durham and Tees Valley SHA, 2002–03 to 2004–05

OrgID	*Name*	*2002–03 (Percentage)*	*2003–04 (Percentage)*	*2004–05 (Percentage)*
RXP	County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	—	75.2	75.9
RTC	County Durham and Darlington Priority Services NHS Trust	89.3	84.3	85.0
5J8	Durham Dales PCT	83.0	45.4	70.1
5KN	Langbaurgh PCT	80.4	77.1	74.7
5KM	Middlesbrough PCT	65.4	70.8	79.2
RR9	North Durham Health Care NHS Trust	84.7	—	—
RVW	North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust	80.6	80.3	82.2
RTA	South Durham Health Care NHS Trust	67.4	—	—
RTR	South Tees Hospitals NHS Trust	75.6	81.7	83.2
RVX	Tees and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust	94.0	91.7	90.5

Notes:
Revised 7 December 2005 following refresh of dataset in line with Department of Health revisions policy.
Source:
Department of Health form KH03

Influenza Vaccinations

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of those aged over 65 years are expected to receive influenza vaccinations by the end of winter 2005–06. [34106]

Caroline Flint: Under the new inspection systems national targets are no longer set. Targets are now a local decision. In the Chief Medical Officer letter to health professionals dated 25 July 2005, he said that continued improvement of uptake rates across all groups should be encouraged.

Mal de Debarquement Syndrome

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps her Department is taking to increase awareness of mal de debarquement syndrome; [46387]

(2) how many patients in England were diagnosed as having mal de debarquement syndrome in each of the last three years; [46388]

(3) what treatments for mal de debarquement syndrome are available on the NHS. [46389]

Mr. Byrne: We have no plans to increase awareness of this very rare condition.

Information on the number of patients with mal de debarquement is not collected.

We are not aware of any effective treatment for mal de debarquement.

Maternity Services

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many midwife-led birth centres there are in England; [44934]

(2) what steps she is taking to promote caseload working in maternity services. [44935]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* It is a matter for local services to determine how they use their midwifery resources and how far they are able to introduce caseload working in maternity services. Not all midwives are able to undertake this form of working as it requires a great deal of flexibility in terms of their working day. Trusts that have been successful in attracting and retaining their midwifery workforce have in place a variety of care models.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many midwives there were in the national health service in England, expressed as *(a)* a headcount and *(b)* whole-time equivalents, in each of the last 10 years. [44936]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

Midwives employed in the national health service as at 30 September each year

	Headcount	*Full-time equivalent*
1995	22,022	18,034
1996	22,595	18,262
1997	22,385	18,053
1998	22,841	18,168

Midwives employed in the national health service as at 30 September each year

	Headcount	Full-time equivalent
1999	22,799	17,876
2000	22,572	17,662
2001	23,075	18,048
2002	23,249	18,119
2003	23,941	18,444
2004	24,844	18,854

Source:
Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to offer women choice over which midwife provides one-to-one continuing care during pregnancy and birth. [44937]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 25 January 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1064W.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many three-month vacancies for midwives there are in the national health service in England. [44938]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The last survey showed that there were 348 three-month vacancies for midwives in the national health service in England at March 2005. The vacancy rate has fallen from 3.3 per cent. in March 2004 to 1.8 per cent. in March 2005, which is shown in the following table.

Three-month vacancies and vacancy rates March 1999–05

	Vacancy rate (percentage)	Number of vacancies
1999	2.1	400
2000	2.8	510
2001	2.6	470
2002	2.8	530
2003	3.1	572
2004	3.3	619
2005	1.8	348

Notes:
1. Vacancy rates rounded to one decimal place.
2. Number of vacancies rounded to the nearest 10.
3. Three-month vacancies are posts that have been vacant for three months or more as at 30 March that trusts are actively trying to fill.
4. Three-month vacancy rates are three-month vacancies as a percentage of vacancies plus staff in post.

Medical Staff (Pay)

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in requiring the *(a)* doctors and dentists review body and *(b)* nurses and other health professionals review body to consider local pay; and if she will make a statement. [44949]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* In the Budget on 9 April 2003, the Chancellor announced that public sector pay arrangements, including those for most of the staff groups covered by pay review bodies should include a greater local and regional dimension. In the light of this announcement the terms of reference of the review body on doctors' and dentists' remuneration and the review body for nursing and other health professions were amended in 2003 to ask the review bodies, in reaching their recommendations, to have regard to regional or local variations in labour markets and their impact on recruitment and retention.

Medicine Use Reviews

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps were taken by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the NHS to make the public aware of the availability of medicine use reviews (i) before and (ii) after their introduction; and how much was spent by each for such purposes; [43316]

(2) what estimate her Department made of the number of medicine use reviews that would be conducted in the first *(a)* six and *(b)* 12 months of the scheme; [43317]

(3) how many medicine use reviews have been conducted in each quarter since the scheme commenced; [43318]

(4) how much her Department allocated to medicine use reviews in *(a)* their first and *(b)* each subsequent year of operation. [43319]

Jane Kennedy: Medicines use review (MURs) is an advanced service within the new community pharmacy contractual framework, which went live from 1 April 2005. Community pharmacists can chose whether or not they undertake MURs, but must meet accreditation requirements if they do. £39 million has been allocated for this service in 2005–06. Each pharmacy contractor can undertake up to a maximum of 250 MURs, if they meet the requirements before 1 January 2006, or 200 MURs, if they meet the requirements from 1 January 2006, in the first year.

The number of MURs conducted monthly since the scheme commenced are shown in the table.

As at 2005:	
April	373
May	718
June	870
July	1,688
August	2,241
September	5,037
October	8,696
November	[1]13,646

[1] The figure for November 2005 is provisional and subject to revision.

In the first six months, community pharmacies would have been focusing on meeting the requirements of the essential services, which had to be met by the end of the transition period on 1 October 2005.

The communication strategy for the new community pharmacy contractual framework, developed by the Department, Pharmaceutical Negotiating Committee and NHS Employers, provides for timely dissemination of information and messages at a number of stages by all parties to the strategy. It is important that the public is made aware of the new services at the point they become widely available.

The Department has to date committed £58,450 for printing and distribution of a booklet entitled "Medicines Use Review: Understand Your Medicines"

prepared by Medicines Partnership. This booklet is aimed at patients to help them get the most from their MUR. All pharmacies in England were sent copies of the booklet just before Christmas, with a covering letter giving details of the Department's publications orderline at 08701 555 455 to call for further supplies. In addition, the booklet is posted on the Medicines Partnership's website and can be downloaded or viewed, as required www.medicines-partnership.org.

Medicines Management

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will publish the results of the Hospitals Medicines Management Framework Self-Assessment; and if she will make a statement; [43300]

(2) if she will list the statistical information collected by her Department relating to medicines management in hospitals; and if she will make a statement; [43301]

(3) how many hospitals have self-medication systems in place; and if she will make a statement. [43302]

Jane Kennedy: As part of the Department's commitment to reducing administrative burdens on the national health service, statistical information relating to medicines management in hospitals is not collected routinely. However, in 2003 NHS trusts were invited to self-assess their medicines management performance against developmental good practice standards contained in the Department's medicines management framework. Responses were considered by strategic health authorities (SHAs) and, where appropriate, action plans to address areas of weakness would be developed and implemented by the individual trusts. The information collected by SHAs suggested that by the end of 2004 some 67 per cent. of respondents expected to have systems in place to utilise patients' own drugs and enable self-administration, where appropriate. The Department does not hold results centrally for the medicines management framework. In line with "Shifting the Balance of Power", SHAs performance manage this process.

Further information about medicines management in hospitals is expected to be available in summer 2006 when the Healthcare Commission publishes findings from its acute hospital portfolio medicines management review.

Mental Health

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what social and cultural factors she has identified as having *(a)* an impact on and *(b)* a correlation with the incidence of mental illnesses; and if she will make a statement. [40897]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department did not directly assess the social and cultural factors that may have an impact on and a correlation with the incidence of mental illnesses. However, the Office for National Statistics' (ONS's) report "Psychiatric Morbidity among Adults Living in Private Households, 2000" shows the associations between the presence of mental disorders and key socio-demographic and economic characteristics for those with different types of mental disorder. This report is available on ONS's website at www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_health/psychmorb.pdf.

"Ethnic Minority Psychiatric Illness Rates in the Community" published by the National Centre for Social Research and the Royal Free and University College Medical School, explores the prevalence of mental disorders by demographic and socio-economic factors for the main ethnic minority groups in England. This report is available at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/02/40/34/04024034.pdf.

The Social Exclusion Unit report, "Mental Health and Social Exclusion", published by the Department in 2004, also identifies a range of factors that can affect the prevalence of mental health problems in the general population. This report is available at www.socialexclusion.gov.uk/page.asp?id=257.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital admissions on mental health grounds in each year since 1997 resulted from the use of *(a)* pharmaceutical drugs, *(b)* heroin, *(c)* cocaine, *(d)* cannabis, *(e)* alcohol, *(f)* nicotine, *(g)* stimulants and *(h)* hallucinogens. [43534]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on admissions under mental illness specialties with a primary diagnosis of a mental or behavioural disorder due to psychoactive substance abuse or poisoning, and caused by drugs, in England between 1996–97 and 2004–05, is shown in the following table.

Admissions under mental illness specialties with a primary diagnosis of a mental or behavioural disorder due to psychoactive substance abuse or poisoning, and caused by drugs, in England between 1996–97 and 2004–05

	Data year								
Type of drug	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–00*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*[1]	*2004–05*[1]
Pharm drugs	460	430	510	510	380	330	400	380	400
Heroin	2,690	3,680	3,940	3,620	3,620	3,520	3,310	3,120	3,110
Cocaine	60	70	130	130	100	160	190	220	190
Cannabis	460	430	530	510	490	580	590	710	710
Alcohol	15,790	15,510	14,650	13,610	12,130	11,470	11,870	11,280	10,910
Nicotine	0	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Stimulants	470	530	590	460	240	310	360	310	280
Hallucinogen	140	110	130	120	70	80	70	80	70
All	20,070	20,780	20,480	18,960	17,020	16,460	16,780	16,110	15,670

[1] The figures for 2003–04 and 2004–05 have not yet been adjusted for shortfalls in data and/or clinical error and are ungrossed, and all figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Health & Social Care Information Centre.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department has taken to develop mental health telephone helpline services. [43891]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has committed funding of £5 million (2004–05 to 2006–07) and is actively supporting the implementation and development of an infrastructure to facilitate mental health helpline providers, working in partnership to achieve increased quality, efficiency, capacity, governance, choice and access in relation to the provision of helpline services 24 hours a day. Members of the Mental Health Helplines Partnership (MHHP) are taking forward a detailed programme of work and progress can be reported in the following areas:

Accredited training: facilitation of accredited training for mental health helpline workers through the Telephone Helplines Association.

Mental Health Helplines Quality Standards (MHHQS): 25 helplines have received accreditation and work is progressing to accredit a further 12.

Targeted Investment Resources: The MHHP has processed over 20 applications for targeted investment and approved 10 to date. Further applications are currently being processed.

Telecommunications solution: Once established this telecommunications solution will enable callers to access mental health helplines 24 hours a day. It is anticipated that a preferred provider will be identified within six months.

MHHP website: Negotiations are at an advanced stage with a preferred provider for the development and maintenance of a website, which will provide partnership updates on all areas of work and helpline services.

Shared Services provision: Later this year work is due to commence on commissioning shared services for MHHP members.

Mental health helplines conference: The MHHP will host a second national mental health helpline conference in May, to share its achievements with service users and key stakeholders.

Midwifery (North Wales)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many midwifery posts are vacant in each acute NHS trust in the North West. [45176]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* Information is not available in the format requested. However, the table shows three month vacancies of qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff in the North West by organisation.

Health and Social Care Information Centre Vacancies Survey March 2005 NHS three month vacancies of qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff in the North West Government office region by organisation

	All nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff			
	March 2005		*September 2004*	
			Staff in post	
	Three month vacancy rate (percentage)	*Three month vacancy (number)*	*Full-time equivalent*	*Headcount*
England	1.7	6,930	400,291	511,607
North West Government Office Region Total	0.9	601	65,566	80,785
Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority area Total	0.7	161	22,475	27,833
Five Borough Partnership NHS Trust	1.5	19	1,191	1,336
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	1.0	11	1,138	1,328
Bebington and West Wirral PCT	0.0	0	222	334
Birkenhead and Wallasey PCT	0.0	0	265	363
Cardiothoracic Centre—Liverpool NHS Trust	0.0	0	565	753
Central Cheshire PCT	0.0	0	361	636
Central Liverpool PCT	0.2	1	545	657
Cheshire and Merseyside SHA	0.0	0	0	1
Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Trust	1.7	21	1,194	1,365
Cheshire West PCT	0.0	0	171	252
Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology NHS Trust	0.0	0	125	145
Countess of Chester NHS Foundation Trust	2.7	24	867	1,056
East Cheshire NHS Trust	0.1	1	738	1,079
Eastern Cheshire PCT	1.0	2	197	319
Ellesmere Port and Neston PCT	0.8	2	186	260
Halton PCT	0.3	1	205	282
Knowsley PCT	0.4	1	254	324
Liverpool Womens Hospital NHS Trust	0.0	0	593	730
Mersey Care NHS Trust	0.1	3	2,143	2,357
Mersey Regional Ambulance Service NHS Trust	—	0	0	0
Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	1.2	9	742	918
North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	0.9	10	1,203	1,454
North Liverpool PCT	1.0	2	205	283
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen Hospitals University NHS Trust	0.9	20	2,218	2,557
Royal Liverpool Childrens NHS Trust	0.0	0	845	1,013
South Liverpool PCT	0.7	1	136	166
South Sefton PCT	1.6	5	305	377
Southport and Formby PCT	2.3	4	168	242
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust	0.0	0	1,042	1,492
St. Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust	0.9	15	1,723	2,084
St. Helens PCT	2.1	5	236	305
Walton Centre for Neurology and Neurosurgery NHS Trust	0.0	0	254	288
Warrington PCT	0.5	1	263	369
Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	0.2	4	2,177	2,708

Health and Social Care Information Centre Vacancies Survey March 2005 NHS three month vacancies of qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff in the North West Government office region by organisation

	All nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff			
	March 2005		*September 2004*	
			Staff in post	
	Three month vacancy rate (percentage)	*Three month vacancy (number)*	*Full-time equivalent*	*Headcount*
Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority area Total	0.5	94	18,601	23,141
Blackburn with Darwen PCT	0.0	0	235	330
Blackpool PCT	1.1	3	245	337
Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust	1.4	28	1,970	2,460
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale PCT	0.4	3	588	725
Calderstones NHS Trust	0.0	0	467	484
Carlisle and District PCT	0.3	1	162	255
Chorley and South Ribble PCT	0.0	0	371	446
Cumbria Ambulance Service NHS Trust	—	0	0	0
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	0.0	0	1	1
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust	0.0	0	2,554	3,038
Eden Valley PCT	0.0	0	218	338
Fylde PCT	0.0	0	164	216
Hyndburn and Ribble Valley PCT	1.6	9	528	688
Lancashire Ambulance Service NHS Trust	—	0	0	0
Lancashire Care NHS Trust	1.1	20	1,865	2,302
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	0.7	14	1,822	2,233
Morecambe Bay Hospitals NHS Trust	0.1	2	3,087	3,586
Morecambe Bay PCT	0.0	0	1,328	1,712
North Cumbria Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	0.2	2	1,536	2,001
North Cumbria Mental Health and Learning Disabilities NHS Trust	0.0	0	563	661
Preston PCT	1.2	4	342	478
West Cumbria PCT	2.1	5	237	376
West Lancashire PCT	2.6	5	171	256
Wyre PCT	0.0	0	149	218
Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority area Total	1.4	345	24,489	29,811
Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT	0.0	0	436	580
Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust	0.1	2	1,608	1,855
Bolton PCT	0.0	0	463	596
Bolton Salford and Trafford Mental Health NHS Trust	4.2	66	1,532	1,668
Bury PCT	7.1	20	261	333
Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	1.4	36	2,567	2,949
Central Manchester PCT	0.0	0	389	527
Christie Hospital NHS Trust	2.4	12	486	599
Greater Manchester Ambulance Service NHS Trust	0.0	0	2	2
Greater Manchester SHA	0.0	0	36	36
Heywood and Middleton PCT	1.8	2	110	128
Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust	0.5	4	870	960
North Manchester PCT	0.0	0	193	242
Oldham PCT	0.0	0	305	344
Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1.1	44	3,807	4,725
Pennine Care NHS Trust	5.5	76	1,306	1,475
Rochdale PCT	0.6	1	156	180
Salford PCT	0.0	0	551	705
Salford Royal Hospitals NHS Trust	0.6	10	1,656	1,987
South Manchester PCT	0.0	0	286	364
South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	2.1	36	1,659	1,924
Stockport NHS Foundation Trust	0.9	12	1,345	1,853
Stockport PCT	0.5	2	407	582
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	0.4	4	1,065	1,353
Tameside and Glossop PCT	0.0	0	325	455
Trafford Health care NHS Trust	0.4	3	799	1,081
Trafford North PCT	0.0	0	127	171
Trafford South PCT	0.0	0	126	205
Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	0.9	15	1,617	1,932

Notes:

Three month vacancy:

1. Three month vacancy information is as at 31 March 2005.
2. Three month vacancies are vacancies which trusts are actively trying to fill, which had lasted for three months or more (whole-time equivalents).
3. Three month vacancy rates are three month vacancies expressed as a percentage of three month vacancies plus staff in post.
4. Three month vacancy rates are calculated using staff in post from the Non-Medical Workforce Census September 2004.
5. Percentages are rounded to 1 decimal place
6. — zero.

Staff in post:

1. Staff in post data is from the Non-Medical Workforce Census September 2004.
2. — zero.

General:
1. Vacancy and staff in post numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number.
2. Calculating the vacancy rates using the aforementioned data may not equal the actual vacancy rates.
3. Due to rounding, totals may not equal the sum of component parts.
4. Strategic health authority figures are based on trusts, and do not necessarily reflect the geographical provision of health care.

Sources:
1. Health and Social Care Information Centre Vacancies Survey March 2005.
2. Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census September 2004.

Mobile Telephone Masts

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her Department's policy is on giving consent to the siting of telephone masts on NHS estates. [45978]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 26 January 2006]:* National health service trusts and primary care trusts hold land in their own name and hence, these trusts do not require the consent of the Department when leasing property for the erection of telephone masts and associated base stations.

Multiple Sclerosis

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the clinical trials at the Atkinson Morley Wing of St George's Medical School in Tooting, South London for Aimspro to treat secondary progressive multiple sclerosis are expected to be completed. [44916]

Jane Kennedy: The trial at St George's was halted by the supplier of the product on 1 March 2005 and has not resumed. It is believed that only one patient had completed the trial by the time it was halted.

NHS Finance

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her statement of 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 851 on NHS Finance, what extra time the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority has been given to sort out its financial deficit; and what help the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority *(a)* has had and *(b)* will have (i) from the NHS Bank and (ii) other NHS organisations to sort out its financial deficit. [30762]

Caroline Flint: It is the responsibility of strategic health authorities to deliver both overall financial balance for their local health communities and to ensure each and every body achieves financial balance. Thames Valley SHA agreed with the Department to deliver a balanced financial position across all its organisations for 2005–06, they have not been granted any extra time to resolve their financial problems. The Department's expectation is that this is met.

The Thames Valley SHA has received no general support form the NHS Bank.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 145W, on NHS finance, what the total saving made by the NHS Litigation Authority was; and whether this saving is non-recurrent. [44269]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The total saving against the NHS Litigation Authority's initial 2004–05 budget was £375 million. The reasons for the reduced budget requirement are ongoing and similar savings are anticipated against the 2005–06 initial budget requirement. Clinical negligence provision by definition cannot be forecast with complete accuracy in advance.

NHS Managers (Job Losses)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of job losses among NHS managers as a result of changes to primary care trusts; and what proportion of job losses will be from managers who are also clinicians. [41882]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* Ministers have given the go-ahead for all 28 strategic health authorities to begin local consultations on boundary changes to strategic health authorities and primary care trusts. Consultations started on 14 December and will continue for a period of 14 weeks, until 22 March. Until any boundary changes are agreed, it is not possible to calculate the number of job losses.

NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency has spent purchasing gas in each financial year since 2000–01. [42019]

Jane Kennedy: The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (NHS PASA) has spent the following on gas in the last five financial years:

	£
2000–01	4,554
2001–02	21,231
2002–03	11,177
2003–04	6,915
2004–05	6,938

Through the NHS PASA framework agreements trusts have spent the following amounts on gas purchases in each financial year since 2000–01:

	£ million
2000–01	[1]63.1
2001–02	[2]48.2
2002–03	[2]71.2
2003–04	[2]62.5
2004–05	[2]79.1
2005–06	[1]148.28

[1] Estimated
[2] Actual

In 2000–01, NHS PASA purchase of gas via the framework agreements accounted for approximately 70 per cent. of the national health service market. In 2005–06, NHS PASA agreements accounted for approximately 85 per cent. of the NHS market.

NHS Trusts (Board Members)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the board members of each NHS trust who have left their positions in the last three years. [45492]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 25 January 2006]:* Information about board members who have left the boards of national health service bodies is not available centrally. The NHS Appointments Commission has information about the appointment of non-executive board members since 2001, when it was established. The NHS Appointments Commission have been asked to write directly to the hon. Member regarding this inquiry.

Northiam and Broad Oak Surgeries

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Minister of State for NHS delivery will provide a written response following his meeting with the hon. Member for Bexhill and Battle on 9 January on Northiam and Broad Oak surgeries. [43955]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 25 January 2006]:* The Minister of State for Delivery, my noble Friend Lord Warner, provided a written response on 23 January 2006.

Palliative Care (Funding)

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the adequacy of funding of palliative care in the Eastern Region of England. [42973]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are five cancer networks in the East of England and each of the five cancer networks, with their constituent primary care trusts (PCTs), has set out a three-year investment strategy informed by a population needs assessment to identify the specialist palliative care requirement of their resident population. Against this assessment they have invested their allocation from the additional £50 million per annum for specialist palliative care which is now in PCT baselines. Having assessed their local priorities, PCTs can invest more.

Patient Deaths

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients have died due to mistakes made by NHS staff in each year since 1997; and what proportion resulted in prosecutions. [43288]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not collected centrally in the form requested.

Several estimates have been made of the number of patient safety incidents that occur each year, and the number of people who die as a result. For example, estimates that have been widely quoted are of 850,000 incidents per year and 40,000 deaths in England. The accuracy of these estimates, and of similar estimates from other countries, has been widely debated. Such estimates are likely to depend on a number of factors including the source of the original data and the definitions used in the original studies from which the estimates were derived.

Many patients, particularly those in acute care settings, are critically ill, and so grading the degree of harm caused by an incident is not straightforward. For example, some deaths following incidents may have occurred as a result of the underlying illness rather than as a result of the incident.

The Government is concerned about assuring and improving the safety of care for NHS patients. As part of our national health service patient safety programme, we established the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) in July 2001 to improve the safety of NHS patient care. The NPSA has introduced a national reporting and learning system for patient safety incidents and issued a number of patient safety solutions to the NHS to improve the safety of care for areas of known risk.

The reporting and learning system will, in time, enable us to understand the nature and extent of adverse events in the NHS more fully, and take action to prevent them being repeated. All NHS organisations in England and Wales are now reporting patient safety incidents to the national system.

Patient Safety

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements are in place for the *(a)* monitoring and *(b)* improvement of the safety of NHS patients who receive treatment from other healthcare providers. [20346]

Jane Kennedy: Health care provided for national health service patients by establishments outside the NHS is covered by the provisions of the Care Standards Act 2000 and the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003.

Those private healthcare establishments, including independent hospitals or clinics, or medical agencies providing services to NHS patients, that are subject to registration with, and inspection by, the Healthcare Commission under the Care Standards Act are required to comply with the Private and Voluntary Healthcare (England) Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards (NMS) for Independent Health Care published in 2002.

Within this framework, the Healthcare Commission uses three essential suitability criteria to determine whether persons, organisations and services are suitable to operate:

fitness of premises—that premises are fit for the purpose of the service;

fitness of persons—that the persons running and managing the service, any person nominated as the responsible individual on behalf of an organisation, and any staff or other persons working for the service are fit to do so; and

fitness of services and facilities—that the treatment, services and facilities (including policies and procedures) meet the requirements of the Private and Voluntary Healthcare Regulations, are suitable and safe and meet the needs of the service users as interpreted through the NMS for the service concerned.

The registration process has been designed to assess each application against these criteria. The process includes interviews with the applicants, checks on their character and an inspection or pre-registration visit to the service.

The registered provider is responsible for providing a safe and effective service. This includes having a health and safety policy and risk assessments in place and audit systems to assess the quality of care.

The Healthcare Commission currently inspects all registered establishments annually. Establishments are inspected against the requirements of the 2001 regulations and the NMS. Inspections focus on perceived areas of risk in each establishment. Assessment managers prepare written reports setting out requirements, recommendations, and areas of concern identified during inspections. These reports, which are published and available on the Commission's website, include timetables for compliance with any specific requirements.

In addition, health care provided for NHS patients, be it by the NHS or for the NHS by a non-NHS establishment, is reviewed by the Healthcare Commission under the 2003 Act, against the NHS standards—"Standards for Better Health"—published by the Secretary of State in July 2004. As part of its review process, the Healthcare Commission ensures that services for NHS patients delivered from outside the NHS are commissioned against these standards, including those covering patient safety.

Those services contracted directly by the Department from non-NHS organisations are commissioned using the framework of the "Standards for Better Health" and where appropriate are reviewed against the Private and Voluntary Healthcare Regulations and NMS.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with the Royal College of Nursing about her plans to give primary care trusts a solely commissioning role. [24403]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has had several discussions with the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) on this issue, and a settlement has now been reached over judicial review proceedings that were issued by the RCN at the end of October 2005.

A letter was issued from the Secretary of State on 8 December 2005 to the RCN General Secretary, Dr. Beverley Malone, which stated that:

"We do not have a policy requirement or timetable for PCTs to divest themselves of provision. We well support PCTs whether or not they divest themselves of service provision, provided that what is being offered is genuinely best for local patient care.

"We have tried to make this clear to the service, and as I said to Parliament on 25 October,

"District Nurses, health visitors and other staff delivering clinical services will continue to be employees by their PCT, unless and until the PCT decides otherwise" and "any such decisions would be driven locally following our White Paper deliberations".

In response to the letter, Dr. Beverly Malone has publicly stated:

"Issuing an application to be granted permission to apply for judicial review is not a step the RCN took lightly. We are, therefore, pleased a settlement has been agreed with the Department of Health and especially welcome the reassurance that there is no policy requirement or timetable for PCTs to divest themselves of provision.

"The RCN looks forward to working closely with the Government to ensure that nurses, and other health care workers, are involved in any decisions made about the future of the NHS."

The RCN have been fully involved in discussions around the White Paper, which is due to be published at the end of January, and will set out a vision for the future of local health and care services that will address questions about how, when and in what settings primary care services are delivered.

Predictive Diallers

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many calls were made from call centres in her Department in 2004–05 using predictive diallers; how many such calls resulted in contact being made with the recipient without a Government agent available to talk to them; and what assessment she has made of the likely impact of Ofcom's policy on silent calls on the use of predictive diallers in departmental call centres. [28172]

Jane Kennedy: The Department has a single call centre, part of a customer service directorate. This centre does not use predictive dialling.

Prescriptions

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate her Department made prior to the change in prescription charge regulations in April 2004 of the number of additional patients per year who would become entitled to free prescriptions; and how many patients have successfully claimed exemption from prescription charges as a result of that change. [45020]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 25 January 2006]:* Prior to the change to the prescription charge regulations in April 2004, based on a sample of low income scheme claims, we estimated that around 29,000 claims would move from partial help, which gives no entitlement to free prescriptions, to entitlement to free prescriptions.

For 2004–05, the latest year for which sample data are available, we estimate that around 45,000 low income scheme claims have resulted in entitlement to free prescriptions that would previously have resulted in partial help.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many reviews of the prescription charging system her Department has undertaken since 1997; what plans she has to conduct further reviews of the prescription charging system; whether she will place the copies of any review of prescription charges which has been undertaken since 1997 in the Library; and if she will make a statement. [42936]

Jane Kennedy: An internal review of prescription charges was undertaken by departmental officials in conjunction with HM Treasury as part of the formulation of government policy for the 1998 Comprehensive Spending Review. This work fed into the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review which was published by the HM Treasury. There are no plans to undertake a further review.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice her Department issues to *(a)* primary care trusts and *(b)* general practitioners on the issue of prescriptions to patients who pay for drugs to ensure that amounts issued by practices in prescriptions are monitored. [41650]

Jane Kennedy: The amounts of drugs prescribed or the duration of prescriptions is a decision reserved for the general practitioner who has clinical responsibility for that particular aspect of a patient's care. The Department has not issued guidance on this issue but informal advice on prescription duration and drug wastage was included in Connect bulletin number 20 issued by the National Prescribing Centre in March 2000. A copy is available in the Library.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Trust

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made on the impact of the private finance initiative arrangements on the reference cost index of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Trust; and if she will make a statement. [44321]

Jane Kennedy: The Queen Elizabeth Hospital National Health Service Trust has a reference cost index score of 103 for the year 2003–04. This shows that it is operating at costs 3 per cent. above the national average. An organisation with costs equal to the national average for this activity will score 100. Private finance initiative costs are apportioned to activity by the trusts themselves and not separately identified in reference costs submissions.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the basis is for the change in the discount rate on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Trust Finance Initiative deferred asset in 2005–06; and if she will make a statement. [44322]

Jane Kennedy: This is a local matter. The South East London Strategic Health Authority (SHA) has advised that following the HM Treasury's discount rate for the provisions for 3.5 per cent. and 2.2 per cent., the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Trust has applied this directive to the deferred asset created to transfer ownership of the private finance initiative hospital back to the national health service over the term of the contract. The SHA further advises that this interpretation of the guidance has recently been clarified by the Department. However, the trust is finding it difficult to contain the impact of the financial pressure resulting from this clarification which was published on 3 January with an effective date of 1 April 2005.

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the consortia refinanced the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Trust Private Finance Initiative; and what estimate she has made of the financial effect on the trust if it had shared the reduced costs. [44325]

Jane Kennedy: This is a local matter. The South East London Strategic Health Authority has advised that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital scheme has not been refinanced. It was financed with an index-linked bond. The nature of bond deals make them very hard to refinance without incurring considerable additional costs. It is therefore unlikely that a refinancing will take place as the costs will normally outweigh the benefits.

Rheumatology

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to safeguard the employment of specialist rheumatology nurses and practitioners during the reorganisation of primary care trusts. [32283]

Mr. Byrne: The potential reorganisation of primary care trusts (PCTs) resulting from Commissioning a Patient-led NHS is currently out for local consultation. The Department has commissioned a human resource framework in support of these anticipated changes, which has been written in partnership with colleagues from the service and trade unions, through the Employers Organisation. This framework document sets out for national health service employers best practice and legal employment requirements needed to retain NHS staff during potential organisational restructuring.

Stoma Nurses

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether any changes are planned in the provision of stoma nurses. [41985]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 18 January 2006]:* The Department is currently undertaking a consultation about the possible changes to improve the arrangements for the provision of dressings, incontinence appliances, stoma appliances, chemical reagents and other appliances to primary and secondary care. Part of this consultation will review the sponsorship of nurses and manufacturers.

The consultation closes on 23 January and we are not in a position at present to comment on the outcome.

Strategic Health Authorities

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost per patient treated in hospital was for each strategic health authority in England in each of the last 10 years. [35164]

Mr. Byrne: There is no data collected centrally at individual patient level. Data are collected on a finished consultant episode basis and at national health service trust level, within which one or more hospitals will operate.

Thiomersal

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what research her Department has undertaken into thiomersal; and if she will make a statement; [43204]

(2) which paediatric vaccines contain mercury; and if she will make a statement. [43205]

Jane Kennedy: As with all medicinal products, vaccine safety is continually monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) with advice from independent experts. The United Kingdom's Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) and its expert working group on vaccine safety have thoroughly reviewed the safety of thiomersal-containing vaccines, including alleged links with neurodevelopmental disorders, and kept this under close review.

In 2001, the CSM, now the Commission for Human Medicines, conducted a major review of the available evidence and has since then considered new data on a number of occasions as it has emerged. Following concerns in the United States of America (USA) about the possible toxicity of thiomersal-containing vaccines, the Department funded a study using the UK's general practice research database to investigate whether there is a relationship between the amount of thiomersal that an infant receives through vaccination at a young age and subsequent neurological disorders. Data from a study involving over a 100,000 UK children were considered by CSM in 2003. Further studies from Denmark involving almost half a million children and a study from the USA have also specifically investigated the suggested link between mercury-containing vaccines and autism. None of these studies have found any evidence of a causal association with subsequent neurodevelopment disorders, including autism.

The advice of CSM stands that there is no evidence of harm from the very small quantities of thiomersal contained in some vaccines, with the exception of possible allergic reactions, typically skin rashes or local swelling at the site of injection. This view concurs with that of the World Health Organisation, the USA's Institute of Medicine and the European Medicines Agency. The balance of benefits and risks of thiomersal-containing vaccines remains overwhelmingly positive.

None of the vaccines that are currently part of the recommended childhood immunisation programme contain mercury.

Thrombosis

John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what discussions she had on raising thrombosis as a patient safety issue during the UK presidency of the European Union; [41491]

(2) whether the prevention of venous thromboembolism was raised at the Patient Safety Summit held in London on 28 to 30 November 2005. [41492]

Jane Kennedy: The prevention of venous thromboembolism was not raised as a specific patient safety issue during the 2005 UK presidency of the European Union.

However, in response to the Health Committee report on "The prevention of the Venous Thromboembolism (VTE) in Hospitalised Patients" published last year, the Government have established an independent expert working group to help develop a comprehensive strategy for both treatment and prevention of VTE.

The VTE expert group has been asked to report to Chief Medical Officer by summer 2006.

Tooth Decay

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what national targets for tooth decay her Department has set in the last five years; and what the performance against each target has been of each *(a)* primary care trust and *(b)* strategic health authority. [35427]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The last national targets were set in 1994 and were for the period 1998–2003. Within this framework, it was for local NHS organisations to decide whether to set individual targets for their locality.

For adults, the target was to reduce the percentage of dentate adults with at least one deep periodontal pocket (greater than 6 millimetres) from 17 per cent. to 10 per cent. The National Adult Dental Health Survey conducted in 1998 showed that 6 per cent. of people aged 45 to 64 had pockets over 6 mm in depth.

For children, the targets were that 12-year-olds should have no more than an average of 1.0 teeth with decay experience, 70 per cent. of five-year-olds should have no decay experience and that five-year-olds should have no more than an average of 1.0 teeth with decay experience. The National Child Health Survey conducted in 2003 found that 12-year-olds in England had an average of 0.7 teeth with obvious decay experience, 59 per cent. of five-year-olds in England had no primary teeth with obvious decay experience and the average number of primary teeth with obvious decay in five-year-olds was 1.5 per cent.

Tuberculosis Vaccination

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent changes there have been to Government policy on the vaccination of children against tuberculosis; and what the present policy is. [39732]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* The changes to the bacille calmette guerin vaccination policy were given in the Chief Medical Officer letter to the health profession dated 6 July 2005. A copy of which is available in the Library.

Value for Money

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her statement on the Dimbleby programme that her Department is examining its budget to ensure value for money is achieved, if she will list the programme budgets which are under review. [39355]

Mr. Byrne: It is usual practice to keep all central budgets under review as the financial year progresses as part of prudent financial management.

Vitamin D (Infants)

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the optimum age at which breastfed babies will benefit from vitamin D drops; and which variety of vitamin D the Department recommends; [37918]

(2) if she will seek advice from the Food Standards Agency on the levels of vitamin D in various foods for infants and issue appropriate guidance. [37919]

Caroline Flint: The Committee on Medical Aspects of Food Policy (COMA) recommends that breastfed infants under six months do not need vitamin supplements provided the mother had an adequate vitamin status during pregnancy. From age six months, infants receiving breast milk as their main drink should be given supplements of vitamins A and D. Between the ages of one to five years, vitamins A and D supplements

should be given unless adequate vitamin status can be assured from a diverse diet containing vitamins A and D rich foods and from moderate exposure to sunlight.

The Department provides free vitamin supplements to children aged under five under the welfare food scheme, and this supplement provides seven micrograms of vitamin D3 per day. COMA also recommends a supplement for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers of 10 mcg per day which we expect to provide under the healthy start scheme.

The levels of vitamin D in various foods for infants are controlled by the Processed Cereal-based Foods and Baby Food for Infants and Young Children (England) Regulations 2004. These regulations set minimum and maximum levels for the vitamin D content of processed cereal-based foods for infants (0.25 to 0.75 per 100 kilojoules or 1 to 3 per 100 kilocalories).

Waiting Times

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* maximum, *(b)* average and *(c)* target waiting times were for (i) inpatient and (ii) first outpatient appointments for each strategic health authority in England in each quarter of the last eight years. [40265]

Mr. Byrne: The Department collects waiting time data by time bands, that is, the number of patients who waited zero to four weeks; four to 13 weeks; 13 to 17 weeks; 17 to 21 weeks; 21 to 26 weeks; and over 26 weeks. It is not possible from those data to calculate precisely the longest any patient had to wait in any given quarter.

Information on average waiting times for first outpatient appointment treatment since 2002–03, when strategic health authority were established, has been placed in the Library.

Target maximum waiting times are shown in the table.

Year end	Maximum inpatient waiting time in months	Maximum waiting time for a first outpatient appointment in months (weeks)
1 April 2002	15	6 (26)
1 April 2003	12	5 (21)
1 April 2004	9	4 (17)
End 2005	6	3 (13)
End 2008	18 weeks for general practitioner referral to start of treatment	

Westmorland and Lonsdale

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* residential, *(b)* nursing and *(c)* elderly mentally infirm (i) homes and (ii) places were available in Westmorland and Lonsdale in each of the last 10 years, broken down by (A) local authority, (B) private sector and (C) charity and voluntary providers; and what percentage of capacity in each sector was used in each year. [43150]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 18 January 2006]:* Information on the number of care and nursing care homes and places was collected by the Department from 1997 to 2001. The data were collected by health authority and council with social services responsibility areas. This information is shown in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 shows the number of care homes and places in Cumbria for adults age 18 and over, by type of accommodation at 31 March 1997 to 2001. Table 2 shows the number of care homes and places for older people with mental health problems in Cumbria, by type of accommodation at 31 March 1997 to 2001. Data are not available for the percentage of capacity used each year.

Table 1: Number of care homes and places in Cumbria[1] by type of accommodation at 31 March 1997 to 2001

Rounded

	Residential homes				Nursing homes[1,4]
	LA	Voluntary	Private[2]	Small[3]	Independent
Homes					
1997	50	30	120	70	[5]
1998	40	40	100	60	30
1999	40	40	100	50	20
2000	50	40	100	50	20
2001	50	50	80	50	30
Places					
1997	1,300	320	2,150	190	[5]
1998	1,200	410	2,040	170	840
1999	1,200	420	2,110	150	950
2000	1,160	490	2,120	150	880
2001	1,160	510	2,010	130	820

[1] Residential data relates to Cumbria council with Social Services responsibilities; nursing data relates North Cumbria health authority.
[2] Includes residential places that are in dual registered homes.
[3] Independent registered care homes with less than four places.
[4] Data for nursing homes include nursing places in dual registered homes.
[5] Data are not available.
Source:
Department of Health forms RA Part A, RAC5, KO36 and RH(N) Part A

Table 2: Number of homes and places for older people with mental health problems[1] by type of accommodation at 31 March 1997 to 2001

	LA	Voluntary	Private[2]	Small[3]	Nursing[4]
Homes					
1997	1	0	4	4	[5]
1998	1	1	1	4	5
1999	1	1	0	4	5
2000	0	1	0	2	5
2001	0	1	0	5	6
Places					
1997	40	0	139	12	[5]
1998	40	40	19	10	190
1999	40	40	0	10	190
2000	0	40	0	6	205
2001	0	40	0	12	205

[1] Data in this table are for primary client group 'older people with mental health problems'.
[2] Includes residential places that are in dual registered homes.
[3] Independent registered care homes with less than four places.
[4] Data are for North Cumbria health authority.
[5] Data are not available.
Source:
Department of Health forms RA Part A and RAC5

No data is available for 2002.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection produces data on the number of care homes and places registered as at 31 March each year, beginning with 2003. There are some minor definitional differences between this data and those for years up to 2001.

Table 3 shows the number of care homes and places that were registered in Cumbria local authority (LA), of which Westmorland and Lonsdale is part, at 31 March for the years 2003 to 2005, for adults aged 18 and over. Table 4 shows the number of care homes and places for older people with mental health problems in Cumbria LA for the same period. Data are not available for the percentage of capacity used each year.

Data for Westmoreland and Lonsdale constituency is not available separately.

Table 3

Establishment category	*As at 31 March 2005*		*As at 31 March 2004*		*As at 31 March 2003*	
	Number of homes	*Maximum number of places*	*Number of homes*	*Maximum number of places*	*Number of homes*	*Maximum number of places*
Nursing						
Independent	30	1,219	29	1,109	31	1,138
Other	1	23	1	23	1	23
Voluntary	2	59	2	59	2	59
Personal care						
Independent	78	1,708	81	1,730	106	1,952
Local authority	36	1,055	43	1,080	0	0
Voluntary	49	502	49	502	49	498
Totals	196	4,566	205	4,503	189	3,670

Table 4

Establishment category: DE(E) elderly mentally infirm	*As at 31 March 2005*		*As at 31 March 2004*		*As at 31 March 2003*	
	Number of homes	*Maximum number of places*	*Number of homes*	*Maximum number of places*	*Number of homes*	*Maximum number of places*
Nursing						
Independent	16	748	13	570	11	484
Personal Care						
Independent	47	1,212	39	985	32	796
Local Authority	30	961	30	961	0	0
Voluntary	4	133	4	133	4	133
Totals	97	3,054	86	2,649	47	1,413

Source:
Commission for Social Care and Inspection registration and inspection database

HOME DEPARTMENT

Alcohol-related Crime

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many alcohol-related crimes were recorded in west Lancashire in each year since 2002. [45156]

Hazel Blears: From the information collected on recorded crime, it is not possible to identify those offences which are alcohol-related. Such offences are not specifically defined by statute and details of the individual circumstances of offences do not feature in the data series.

Antisocial Behaviour

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what new powers have been made available to *(a)* local councils and *(b)* police forces to counter antisocial behaviour since May 1997. [45002]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) were introduced in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 is the single biggest package of measures tackling antisocial behaviour. Powers that have been made available to the police and local authorities include: ASBOs, Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, Crack House Closure Orders, Housing Injunctions, Parenting Orders/Contracts and Dispersal Orders.

The Respect Action Plan proposes to broaden the approach to dealing with all aspects of antisocial behaviour through tackling its causes and building on strong enforcement measures available to police and local authorities. New powers will enable a range of agencies to deliver a robust response to antisocial behaviour.

Asylum/Immigration

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many principal applicants for asylum have been granted indefinite leave to remain (ILR) as a result of the family ILR exercise announced on 24 October 2003; how many of the dependants of principal applicants for asylum already in the UK have also been granted ILR; and how many dependants of principal applicants have subsequently been given leave to join them in the UK. [31458]

Mr. McNulty: Up to and including 30 September 2005, 16,870 principal asylum applicants have been granted indefinite leave to remain (ILR) under the Family ILR Exercise. This figure is included in the information on cases considered under the Family ILR exercise that is published quarterly. Copies are available from the Library and on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

These figures will be updated on 28 February 2006 and will include data up to and including 31 December 2005.

A further 41,525 dependants of these principal applicants have been granted indefinite leave to remain under the Family ILR Exercise. This information is based on internal management information and is not published within the official statistics.

It is not possible to obtain figures for dependants who have subsequently been given leave to join existing families in the UK from internal management information.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether immigration detention centre staff will be subject to the vetting and barring scheme recommended by the Bichard Report. [46057]

Mr. McNulty: All Detainee Custody Officers (DCOs) at all Immigration Removal Centres are subject to enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checks. In addition, all DCOs at those centres which accommodate families with children—Yarl's Wood, Tinsley House and Dungavel—receive regular training in child protection procedures. Legislative measures to establish the new Vetting and Barring Scheme will be introduced shortly. The scheme is intended to cover those working with or having contact with children and vulnerable adults, and this would include those working with detainees in immigration removal centres.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will answer the letter to him dated 5 December 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Bakhtyar Ahmed. [45406]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I responded to the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton (Sir Gerald Kaufman) on 25 January 2006.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to the letter of 7 October 2005 from the hon. Member for Aylesbury about the case of Mr. A. N. T. of Aylesbury (reference N1041456; B23827/5) which was acknowledged on 14 October 2005. [42464]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The Immigration and Nationality Directorate replied to the hon. Member's letter on 23 January.

Corruption

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases are on the register of overseas corruption allegations held by the National Criminal Intelligence Service; and how many of these are being investigated. [46374]

The Solicitor-General: I have been asked to reply.

The Register of Referrals is now maintained by the Serious Fraud Office. The Department has initial responsibility for assessing reports that a United Kingdom national or other entity has engaged in

conduct outside the United Kingdom which may render that person or corporate entity liable for prosecution within the United Kingdom under sections 108 and 109 of the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001.

Sixty-six cases have been entered on the register of which six are currently the subject of investigations by the Serious Fraud Office and four by other authorities.

Crime Statistics

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average number of crimes reported per day was in Lancashire in the last year for which figures are available; and what estimate he has made of the incidence of unreported crime in Lancashire over the same period. [45153]

Hazel Blears: The published data relate to the number of crimes recorded by the police in terms of financial years. For the year 2004–05, Lancashire police recorded 152,043 offences. This figure takes into account the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002. Therefore, figures after April 2002 are not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Estimates of the proportion of crime that is reported to the police can be made at a national level using the British crime survey (BCS), but sample sizes are not sufficiently reliable to estimate reporting rates at the sub-national level. Forty-two per cent. of victims interviewed in the 2004–05 BCS said that the incident had been reported to the police or was known to them. This figure is similar to that for 2003–04 and shows that most crimes (58 per cent. of comparable crimes) are never reported to the police.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of young offenders re-offended in *(a)* Lancashire and *(b)* west Lancashire constituency in each year since 2002. [45154]

Fiona Mactaggart: Re-offending rates are not available centrally on a sub-national basis.

National reconviction rates—a commonly used proxy for reoffending—are published on the Home Office website. The data relate to young offenders who were discharged from prison, began a community sentence, or received a pre-court disposal in the first quarters of 2001 and 2002. (www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/rdsolr0805.pdf)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many violent crimes took place in the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in each of the last five years. [45253]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is given in the tables. It is estimated that the effect of the introduction of the national crime recording standard (NCRS) in April 2002 was a 20 per cent. increase nationally in recorded violent crime in its first year.

Table 1: Violent crime in the Hammersmith and Fulham crime and disorder reduction partnership area: 2000–01 and 2001–02

	Number of offences
2000–01	5,498
2001–02	5,845

Note:
The national crime recording standard was introduced in April 2002. Because of this figures before and after that date are not directly comparable.

Table 2: Violent crime in the Hammersmith and Fulham crime and disorder reduction partnership area:—2002–03 to 2004–05

	Number of offences
2002–03	5,856
2003–04	5,701
2004–05	6,234

Note:
The national crime recording standard was introduced in April 2002. Because of this figures before and after that date are not directly comparable.

Criminal Records Bureau

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the most recent estimate is of the time taken to process *(a)* a standard disclosure and *(b)* an enhanced disclosure by the Criminal Records Bureau; and whether the average time taken has changed since the system was introduced. [44900]

Andy Burnham: The Criminal Records Bureau's published service standards are to process 93 per cent. of standard disclosure applications within two weeks and 90 per cent. of enhanced disclosure applications within four weeks. The performance achieved for standard disclosures for December 2005 was 99 per cent. with a 12 month average of 99.4 per cent.

For enhanced disclosures, CRB are expected to complete their part of the checking process in 90 per cent. of cases in 12 days before referring these applications to local police forces for them to complete their part of the checking process against local intelligence databases.

The CRB has consistently exceeded its targets in processing disclosures up to the point at which they are referred to police forces. In December 2005, the CRB processed 95.8 per cent. of valid enhanced applications to the police within six days of receipt. This has provided forces with considerably more time to complete their checks within the published service standard.

The CRB has issued over eight million disclosures since the service was launched in March 2002 and more organisations have access to the service than ever before. Each week it is effectively dealing with over 55,000 disclosure applications. In general, the time taken to process disclosures has shortened, especially those that have been issued at the standard level, due to improvements introduced by the CRB.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time taken to process Criminal Records Bureau applications was in *(a)* September 2005, *(b)* June 2005, *(c)* January 2005 and *(d)* the latest period for which figures are available. [45505]

Andy Burnham: The Criminal Records Bureau's performance is measured against a set of published service standards, which are to process 93 per cent. of standard disclosure applications within two weeks and 90 per cent. of enhanced disclosure applications within four weeks. Standard disclosures are processed entirely within the CRB's internal systems and require no referral to external agencies.

The performance achieved for standard disclosures for January, June, September and December 2005 was 99 per cent., 98.7 per cent., 99.9 per cent. and 99.9 per cent. respectively, with a 12 month average of 99.4 per cent. Enhanced disclosures require a further level of check against local police intelligence databases and the CRB are expected to complete their part of the checking process in 90 per cent. of cases in 12 days before referring these applications to local police forces for them to complete their part of the checking process.

The CRB has consistently exceeded its targets in processing disclosures up to the point at which they are referred to police forces. In January 2005, 95 per cent. of valid applications were progressed by the agency to the police within 10 days. In June, the CRB processed 95 per cent. of valid applications to the police within 11 days. During September, the CRB processed 95 per cent. of valid applications to the police within seven days and in December 2005, the CRB processed 95.8 per cent. of valid enhanced applications to the police within six days of receipt.

This has provided forces with considerably more time to complete their checks within the published service standard.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of the extent to which the rules under which the Criminal Records Bureau can divulge former convictions, including spent convictions, to prospective employees are consistent with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974; and if he will make a statement; [46015]

(2) to what types of employer the Criminal Records Bureau is empowered to reveal the spent convictions of job applicants; in respect of what types of employment; and if he will make a statement. [46017]

Andy Burnham: The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 sets out those occupations and positions exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (the Act). This provides that persons employing individuals in those occupations and positions are exempt from the provisions of the Act and may therefore ask an individual to reveal details of all convictions, both 'spent' and 'unspent', under what is termed as an 'exempted question'.

The positions generally involve work with children and vulnerable adults, work involving the administration of justice and other employment of sufficient sensitivity to warrant a higher than normal level of criminal disclosure on public protection grounds. The Exceptions Order is updated periodically, ensuring that it reflects changes in risk to employers and the public.

The Criminal Records Bureau operates under the Police Act 1997. This provides that when applying for one of the two higher level Disclosures, Standard and Enhanced, an application must be accompanied by a statement from a registered person that the Disclosure is required for the purpose of asking an 'exempted question'. Accordingly release of conviction information by the criminal Records Bureau is fully consistent with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many immigration detention centre staff are *(a)* trained in child protection procedures and *(b)* subject to Criminal Records Bureau checks. [46056]

Mr. McNulty: All Detainee Custody Officers (DCOs) at all immigration removal centres are subject to enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checks. In addition, all DCOs at those centres which accommodate families with children—Yarl's Wood, Tinsley House and Dungavel—receive regular training in child protection procedures.

Deportation

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many charter flights have been used to deport illegal immigrants and overstayers in each of the last five years, broken down by *(a)* destination, *(b)* date of the flight and *(c)* cost. [26437]

Mr. McNulty: The immigration and nationality directorate has been using charter flights to effect removals on a regular basis since March 2001. From that time there have been a total of 320 charter operations including a small number of flights operated with other EU member states. The flights have resulted in the removal from the UK of 12,956 individuals who had no permission to remain here. Full details of dates and destinations are provided in the following table.

The cost of charter operations has been:

	Cost of charter operation (£)
2002–03	1,968,025
2003–04	1,226,972
2004–05	1,779,204

Figures for 2001–02 are not available as they were not separated from other public expense removal costs.

Destination	*Charter totals*	*Individuals*
Kosovo	233	9,785
Romania	28	1,296
Austria	5	75
Athens	1	1
Kinshasa	1	8
Czech rep	15	793
Poland	6	355
Others	8	16
Afghanistan	9	343
Azerbaijan	5	90
China	2	110
Iraq	1	15
Angola	1	18
Vietnam	1	36
Joint charter with Germany to Togo and Benin	1	4
Joint charter with Italy to Nigeria	1	7
Joint charter with Holland to Cameroon	2	4
Total		12,956

DNA Profiles

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances the police are permitted to retain DNA profiles obtained with consent from *(a)* the victims of crimes and *(b)* witnesses to crimes; and (i) for how long and (ii) subject to what conditions these profiles may be retained. [46013]

Andy Burnham: A victim or witness to a crime may be asked to consent to provide the police with a DNA sample for elimination purposes as part of the investigation into that crime. They may also consent to their DNA profile being retained on the National DNA Database. In both cases, under section 63 of the Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984, as amended, their consent must be in writing. Once given, consent to the retention of their sample and DNA profile cannot be withdrawn.

Samples and DNA profiles are normally retained until the individual's 100th birthday or until the notification of death and may only be used for the purposes of prevention and detection of crime, the investigation of an offence, the conduct of a prosecution or for the purposes of identifying a deceased person or body part.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances the police may retain DNA profiles; and for how long these profiles may be retained. [46014]

Andy Burnham: Under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, as amended, the police may retain DNA samples taken from persons who have been arrested for, informed they will be reported for or charged with a recordable offence and detained in a police station. The police may also take and retain DNA samples from persons convicted of a recordable offence. The samples may only be used for the purposes of prevention and detection of crime, the investigation of an offence, the conduct of a prosecution or for the purposes of identifying a deceased person or body part.

DNA samples are normally retained until the person is 100-years-old or notification of death.

Drug Dealers

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what additional funding has been made available to police forces to deal with regional drug dealers; and if he will make a statement. [42777]

Hazel Blears: Tackling regional drug dealers is part of core police business and funding for these operations is met from within general grant allocations. The Government has put significant extra resources into the police service in England and Wales over the last few years. On a like-for-like basis, Government grant and central spending on services for the police will have increased by 56 per cent. or almost £4 billion between 2000–01 and 2007–08.

It is a matter for each chief constable and police authority to decide how best to deploy the available resources across the force area, taking into account operational priorities and objectives.

We recognised that capacity in this area needed to be developed and in 2001 provided short-term funding of £6 million to three regional drugs units to develop expertise in tackling cross-regional drugs-markets, in order to disseminate the lessons learned. These were Operation Middle Market (West Midlands), Merseyside Middle Market Unit and Tarian Regional Taskforce (South Wales).

The creation of the Serious Organised Crime Agency in April 2006 will provided enhanced capacity and support to local police forces in tackling serious organised crime at the regional and national level.

Furthermore forthcoming police force restructuring will ensure that forces have the capacity, capability and resilience to effectively deal with regional drug dealers and similar criminality.

Early Release Scheme

Jeremy Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offences have been committed by offenders released under the Government's early release scheme during periods they would otherwise have served in custody. [42083]

Fiona Mactaggart: Since the scheme was introduced in January 1999 and for the period ending 30 November 2005, 120,837 offenders have been placed on Home Detention Curfew. Of these, 4,341 offenders have been notified to the National Offender Management Service as having been either cautioned or convicted or awaiting prosecution for 7,506 offences committed while they were subject to the scheme.

Faith Communities

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the publications his Department has produced relating to faith communities since 1989. [35351]

Paul Goggins: Since 1989, five publications have been produced by the Home Office which relate in their entirety to faith communities. However, during this period there have also been numerous publications with occasional references to faith communities in a wider context.

The five publications, focusing entirely on religious issues and listed on the Home Office Library catalogue are:

1. Working Together: Co-operation between Government and Faith Communities

Faith Communities Unit

Home Office, 2004

2. Religion in England and Wales: findings from the 2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey

Home Office Research Study 274

Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate, 2004

3. Tackling Religious Discrimination: practical implications for policy makers and legislators

Home Office Research Study 221

Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate, 2001.

4. Religious Discrimination in England and Wales

Home Office Research Study 220

Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate, 2001

5. Information about Ministers of Religion

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

ISBN 1858935083

Home Office, 2001

Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 987W, on festivals, how much funding his Department made available to fund the *(a)* Eid/Diwali celebration on 14 November and *(b)* the internal staff event on 8 November. [37683]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* The Home Office funded *(a)* the external Eid/Diwali celebration on 14 November and *(b)* the staff event held on 8 November to celebrate Ramadan and Eid at a cost of £8,933 and £7,557 respectively.

Forensic Practitioners (Complaints)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the transparency of the complaints procedure of the Council for the Registration of Forensic Practitioners. [45519]

Andy Burnham: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has no responsibility for the procedures adopted by the Council for handling complaints. The Home Secretary has, therefore, not undertaken any formal assessment of the Council's procedures.

Fresh Talent Working in Scotland

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications have been received for the fresh talent working in Scotland scheme; how many of these *(a)* were successful, *(b)* were unsuccessful and *(c)* are yet to be considered, broken down by (i) country of origin of applicant and (ii) month of application. [29587]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 21 November 2005]:* Applications have been received for the fresh talent: working in Scotland scheme at UK visas and the immigration nationality directorate (IND). Data to the end of December 2005 for the IND applications only are in the following table.

FTWISS: Intake, grant, refuse and invalid cases: 22 June 2005 to 31 December 2005

	June				*July*			
	Intake	*Grant*	*Refuse*	*Invalid*	*Intake*	*Grant*	*Refuse*	*Invalid*
India	10	10	0	0	25	20	0	[1]
China (Peoples Republic of China)	5	5	0	0	25	10	0	0
Nigeria	[1]	[1]	0	0	5	5	0	0
Malaysia	0	0	0	0	5	[1]	0	[1]
United States of America	[1]	0	0	0	5	5	0	0
Cameroon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kenya	0	0	0	0	5	[1]	0	0
Pakistan	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0
Taiwan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Angola	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	5	5	0	0	30	15	0	0
Grand Total	20	20	0	0	105	60	0	0

	August				*September*			
	Intake	*Grant*	*Refuse*	*Invalid*	*Intake*	*Grant*	*Refuse*	*Invalid*
India	35	25	1	0	30	30	0	0
China (Peoples Republic of China)	25	5	0	0	35	30	0	0
Nigeria	15	10	0	0	5	5	[1]	[1]
Malaysia	10	10	0	0	10	5	0	0
United States of America	5	5	0	[1]	10	10	0	0
Cameroon	5	[1]	0	[1]	[1]	0	0	0
Kenya	5	0	0	0	[1]	0	0	0
Pakistan	5	[1]	0	0	5	5	0	0
Taiwan	5	0	0	0	[1]	0	0	0
Angola	[1]	[1]	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	10	10	0	5	30	25	5	5
Grand Total	120	65	0	5	125	110	5	5

	October				November			
	Intake	*Grant*	*Refuse*	*Invalid*	*Intake*	*Grant*	*Refuse*	*Invalid*
India	65	50	0	[1]—	95	80	0	0
China (Peoples Republic of China)	55	45	0	[1]—	100	65	0	0
Nigeria	25	20	0	0	40	35	0	[1]—
Malaysia	10	10	[1]—	0	5	5	0	0
United States of America	20	15	0	0	25	20	0	0
Cameroon	0	[1]—	0	[1]—	5	[1]—	0	0
Kenya	0	[1]—	0	0	[1]—	[1]—	0	0
Pakistan	10	10	0	0	10	5	0	[1]—
Taiwan	0	0	0	0	5	[1]—	0	[1]—
Angola	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	60	45	[1]—	45	50	15	0	40
Grand Total	245	195	0	45	335	225	0	40

	December				WiP
	Intake	*Grant*	*Refuse*	*Invalid*	*at 1 December 2005*
India	65	65	0	0	25
China (Peoples Republic of China)	115	95	0	0	85
Nigeria	30	25	0	0	20
Malaysia	5	5	0	0	[1]—
United States of America	5	5	0	0	5
Cameroon	0	0	0	0	[1]—
Kenya	[1]—	[1]—	0	0	5
Pakistan	20	15	0	0	10
Taiwan	[1]—	5	0	0	0
Angola	0	0	0	0	0
Other	25	50	5	0	30
Grand Total	265	265	5	0	180

[1] Indicates 1 or 2.

Notes:

1. This information has not been quality assured, and is not a national statistic.
2. It should be treated as provisional management information.
3. Main applicant only.
4. Charged and non charged applications.
5. Report produced through GSMIS
6. All figures are rounded to nearest 5.
7. Statistics to be used publicly, or for other Government Departments or agencies, must be agreed with Immigration Research and Statistics Service (IRSS).
8. Invalid figures include rejections and void cases

Gambling

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate his Department has made of *(a)* the proportion of all recorded crimes and *(b)* the total number of crimes which were related to internet gambling addiction in the last year for which figures are available. [44288]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Glass Attacks

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many violent incidents involving glasses or glass bottles were reported in West Lancashire in 2004–05 resulting in injuries. [45034]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally in the recorded crime series. Details of the individual circumstances of offences do not feature in the data series.

Highways Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were (i) prosecuted and (ii) convicted during 2004 of an offence under section 131(2) of the Highways Act 1980, including that provision as applied by section 27(6) of the Countryside Act. [41011]

Paul Goggins: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of males and females proceeded against and found guilty at the magistrates courts for offences under a number of sections including section 131 of the Highways Act 1980, England and Wales, 2004 are given in the table. It is not possible to separately identify those offences under section 131 from offences under other sections collected within the same code group.

Number of males and females proceeded against and found guilty at the magistrates courts for offences under certain sections of the Highways Act 1980, England and Wales 2004[1]

Offence description: various offences
Statute: Highways Act 1980, SS 46, 73, 74, 79, 131, 134 & 136

	2004	
	Proceeded against	*Found guilty*
Male	15	8
Female	2	2

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis.

Historical Sex Abuse Investigations

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the work of the National Centre for Policing Excellence in relation to historical sex abuse investigations. [45521]

Paul Goggins: The National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE) was established on 1 April 2003. Its primary goal is "professionalism of policing" through enhancement of the capabilities of those involved in tackling crime.

Any number of forces may be investigating historic child abuse cases at any one time and, as individuals involved in such cases may have moved around the country, there was a chance that individuals could be investigated by more than one police force at the same time. To avoid this duplication the Association of Chief Police Officers asked the Serious Crime Analysis Section (SCAS), part of NCPE, to take over the Historical Institutional Child Abuse Database and keep it operating as long as required. A recent evaluation has indicated that there is still a requirement for such a database.

Guidance on Investigating Serious Sexual Offences was published on behalf of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) by the National Centre for Policing Excellence in September 2005. This document touches on the investigation of historic child abuse cases.

House Building (Aylesbury)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of additional *(a)* police officers and *(b)* police stations that will be required as a result of the planned expansion of housing in Aylesbury Vale. [44163]

Hazel Blears: It is for the chief constable of the Thames Valley police, in consultation with the police authority, to determine how many police officers are deployed to the Buckinghamshire Basic Command Unit (BCU) (which includes Alesbury Vale), also whether there is a need for additional police facilities in the area. The police funding formula takes account of the relative needs of policing across England and Wales.

Illegal Fireworks

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many illegal fireworks were seized in *(a)* West Lancashire, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* England in each of the last five years for which records are available. [45141]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office does not collect or hold figures on the number of seized illegal fireworks.

I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 594W.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fines have been imposed by the police for offences relating to fireworks in *(a)* West Lancashire constituency, *(b)* Lancashire, *(c)* the North West and *(d)* England and Wales since the Fireworks Act 2003 came into force. [45149]

Hazel Blears: Offences under the Fireworks Regulations 2004 (made under section 11 of the Fireworks Act 2003) for breach of the national fireworks curfew, the illegal possession of category four fireworks and the possession by a person under 18 of an adult firework attract penalty notices for disorder, as well as the offence of throwing fireworks. The offences under the Fireworks Regulations 2004 were brought into the scheme with effect from 11 October 2004 and the offence of throwing fireworks has been included in the penalty notice for disorder scheme since it was introduced nationally during 2004.

The numbers of penalty notices issued in Lancashire, the North West and England and Wales in 2004 and provisional data from January to September 2005 are provided in the table. It is not possible to separately identify Penalty Notices issued in West Lancashire constituency as data held centrally is not broken down to that level of detail.

Number of Penalty Notices for Disorder issued for fireworks offences, Lancashire police force area, North West Region and England and Wales, 2004 and January-September 2005 provisional data

	2004				January—September 2005 (provisional)			
Area	*Throwing fireworks*	*Breach of fireworks curfew*	*Possession of a Category 4 fireworks*	*Possession by under 18 of adult firework*	*Throwing fireworks*	*Breach of fireworks curfew*	*Possession of a Category 4 fireworks*	*Possession by under 18 of adult firework*
Lancashire	11	1	1	—	14	2	—	1
North West	82	1	1	1	49	2	6	7
England and Wales	332	10	7	4	177	12	12	20

Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

International Arrest Warrants

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he plans to bring before the House his proposals to amend the law to prevent individuals from applying for international arrest warrants. [45861]

Andy Burnham: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave her on 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1363W.

Knives

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been found to be unlawfully carrying knives in public without good reason in each division of Staffordshire police force in each year since the introduction of the Knives Act 1997. [43793]

Hazel Blears: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform

for the number of people found guilty at all courts for carrying knives in public without good reason or lawful authority for Staffordshire police force area, 2002–04 are in the following table.

It is not possible to identify those convictions by each division of Staffordshire police as the data are not collected at this level of detail.

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts under Criminal Justice Act 1988, Sec 139[1], Staffordshire police force area[2], 1997 to 2004

Offence description	*Statute*	*Year*	*Found guilty*
Having an article with blade or point in public place	Criminal Justice Act 1988, Sec 139 as amended by Offensive Weapons Act 1996, Sec 3	1997	23
		1998	39
		1999	42
		2000	24
		2001	33
		2002	68
		2003	63
		2004	69
Having an article with blade or point on school premises	Criminal Justice Act 1988, Sec 139A(1)(5)(a) added by Offensive Weapons Act 1996, Sec4(1)	1997	—
		1998	—
		1999	—
		2000	—
		2001	1
		2002	—
		2003	—
		2004	2

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Staffordshire police force were only able to submit sample data for persons proceeded against and convicted in the magistrates courts for the year 2000. Although sufficient to estimate higher orders of data, these data are not robust enough at a detailed level and have been excluded from the table.

Migrations Fund

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the size is of the migrations fund to help failed asylum seekers resettle in their own country; and if he will make a statement. [44829]

Mr. McNulty: The total resources available to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate Migration Fund for this financial year are £3.6 million. The Migration Fund was established in 2005 in response to the needs identified in IND's five year plan, "Controlling our Borders: Making migration work for Britain". It is used to finance projects aimed at managing illegal migration and refugee protection in source and transit countries of concern to the UK. The Fund can also assist in other areas, such as in supporting returns, including those of failed asylum seekers. FCO have a parallel, but linked, Migration Fund with objectives similar to that of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate Fund.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish a job description for regional offender managers under the National Offender Management Services structures. [23272]

Fiona Mactaggart: The job description for the post of regional offender manager was contained in the information pack sent to all prospective candidates in the summer of 2004. A copy of the information pack has been placed in the Library for Members to read.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the effectiveness of regional offender managers is to be assessed. [44880]

Fiona Mactaggart: The effectiveness of the regional offender managers will be assessed against the target to deliver a 5 per cent. reduction in re-offending by adults and young offenders by 2007–08 compared to 2002–03, leading to a 10 per cent. reduction by the end of the decade.

NHS Pension Scheme

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many early retirements there were under the NHS Pension Scheme *(a)* in 2000 and *(b)* in each year since 2002. [29040]

Mr. Byrne: I have been asked to reply.

The number of early retirements in England and Wales for the financial years 2000 to 2005 is shown in the table. Early retirement includes ill health, redundancy and voluntary early retirement.

	Number
1999–2000	7,766
2000–01	7,556
2001–02	7,419
2002–03	6,511
2003–04	7,583
2004–05	6,806

Overseas Prisoners

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 13 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1094W, on overseas prisoners, whether the UK has a bilateral prisoner transfer agreement with the United States; whether not keeping records of transit applications are a standard of such agreements; whether transit applications are recorded electronically at any stage in the process; and by what means records of transit applications are disposed of once the transit has been completed. [38970]

Fiona Mactaggart: The United Kingdom and the United States are both parties to the Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons. The Convention provides for the transfer of sentenced persons to continue serving their sentences in their country of nationality or one with which the sentenced person has close links. Transfer under the Convention requires the consent of both states involved and the prisoner concerned.

Article 16 of the Convention enables contracting parties to transit through UK airports to another contracting party, or to a third party, where transfer of the prisoner has been agreed in accordance with the relevant international agreement. The Convention does not require that records of transit requests be kept. For the purposes of the transfer of sentence prisoners transit only takes place in the United Kingdom through Gatwick and Heathrow and it is the normal practice of states wishing to transit through Heathrow or Gatwick airports to fax a request to the National Offender Management Service. The request would normally

contain details of the individual concerned, including sentence and offence details, the agreement under which transfer has been agreed, and flight details. The National Offender Management Service then makes the relevant arrangements for transit. Once transit has been completed the request is destroyed either by shredding or disposal in confidential waste. Secure disposal is used because requests contain personal information about the prisoner. Transit requests are not electronically recorded.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to reply to question 39532, tabled by the right hon. Member for Birkenhead on 19 December 2005. [42011]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* I replied to my right hon. Friend on 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1117W.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will answer Question 24259 tabled by the hon. Member for St. Ives. [44449]

Mr. McNulty: I replied on 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1791W.

Police

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which police forces in England and Wales have a dedicated major investigation team. [32864]

Hazel Blears: During the Protective Services Review of summer 2005, the extent to which police forces had a dedicated Major Incident Team (MIT) was assessed. The vast majority of police forces do have some dedicated staff to major crime investigation; however, generally this takes the form of a small, core office team, with the additional investigative staff being drawn from basic command unit's (BCUs), ordinarily the CID. It is believed that, at the time of the assessment, only 13 of the 43 forces of England and Wales had sufficient staff dedicated to MITs to prevent any abstractions from BCU.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether police authorities will receive Government grant to cover *(a)* the full and *(b)* part of the cost of the proposals for police force restructuring; and if he will make a statement. [35457]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 7 December 2005]:* We will be considering grant arrangements for police authorities in the light of changes to police authority boundaries and of the way the new larger authorities might operate.

Both Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Association of Police Authorities (APA) have been invited to participate fully in a Restructuring Finance Working Group, which has been established to consider the financial aspects of reorganisation.

I announced details of the provisional police funding settlement for 2006–07 and 2007–08 on 5 December and capital grant allocations on 13 January. I have set aside £50 million capital grant for 2006–07 and £75 million for 2007–08 to address prospective force amalgamations.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of *(a)* police officers and *(b)* the population of England and Wales is from ethnic minorities; and what the equivalent figures are for West Yorkshire. [41833]

Hazel Blears: The data requested for *(a)* police officers from ethnic minorities for each police force area in England and Wales are available from the 'Police Service Strength publication as at 31st March 2005'. This report was published on 25 July 2005 and is available in the Library and on:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb1205.pdf

The population of England and Wales that are from ethnic minorities is available from the 2001 Census published by the Office for National Statistics.

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the manpower allocation of *(a)* police officers and *(b)* civilian police staff was in each London borough in each year since 2003–04; and if he will make a statement. [45046]

Hazel Blears: I would refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 2 November 2005 to the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green (Lynne Featherstone), *Official Report*, column 1117–20W which sets out the published information on police officer numbers for each London borough. Information on the number of police staff each in London borough operational command unit in the Metropolitan Police Service has not been published as it cannot be disaggregated from other police support staff groups. In 2004 the Metropolitan Police Service had 12,144 police staff, in March 2005 this was 13,127 and in September 2005 it was 13,437.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* civilian staff and *(b)* police officers are employed by Lancashire police force. [45155]

Hazel Blears: As at 30 September 2005, there were 1,734 full-time equivalent police staff (excludes designated officers, police community support officers and traffic wardens) and 3,602 full-time equivalent police officers in Lancashire.

Mr. David: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there are in Caerphilly constituency; and how many there were two years ago. [44099]

Hazel Blears: During 2003–04 Caerphilly was merged with Blaenau Gwent. As at 31 March 2004, the new Basic Command Unit (BCU) had 456 police officers and as at 31 March 2005, Blaenau Gwent had 465 officers.

It is not possible to separate Caerphilly from the rest of the BCU after 2003–04.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers from black or other ethnic minority backgrounds who resigned in each of the last three years stated discrimination from their colleagues as the reason for their resignation. [44837]

Hazel Blears: The reasons for officers resigning are not collected centrally.

The total number of police officers from minority ethnic backgrounds who voluntarily resigned from the 43 forces in England and Wales was 123 as at March 2003, 163 as at March 2004 and 125 as at March 2005.

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police forces in England and Wales routinely issue in-car satellite navigation systems for use in patrol cars. [44111]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is not held centrally.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what impact he expects police force amalgamations to have on crime reduction. [41679]

Hazel Blears: The objective of the restructuring police forces is to enhance the capability and capacity of forces to deal with crime at all levels from cross border, serious and organised crime to local volume crime and disorder. Strategic forces should have sufficient critical mass to maintain neighbourhood policing teams without having to abstract officers from communities to deal with major incidents or investigations elsewhere.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received on amending police regulations to enable serving officers to participate in the selection process for parliamentary candidates; and if he will make a statement. [42459]

Hazel Blears: No representations have been received.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether police regulations allow serving officers to participate in the activities of political parties; and if he will make a statement. [42460]

Hazel Blears: Paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 to the Police Regulations 2003 states that

"A member of a police force shall at all times abstain from any activity which is likely to interfere with the impartial discharge of his duties or which is likely to give rise to the impression amongst members of the public that it may so interfere; and in particular a member of a police force shall not take any active part in politics".

Prisons

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding the Government provides for support services for prisoners' families. [41573]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government provides support services for prisoners' families in a variety of ways ranging from grants to charities, investing in partnerships, and support provided within prisons themselves. There is no central account which specifically identifies all these resources. The Assisted Prison Visits Scheme for 2004–05 costs £1,870,386 (less staff and running costs.) This scheme provides help with travel costs for close relatives and partners on low incomes.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to provide career development opportunities for prison officers interested in assisting in the delivery of *(a)* prison education and *(b)* effective re-settlement; and if he will make a statement. [44342]

Fiona Mactaggart: Education for offenders in custody is provided under contract. The public sector Prison Service is not normally involved in the direct employment of teachers who deliver this provision. The service is currently developing a new suite of offender management courses. They will be accessible to all appropriate staff who wish to deliver resettlement work.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to increase *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector prison capacity in each of the next five years, broken down by (i) category of establishment and (ii) security status; and if he will make a statement. [44346]

Fiona Mactaggart: Additional prison places are being built under an ongoing funded building programme at existing prisons and will increase total capacity to around 80,400 by 2007. This includes the 1,300 additional places announced by the Home Secretary in September 2004 as well as the completion of an earlier building programme. Additional places will become available at a number of public and private sector prisons in the adult male closed estate. Details of these places are set out in the following table.

All these places are at adult male training or Local prisons and are Category B or C.

Prisons	*2006*	*2007*
Public sector	880	640
Private sector	0	300

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many working days were recorded lost in each prison in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2001 and *(c)* the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [44355]

Fiona Mactaggart: The following table details the total number of working days lost due to sickness absence within each public sector Prison Service establishment in 2001 and 2005, the last year for which figures are available. Data for 2001 have been adjusted to reflect the amount of under-reporting estimated as high as 8.7 per cent. by the National Audit Office at that time. Data for 2005 remain provisional. Information on working days lost, broken down to the level of establishment, is not available for 1997.

It is estimated that the total number of working days lost across the public sector Prison Service in 1997 was 634,000 compared to 642,000 in 2001 and 609,000 in 2005.

Information relating to privately managed prisons is not available and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Number of working days lost in each public sector prison establishment in 2001 and 2005

Establishment	*2001*[1]	*2005*
Acklington	4,656	5,170
Albany	3,119	2,894
Ashwell	3,026	2,270
Askham Grange	872	968
Aylesbury	7,459	4,336
Bedford	4,761	2,246
Belmarsh	18,862	12,334
Birmingham	9,652	10,438
Blakenhurst	2,528	5,236
Blantyre House	825	586
Blundeston	2,429	4,201
Brinsford	4,103	4,464
Bristol	9,067	8,432
Brixton	13,527	6,924
Brockhill	3,577	3,428
Buckley Hall	2,389	3,472
Bullingdon	5,958	5,011
Bullwood Hall	2,592	1,906
Camp Hill	3,286	3,396
Canterbury	3,351	2,087
Cardiff	5,012	4,252
Castington	6,116	4,349
Channings Wood	4,675	5,081
Chelmsford	4,882	3,003
Coldingley	2,298	2,264
Cookham Wood	1,563	1,905
Dartmoor	4,768	4,797
Deerbolt	2,696	4,671
Dorchester	1,745	2,686
Dover	3,121	4,249
Downview	3,376	3,241
Drake Hall	2,327	2,282
Durham	9,760	8,636
East Sutton Park	1,066	884
Eastwood Park	5,221	3,849
Edmunds Hill	1,147	3,017
Elmley	5,500	5,983
Erlestoke	2,579	3,070
Everthorpe	3,195	3,042
Exeter	5,148	4,980
Featherstone	4,857	4,671
Feltham	10,461	11,894
Ford	2,683	2,659
Foston Hall	1,655	3,092
Frankland	9,941	13,262
Full Sutton	9,938	8,547
Garth	6,603	5,887
Gartree	2,886	2,409
Glen Parva	5,330	5,136
Gloucester	3,986	2,434
Grendon	5,457	4,020
Guys Marsh	3,672	3,646
Haslar	1,267	1,151
Havering	3,872	5,177
Hewell Grange	769	1,044
High Down	8,357	5,132
Highpoint	3,539	5,649
Hindley	8,234	8,691
Hollesley Bay	4,365	818
Holloway	11,891	7,162
Holme House	5,218	7,047
HQ	18,427	16,701
Hull	3,625	6,579
Huntercombe	4,874	4,247
Kingston	2,256	1,009
Kirkham	3,672	2,621
Kirklevington Grange	671	1,303
Lancaster	2,018	2,006
Lancaster Farms	5,676	5,109
Latchmere House	1,014	1,031
Leeds	11,686	10,693
Leicester	3,375	2,489
Lewes	4,457	4,042
Leyhill	2,718	3,721
Lincoln	4,594	4,486
Lindholme	4,215	5,568
Littlehey	4,975	2,919
Liverpool	12,989	8,384
Long Lartin	8,568	5,667
Low Newton	2,484	3,894
Maidstone	5,455	5,399
Manchester	13,413	8,942
Moorland	7,715	6,779
Morton Hall	1,576	2,004
New Hall	3,814	7,149
North Sea Camp	1,446	2,080
Northallerton	2,627	1,784
Norwich	5,661	5,139
Nottingham	3,214	4,976
Onley	8,297	8,348
Parkhurst	5,404	5,266
Pentonville	9,426	10,396
Portland	4,648	4,901
Preston	5,796	4,175
Ranby	5,530	5,716
Reading	3,062	2,831
Risley	8,676	8,519
Rochester	3,876	4,003
Send	1,829	1,812
Shepton Mallet	1,196	1,674
Shrewsbury	3,143	1,803
Stafford	5,095	4,306
Standford Hill	2,314	2,692
Stocken	2,217	4,094
Stoke Heath	7,682	7,334
Styal	5,175	4,625
Sudbury	1,708	1,736
Swaleside	5,868	4,437
Swansea	2,982	3,490
Swinfen Hall	1,840	4,418
The Mount	3,449	3,546
The Verne	2,583	3,314
Thorn Cross	2,699	2,731
Usk/Prescoed	1,533	1,860
Wakefield	8,439	8,108
Wandsworth	12,094	9,852
Warren Hill	—	2,903
Wayland	2,742	2,439
Wealstun	3,735	5,187
Weare	2,643	2,040
Wellingborough	3,702	5,139
Wellington	2,648	3,111
Wetherby	3,912	3,608
Whatton	1,634	2,104
Whitemoor	16,011	11,249
Winchester	5,124	4,659
Woodhill	11,752	12,346
Wormwood Scrubs	11,035	6,577
Wymott	6,189	8,416
Prison Service total	642,118	609,054

[1] Including adjusted for estimated under-recording.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the ratios of *(a)* prison officers and *(b)* all prison staff to inmates were in (i) 1997, (ii) 2001 and (iii) 2005; and if he will make a statement. [44356]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the ratio of officers (including prison officers, senior officers and principal officers) to prisoners and total staff to prisoners is contained in the following table. This information relates to prisoners and staff within the

public sector Prison Service only. The information shows a snapshot of ratios on the 31 March each year, as well as the latest available information. Information relating to privately managed prisons is not available and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

	Officer/prisoner ratio	*All staff/prisoner ratio*
31 March 1997	1:2.46	1:1.43
31 March 2001	1:2.51	1:1.36
31 March 2005	1:2.80	1:1.40
31 December 2005	1:2.77	1:1.40

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many individuals have served as governor in each prison since 1997; and if he will make a statement; [44357]

(2) what the average tenure has been since 1997 for governors in *(a)* each prison, *(b)* each region and *(c)* England and Wales; and if he will make a statement. [44358]

Fiona Mactaggart: The table contains information on the number of individuals who have held the position of governor in-charge in each public sector Prison Service establishment since 1997 and the average length of tenure over the same period. Temporary appointments are excluded from the figures. The average length of tenure of in-charge governors within the public sector Prison Service was two years 10 months.

Information on contracted prison is not available centrally and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Number of prison governors in charge of each public sector prison establishment and the average length of tenure

Area (region)	*Establishment*	*Number of in-charge governors since 1 January 1997*	*Average length of tenure*[1]
High Security Prisons	Belmarsh	4	2.5
	Frankland	3	3.5
	Full Sutton	5	1.9
	Long Lartin	3	3.6
	Manchester	5	2.0
	Wakefield	4	2.5
	Whitemoor	5	2.3
	Woodhill	4	2.8
High Security Prisons Average		33	2.5
East Midlands	Ashwell	4	2.6
	Foston Hall	1	9.0
	Gartree	5	2.8
	Glen Parva	4	2.8
	Leicester	5	2.1
	Lincoln	5	2.7
	Morton Hall	4	2.6
	North Sea Camp	3	3.7
	Nottingham	5	2.6
	Onley	5	2.5
	Ranby	4	2.3
	Stocken	4	2.4
	Sudbury	2	6.8
	Wellingborough	4	3.5
	Whatton	4	2.8
East Midlands Average		59	2.9

Number of prison governors in charge of each public sector prison establishment and the average length of tenure

Area (region)	*Establishment*	*Number of in-charge governors since 1 January 1997*	*Average length of tenure*[1]
Eastern	Bedford	5	2.3
	Blundeston	3	4.3
	Bullwood Hall	4	2.3
	Chelmsford	5	1.9
	Edmunds Hill[2]	2	2.5
	Highpoint	4	2.3
	Hollesley Bay	5	1.8
	Littlehey	4	3.5
	Norwich	5	2.1
	The Mount	3	3.1
	Warren Hill[3]	1	2.5
	Wayland	4	2.4
Eastern Average		45	2.5
Kent	Blantyre House	4	2.4
	Canterbury	3	3.5
	Cookham Wood	3	3.0
	Dover	3	3.0
	East Sutton Park	3	4.1
	Elmley	3	3.4
	Maidstone	3	3.0
	Rochester	5	2.5
	Standford Hill	4	3.6
	Swaleside	4	2.3
Kent Average		35	3.0
London	Brixton	5	2.9
	Feltham	5	1.8
	Holloway	4	2.5
	Latchmere House	3	3.4
	Pentonville	3	3.1
	Wandsworth	5	3.4
	Wormwood Scrubs	4	2.4
London Average		29	2.7
North East	Acklington	5	2.0
	Castington	4	3.2
	Deerbolt	3	3.5
	Durham	3	3.3
	Holme House	3	3.8
	Kirklevington Grange	3	3.9
	Low Newton	4	2.6
North East Average		25	3.0
North West	Buckley Hall[4]	2	2.8
	Garth	3	4.6
	Haverigg	4	3.8
	Hindley	3	2.0
	Kirkham	3	4.7
	Lancaster	5	3.0
	Lancaster Farms	5	2.6
	Liverpool	7	1.5
	Preston	4	2.5
	Risley	5	2.0
	Styal	3	3.8
	Thorn Cross	7	1.6
	Wymott	3	3.0
North West Average		56	2.7
South West	Bristol	6	2.2
	Channings Wood	4	2.5
	Dartmoor	4	2.9
	Dorchester	3	3.1
	Eastwood Park	2	4.9
	Erlestoke	6	1.5
	Exeter	5	2.5
	Gloucester	3	3.4
	Guys Marsh	4	2.8
	Leyhill	2	6.4
	Portland	3	3.0
	Shepton Mallet	4	3.2
	The Verne	3	4.2
	Weare	4	2.2
South West Average		53	2.9

Number of prison governors in charge of each public sector prison establishment and the average length of tenure

Area / region	Establishment	Number of in-charge governors since 1 January 1997	Average length of tenure[1]
Surrey and Sussex	Coldingley	5	2.2
	Downview	6	2.1
	Ford	3	3.1
	High Down	4	2.4
	Lewes	3	4.3
	Send	4	2.9
Surrey and Sussex Average		25	2.7
Thames Valley and Hampshire	Albany	3	3.0
	Aylesbury	4	2.4
	Bullingdon	3	3.2
	Camp Hill	4	2.3
	Grendon	3	4.7
	Haslar	7	1.7
	Huntercombe	4	3.0
	Kingston	3	3.0
	Parkhurst	3	3.7
	Reading	5	2.1
	Winchester	5	2.8
Thames Valley and Hampshire Total		43	2.8
Wales	Cardiff	4	2.5
	Swansea	5	3.0
	Usk/Prescoed	5	2.6
Wales Average		14	2.7
West Midlands	Birmingham	3	3.8
	Blakenhurst[5]	2	2.2
	Brinsford	4	3.0
	Brockhill	6	1.8
	Drake Hall	3	3.8
	Featherstone	3	3.3
	Hewell Grange	3	5.6
	Shrewsbury	4	2.5
	Stafford	3	4.2
	Stoke Heath	4	3.7
	Swinfen Hall	2	5.3
	Werrington	5	2.6
West Midlands Average		42	3.3
Yorkshire and Humberside	Askham Grange	4	3.7
	Everthorpe	4	3.3
	Hull	4	2.5
	Leeds	4	3.3
	Lindholme	4	2.6
	Moorland	3	3.1
	New Hall	5	3.0
	Northallerton	3	4.2
	Wealstun	4	2.7
	Wetherby	5	2.1
Yorkshire and Humberside Average		40	3.0
Public Sector Prison Service Average		499	2.8

[1] Includes time spent by governors in post at 1 January 1997, leading up to that date.
[2] Edmunds Hill was incorporated within Highpoint until November 2000.
[3] Warren Hill was incorporated within Hollesley Bay until January 2003.
[4] Buckley Hall was a privately managed prison until June 2000.
[5] Blakenhurst was a privately managed prison until August 2001.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of inmates at each prison *(a)* had access to and *(b)* enrolled in (i) recognised vocational education courses, (ii) further education courses, (iii) higher education courses and (iv) basic literacy and numeracy skills courses in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [44360]

Fiona Mactaggart: All offenders in custody are encouraged to access learning and skills provision.

With the exception of higher education, figures on the numbers enrolled in formal education and training schemes are not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The latter data will however become increasingly available through Learning and Skills Council management information arrangements as they take responsibility for planning and funding offender learning and skills during 2006.

The following table shows the number of participants in undergraduate courses and openings courses directly funded by the Offenders Learning and Skills Unit via the Prisoners' Education Trust between April 2004 and March 2005.

Establishment	Participants in openings courses	Participants in undergraduate courses (mainly first level courses)
HMP Acklington	3	4
HMP Albany	6	10
HMP Ashwell	1	4
HMP Belmarsh		5
HMP Birmingham	2	7
HMP Blakenhurst		2
HMP Blundeston	1	7
HMP Bristol	2	1
HMP Brixton	1	8
HMP Bullingdon	6	4
HMP Camp Hill	3	3
HMP Canterbury	3	
HMP Channings Wood		2
HMP Chelmsford		2
HMP Coldingley	3	7
HMP Dartmoor	7	8
HMP Dovegate	7	16
HMP Downview		5
HMP Drake Hall	3	4
HMP Durham	1	1
HMP Elmley		3
HMP Erlestoke	2	1
HMP Featherstone		2
HMP Ford	1	
HMP Foston Hall		7
HMP Frankland	1	3
HMP Full Sutton		8
HMP Garth	5	13
HMP Gartree	1	5
HMP Grendon	1	
HMP Haverigg	2	2
HMP High Down		2
HMP Highpoint	1	1
HMP Holloway	2	4
HMP Holme House	23	4
HMP Kingston	8	3
HMP Kirkham	2	
HMP Kirklevington Grange		3
HMP Lancaster Farms		1
HMP Latchmere House		1
HMP Lewes		1
HMP Leyhill	1	1
HMP Lincoln		1
HMP Littlehey	2	5
HMP Liverpool	1	1
HMP Long Lartin	20	11
HMP Lowdham Grange		11
HMP Maidstone	2	2
HMP Manchester	1	5
HMP Moorland	35	10
HMP Morton Hall		1
HMP Norwich	4	1
HMP Parkhurst	1	19
HMP Risley	8	1
HMP Rye Hill	3	5
HMP Send	4	8

Establishment	Participants in openings courses	Participants in undergraduate courses (mainly first level courses)
HMP Spring Hill	2	
HMP Stafford		3
HMP Standford Hill		2
HMP Stocken		2
HMP Swaleside	1	5
HMP The Mount	2	7
HMP The Verne	4	16
HMP The Wolds		2
HMP Usk	1	4
HMP Wakefield		1
HMP Wandsworth	18	30
HMP Wayland	1	3
HMP Wealstun	3	4
HMP Wellingborough	10	1
HMP Whatton	7	
HMP Whitemoor		4
HMP Woodhill	1	3
HMP Wormwood Scrubs		5
HMP Wymott	15	1
HMP RC Cardiff	1	2
HMP YOI Askham Grange		1
HMP YOI Cookham Wood	4	
HMP YOI East Sutton Park		2
HMP YOI Guys Marsh	2	4
HMP YOI Hollesley Bay		1
HMP YOI Low Newton	1	7
HMYOI Deerbolt		1
HMYOI Frescoed		3
HMYOI Stoke Heath	19	
HMYOI Swinfen Hall		1

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effect of prison education on levels of offender recidivism; and if he will make a statement. [44362]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government published on 15 December 2005 a Green Paper called 'Reducing Re-Offending through Skills and Employment' (Cm 6702). The Green Paper outlined the Government's assessment of the importance of skills and employment as part of a broad package of interventions to reduce re-offending.

Evidence suggests that employment and a reduction in re-offending are linked and that those with higher skills, for example level two in the National Qualifications Framework, are more likely to be in employment than those without. The Home Office's longitudinal study—Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction—will assess the impact of a range of interventions, including education.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which prisons have intensive rehabilitation programmes for drugs; what his assessment is of the effectiveness of the programmes; what plans he has to expand the programmes; and if he will make a statement. [44373]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prisons running intensive drug rehabilitation programmes are shown in the following list.. There are currently no plans to expand the delivery of drug treatment programmes. Research evidence shows that it is possible to achieve up to a 10 per cent. decrease in the level of expected re-offending but this can only realistically be achieved where effective through-care arrangements exist and timely community after-care has been made available.

Acklington
Altcourse
Ashwell
Aylesbury
Bedford
Birmingham
Blakenhurst
Blundeston
Bristol
Brixton
Bullingdon
Bullwood Hall
Camp Hill
Canterbury
Cardiff Hull
Castington
Channings Wood
Chelmsford
Coldingley
Cookham Wood
Dartmoor
Deerbolt
Doncaster
Dorchester
Drake Hall
Durham
Eastwood Park
Edmunds Hill
Elmley
Erlestoke
Everthorpe
Exeter
Featherstone
Ford
Forest Bank
Frankland
Full Sutton
Garth
Gartree
Glen Parva
Gloucester
Guys Marsh
Haverigg
Highdown
Highpoint
Hindley
Hollesley Bay
Holloway
Holme House
Hull
Kingston
Kirkham
Lancaster Farms
L'caster Castle
Leeds
Leicester
Lewes
Leyhill

Lincoln
Lindholme
Littlehay
Liverpool
Long Lartin
Low Newton
Maidstone
Manchester
Moorland closed
New Hall
North Sea Camp
Northallerton
Norwich
Nottingham
Onley
Parc
Parkhurst
Pentonville
Portland
Preston
Ranby
Reading
Risley
Rochester
Send
Stafford
Stocken
Stoke Heath
Styal
Swaleside
Swansea
Swinfen Hall
The Mount
The Verne
Thorn Cross
Wakefield
Wandsworth
Wayland
Wealstun
Wellingborough
Whitemoor
Winchester
Woodhill
Wormwood Scrubbs
Wymott

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison dogs have been in service in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [44375]

Fiona Mactaggart: The following table details licensed prison dogs in the Prison Service since 1997.

Table showing the number of prison dogs in the Prison Service since 1997

	Patrol dogs	*Pro-active*	*AES*	*Passive*
1997	449	172	75	09
1998	462	178	78	34
1999	462	178	78	34
2000	462	195	78	121
2001	410	208	60	149
2002	381	221	55	179
2003	301	221	43	183
2004	314	236	44	203
2005	267	238	40	224

Notes

1. A patrol dog is a German Shepherd dog used mainly in high security prisons to provide perimeter protection against escape attempts or concerted prisoner indiscipline.

2. A proactive dog is generally one of the gundog breed and is trained to search cells, vehicles and other areas for hidden controlled drugs or drug-contaminated items.

3. An arms and explosive search (AES) dog is generally one of the gundog breeds. It is trained to search cells, areas, vehicles and other areas for hidden firearms, explosives and associated components.

4. A passive drug dog is generally one of the gundog breeds and is trained to search individual or groups of people usually entering a prison for hidden controlled drugs on their person.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the work of prison dogs; and if he will make a statement. [44376]

Fiona Mactaggart: Three reports have been undertaken over the last 10 years, with a further report due later this year on the use of dogs in the high security estate. The number of dog sections has fallen, as high risk prisoners have been concentrated in eight high security prisons. The introduction of drug dogs began in about 1993 and has been expanded to each establishment within the service.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison dogs are designated as *(a)* passive and *(b)* pro-active in the detection of drugs; and if he will make a statement. [44377]

Fiona Mactaggart: Currently there are 203-licensed passive and 236 pro-active drug dogs in use in the Prison Service.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of options other than the private finance initiative for the construction of new prisons. [45181]

Fiona Mactaggart: There are no plans to build any new prisons at present. No procurement options have been ruled out.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what forecast he has made of the level of the prison population in each of the last three years; and what the actual level was in each year. [45207]

Fiona Mactaggart: Projections of the prison population are made on the basis of several possible future scenarios (a range of likely changes in sentencing and effects of new legislation, etc.) and are regularly updated. All published projections are available on the Home Office website. Taking the most recent projection for June in each case: in 2003 the projections ranged from 73,600 to 75,800 and the actual value was 73,700; in 2004 the projections ranged from 79,500 to 85,100

and the actual value was 74,500; in 2005 the projections ranged from 76,100 to 76,600 and the actual value was 76,200.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who was responsible for the independent assessment of the performance test of prisons on the Isle of Sheppey. [46048]

Fiona Mactaggart: The proposals made by Her Majesty's Prison Service in respect of the performance improvement test of the prisons on the Isle of Sheppey were independently assessed by the National Offender Management Service.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what selection criteria were used to select the three prisons on the Isle of Sheppey for market testing in 2005; [46052]

(2) what selection criteria were used to select *(a)* individual prisons and *(b)* clusters of prisons for market testing. [46053]

Fiona Mactaggart: When the original contracts for the private sector prisons Blakenhurst, Buckley Hall, Doncaster, and Wolds and Service Level Agreement for the public sector prison Manchester were due to expire, the management of each prison was market tested. Brixton prison was selected for market testing on the basis that it is was underperforming. The three prisons on the Isle of Sheppey were the first cluster of prisons to be market tested. The criteria used for selecting the Sheppey cluster were geographical proximity; public sector management; range of security classification; and low likelihood of their being re-roled or closed.

Probation Service

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of how many probation hostel places will be required in each of the next five years; what effect he expects the establishment of the National Offender Management Service to have on demand; and if he will make a statement. [44335]

Fiona Mactaggart: There is a National Offender Management Service (NOMS) instigated review and scoping exercise currently being undertaken to ascertain the level of development required across the Approved Premises (formerly Bail and Probation Hostels) estate. Once complete, this information will be used to inform a national strategy for Approved Premises Development. This will take into account any potential impact of the creation of NOMS which is identified during the review.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what mechanisms exist to ensure consistency in Probation Service assessments; and if he will make a statement. [44380]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Offender Assessment System (OASys) is the assessment system used across the whole of the National Probation Service. Having a single standard tool provides consistency. The National Probation Directorate has put in place measures to help ensure the quality of OASys completion.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to change the offender assessment procedures used by the Probation Service; and if he will make a statement. [44385]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Offender Assessment System (OASys) is a good system, as attested by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. It is subject to ongoing improvement but there are no plans to replace it.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many responses were received in response to the consultation paper Restructuring Probation to Reduce Reoffending from Welsh-based *(a)* organisations and *(b)* individuals; and how many of these responses were supportive of the Government's position. [45401]

Fiona Mactaggart: Responses were received from:

(a) 10 Welsh-based organisations;

(b) 62 individuals identifying themselves as from Wales.

We will be publishing a summary of all the responses along with our response to the key issues raised. We expect to publish it within the timescale set out in the Cabinet Office guidelines on public consultations.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether in his proposals for restructuring the Probation Service in Wales he plans to allow *(a)* members of the public and *(b)* local organisations (i) to be made aware of the applicants for contracts to provide probation services and (ii) to make objections to those service providers' applications. [45402]

Fiona Mactaggart: There are no plans to publish the names of those tendering for a contract to provide probation services. Competitions will be organised in full compliance with the revised EU procurement directives; an objection to a bidder's participation in the competition would be considered in the light of the directives which allow for the disqualification of a bidder under specified circumstances such as fraud.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether in the restructuring proposals for the Probation Service in Wales he plans to give offenders rights to object to being supervised by a particular provider of probation services under contract. [45403]

Fiona Mactaggart: No. Offenders will not be able to object to being supervised by any provider of probations services.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many responses to the consultation paper, Restructuring Probation to reduce Re-offending, were received from individual members of *(a)* the probation staff, *(b)* probation services and *(c)* probation boards in Wales; how many were supportive of the proposals; and if he will publish them. [45415]

Fiona Mactaggart: Responses were received as follows:

(a) 58 respondents identified themselves as individual members of probation staff in Wales;

(b) three respondents identified themselves as individual members of Probation Boards in Wales;

(c) all four Probation Boards in Wales responded.

Work analysing the responses is not yet complete. We will publish a summary of responses and the key points raised within the three-month timescale set out in the Cabinet Office guidelines on public consultations.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he can take during the restructuring of the Probation Service in Wales if employees refuse to accept the transfer of their employment from a probation board to a probation trust or private company. [45416]

Fiona Mactaggart: When probation trusts are established, most staff will transfer from probation boards to the new trusts on the same terms and conditions of employment. If, in due course, work transfers to an alternative provider, staff will generally transfer, with their pay, terms and conditions protected by TUPE and the recent extension of the Two Tier Workforce Agreement. Staff who do not wish to transfer will be free to terminate their contract of employment. The employment status of chief officers will change in the transition from boards to trusts: they will cease to be statutory office holders appointed by the Secretary of State and will instead be appointed and employed by the trust itself. If a chief is not appointed to the trust, he or she will be compensated accordingly.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what responses he has received from the judiciary in Wales to the publication, Restructuring Probation to reduce re-offending; and if he will place copies of those responses in the Library. [45417]

Fiona Mactaggart: Two responses were received from individual members of the judiciary in Wales. We will publish a summary of all responses following the procedures set out in Cabinet Office guidance on consultation.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he last met the Secretary of State for Wales to discuss the Probation Service in Wales and the restructuring proposals for the service. [45418]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Wales meet regularly but have not specifically discussed the proposals for restructuring the probation service. The Minister of State for Offender Management has, however, discussed the proposals for restructuring probation with the Welsh Assembly Minister for Social Justice.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how he expects resources allocated to the Welsh Regional Offender Manager under the National Offender Management Service arrangements to enhance services operationally in Wales. [45475]

Fiona Mactaggart: The prime focus of National Offender Management Service (NOMS) in Wales is to reduce re-offending. The Director of Offender Management Service Wales (directly equivalent to Regional Offender Managers (ROMs) in English regions) will do this through a number of mechanisms.

Over the next three years NOMS in Wales will establish a clear and effective commissioning relationship with service providers. Initially, these will be Prison establishments and Probation areas, although alliances with the voluntary and community sector will be strengthened at the same time.

Prison and Probation provision will be managed through Service Level Agreements with the Director of Offender Management Service Wales, with public protection and decency high on the agenda, alongside reducing re-offending through end-to-end offender management.

A Reducing Re-offending strategy has been jointly developed with the Welsh Assembly Government, work will be planned and carried out in close partnership with all relevant agencies to address the seven pathways which are thought to be most instrumental in improving offenders lives and reducing their criminality.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether contestability will be introduced into the provision of probation services in Wales. [45476]

Fiona Mactaggart: Proposals for the restructuring of the probation service were set out in the Home Office consultation paper Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending, published on 20 October. These proposals would enable the Secretary of State to contract with a range of different providers to deliver all probation services in England and Wales.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has for the future of probation boards in Wales. [45477]

Fiona Mactaggart: Proposals for the restructuring of the probation service were set out in the Home Office consultation paper Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending, published on 20 October. Further announcements on our proposals will be made in due course.

Prostitution

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prostitutes were given custodial sentences for soliciting in 2005. [44838]

Fiona Mactaggart: A custodial sentence is not available for the offence of soliciting.

Public Order

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* anti-social behaviour orders, *(b)* individual support orders, *(c)* enforced parenting orders and *(d)* voluntary parenting contracts have been issued in west Lancashire since each was established. [45157]

Hazel Blears: The available information, as notified to the Home Office, on the numbers of antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) issued and the number of individual support orders and parenting orders issued in tandem is given in the table.

The Youth Justice Board collect data on parenting contracts related to crime and antisocial behaviour from youth offending teams (YOTs). These data are collected at YOT area level only.

The number of anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) issued, where prohibitions have been imposed in the west Lancashire district council local government authority area, and individual support orders (ISOs) and parenting orders (POs) issued in tandem, as notified to the Home Office, from 1 June 2000[1] to 30 June 2005 (latest available)

	Number
ASBOs issued	13
ISOs issued[2]	—
POs issued[3]	—

[1] From 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000 data were collected on aggregate numbers only by police force area. During this period five ASBOs were issued within Lancashire.
[2] ISOs, available since 1 May 2004, can be given to persons aged 10 to 17 years being issued with an ASBO at civil proceedings. Two of the 13 people were eligible.
[3] Parenting orders can be given where the offender is under 18 years of age. Six of the 13 people were eligible.

Regional Offender Managers

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what protections are in place for regional offender managers should they be unable to meet their legal obligations because the number of prison places required exceeds those commissioned. [45180]

Fiona Mactaggart: The development of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has moved responsibility for providing prison places from the Prison Service to the NOMS commissioners, although ultimately that responsibility remains the Secretary of State's. Commissioning decisions will be based upon projections of the future size of the prison population and provision made using the expertise established over many years for procuring sites and building prisons. The Government is keeping the need for any further increase in capacity under review, but will ensure that places are available for those prisoners committed by the courts.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether offices have been *(a)* rented and *(b)* purchased by Regional Offender Managers; where each of these offices is located; and what the annual cost is for each. [44942]

Fiona Mactaggart [holding answer 23 January 2006]: Seven Regional Offender Managers (ROMs) have been allocated temporary "serviced" office accommodation, let on a licence for a period of 12 months. The Licence enables the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) to take further space in line with planned expansion but only pay for space actually taken. These seven offices are:

South-west—Exeter

Wales—Cardiff

North-west—Manchester

East Midlands—Leicester

Yorkshire and Humberside—Wakefield

London—London (from April 2006)

South-east—London and Oxford (from April 2006)

The ROM for the North-east is located in a Government building in Newcastle under a three year Memorandum Of Terms of Occupation (MOTO) with a break clause at 18 months.

The ROM for the West Midlands is currently in temporary Government accommodation in Birmingham and will be moved in to Government Office for the West Midlands in April 2006 on a three year MOTO, with breaks.

The ROM for the East of England remains within leased accommodation in Peterborough (former Area Manager for the East of England) where he is likely to remain. The lease is a short-term lease (three years) subject to 12 months notice.

The annual costs for this accommodation (inclusive of VAT) is as follows:

	£
Licences	
South-west	92,448
Wales	98,982
North-west	83,748
East Midlands	87,984
Yorkshire and Humberside	64,578
London	135,000
South-east	110,064
MOTOs	
North-east	30,000
West Midlands	Approx [1]90,000
Lease	
East of England	79,000

[1] Yet to be agreed.

Remand Prisoners

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the reason for the change in the number of *(a)* women and *(b)* men remanded into custody in the last three years. [45211]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the size of the remand population, as recorded on the Prison Service IT system, is provided in the table. Changes in the make-up of the remand population are described in the Population in Custody Quarterly Brief available on the Home Office website.

Males and females in the prison population on remand, as at 30 June

	Males	*Females*	*Total*
2003	12,001	1,072	13,073
2004	11,544	951	12,495
2005	11,863	1,001	12,864

Reoffending

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he has issued on determining the risk that an offender presents *(a)* to the public and *(b)* of reoffending; and if he will make a statement. [44381]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Probation Service assesses risk of harm and likelihood of reconviction using the Offender Assessment System (OASys). The principal

source of guidance for staff is the OASys Manual. In addition to the Manual there are various pieces of practice guidance.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to reduce reoffending. [45210]

Fiona Mactaggart: Building on the National Action Plan launched in 2004, in November 2005 we launched the National Reducing Reoffending Delivery Plan, the cornerstones of which are: partnership working at national, regional and local levels; end-to end-offender management under the National Offender Management Service (NOMS); and public protection. The Delivery Plan sets out the key actions the Government intends to take over the next 18 months towards the delivery of our target of reducing re-offending by 10 per cent. by the end of the decade. It also charts the real progress NOMS and its partners have made over the last 18 months in delivering services to offenders that address the reasons for their re-offending. For example, 87 per cent. of prisoners on whom information is recorded now have accommodation to go to on release, the number of educational awards offenders have achieved has risen by 40 per cent. and the number completing a drug treatment course in prison or a drug testing order in the community is up by a third. (Copies of the Delivery Plan were placed in the Library at the time of publication.)

Alongside the Delivery Plan, we announced three important new reducing re-offending alliances. The first of these will build on links with employers at national, regional and local levels to explore how businesses can work with NOMS to improve the employability and training of offenders. The second, the civic society alliance, will involve working with local authorities and other local partners to support the resettlement and reintegration of offenders. The final alliance is with faith groups and the voluntary sector and will address the needs of offenders through the innovative work by faith and voluntary sector groups already under way.

Complementing the alliances, NOMS has published an Action Plan to improve effective engagement and partnership with the voluntary and community sector. Also, as part of the cross-Government "Together We Can" Action Plan, NOMS and the Youth Justice Board have developed a joint approach to working with communities and civil renewal. This has the twin aims of reducing re-offending and increasing public confidence, with a focus on four priorities: public protection; unpaid and reparative work; victims and restorative justice; and community integration.

In December we published, jointly with colleagues in the Department for Education and Skills and the Department for Work and Pensions, a Green Paper, 'Reducing Re-offending Through Skills and Employment'. We have been developing proposals for embedding skills and employment for offenders as key tenets of the broader national delivery plan for reducing re-offending. We hope that this will start a constructive dialogue with our partners about how we can most effectively equip offenders for employment and with the basic skills needed for law-abiding adult life, including engaging employers in the design and delivery of programmes for offenders and drive improvement in the quality of the programmes offered to offenders.

Beyond this, NOMS is about to publish a five year strategy. This will set out the wider vision for how NOMS will work with its many partners to reduce re-offending and cut crime.

Respect Action Plan

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what role he expects residents' associations to play in the Government's Respect Action Plan. [45247]

Hazel Blears: The Respect Action Plan aims to tackle antisocial behaviour and promote respect by empowering individuals and community groups, such as residents' associations, to play an important role in taking a stand and tackling and not tolerating antisocial behaviour. This will be supported by giving people power over their local public services, creating a greater sense of ownership and improving accountability between the providers and the local community.

Sex Offenders Register

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average length of time was between a relevant conviction in court and the sexual offenders register being updated in each of the last five years. [44622]

Paul Goggins: The term "sex offenders register" is a reference to the requirement under Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 on all offenders who have received a conviction or caution for certain sexual offences to notify certain personal information to the police and, for a period of time set out in legislation, keep the police informed of: any changes to those details; any period of seven days spent at another address, and; any intention to travel overseas for three days or more.

Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 requires all relevant offenders to make an "initial notification" with the police, at a designated police station, within three days of their caution or conviction. If an offender is serving a term of imprisonment on the day that his "initial notification" falls due, then he must make this notification within three days of his release from imprisonment. Failure to comply with the notification requirements is a criminal offence with a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment.

The Association of Chief Police Officers estimate that 97 per cent. of offenders comply with the notification requirements.

Speed Cameras/Speedmeters

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which models of mobile speed cameras have been purchased by each police force in England and Wales since 2003. [45159]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is not recorded centrally.

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many vehicles were detected by speed cameras exceeding the speed limit on the contraflow between junctions 19 and 20 of the M5 *(a)* in the first month of operation and *(b)* to date. [45160]

Paul Goggins: Information on penalties generated by individual speed camera location is not collected centrally.

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which speedmeters have been type-approved for police use. [45158]

Paul Goggins: The following list details speedmeters type approved for police use.

Home Office type approved speedmeters as at 6 December 2005

Attended actively operated

1. Hand Held Radar Speed Measuring Devices:

Kustom HR four—Kustom Electronics

Kustom HR eight—Kustom Electronics

Kustom Roadrunner—Kustom Electronics

Kustom Falcon—Kustom Electronics

Kustom Cordless Falcon—Kustom Electronics

MuniQuip K-GP—Tribar Industries Inc.

Speedar SR1—Ottery Electronics

2. Tripod Mounted Radar Speed Measuring Devices:

Gatsometer BV Type 24 + AUS—Gatsometer BV

3. Pneumatic Tube Sensor Speed Measuring Devices:

Speedmaster DS2—Traffic Safety Systems Ltd.

Autovision two with the above—Traffic Safety Systems Ltd.

Speedmaster DS3—Traffic Safety Systems Ltd.

Autovision three with the above—Traffic Safety Systems Ltd.

4. Piezo Sensor Speed Measuring Devices:

Micro Mercury Speed Measuring System 905000—Traffic Technology Research Ltd.

Micro Mercury Vision System 92600Traffic—Traffic Technology Research Ltd.

Speedmaster DS2—Traffic Safety Systems Ltd.

Autovision two with the above—Traffic Safety Systems Ltd.

Speedmaster DS3—Traffic Safety Systems Ltd.

Autovision three with the above—Traffic Safety Systems Ltd.

M4 Squared Speed Measuring Device—Truvelo

Combi S Speedmeter—Truvelo

Combi S-mc Speedmeter—Truvelo

5. Laser Speedmeters:

LTI 20/20 Laser Hand Held Device—Tele Traffic

LTI 20/20 TS/M "Speedscope" Speed Measuring Device

LTI 20/20 Ultralyte 100

LASTEC Local Video system used with all of the above

LaserCam Digital Camera System—Locktronic Systems

LaserCam NT Digital Camera System—Poltech International

ProLaser II Kustom

Autovision three with the above via the Laser Data Interface—Traffic Safety Systems

Prolaser III Kustom

Autovision three with the above via the Laser Data Interface—Traffic Safety Systems

Riegl LR90-235/P—Riegl

RieglFG21-P—Riegl

Stealth Speedlaser—Cleartone

Urban Speed Ace—UNIPAR

Speed Laser SL700

Speedeye for use with both of the above

Laser Patrol SpeedLaser—Jenoptik

Leica XV2 SpeedLaser—Leivtec

Autovelox 104/C-2—Sodi Scientifica

Automatic—unmanned

1. Radar:

Gatsometer BV Type 24 + AUS—Gatsometer BV

Serco Speed Enforcement System Type one operating with either Techspan CMI Type 450 EE or SES CMI Type 450EE

2. Piezo cable sensors:

Traffiphot S—Traffipax

Combi S Speedmeter—Truvelo

Combi S-mc Speedmeter—Truvelo

SpeedCurb Speed Safety Camera—RedSpeed International Ltd.

3. Automatic Distance Over Time Speedmeters

Speed Violation Detection Deterrent

SVDD

4. Combined Speed and Red Light Cameras:

RedSpeed Red Light and Speed Safety Camera—RedSpeed International Ltd.

Automatic—supervised

1. Piezo cable sensors:

Combi S Speedmeter—Truvelo

Speedmaster DS3 with the Autovision three—Traffic Safety Systems Ltd.

2. Pneumatic tube Sensor Speed Measuring Devices:

Speedmaster DS3 with the Autovision three—Traffic Safety Systems Ltd.

Tasers

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 470W, on taser stun guns, if he will make a statement on the use of tasers in recent efforts by the police to heighten security in *(a)* the City of London and *(b)* England. [44404]

Hazel Blears: I understand from the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) that taser has been fired 97 times by English forces from 21 April 2003 to 10 January 2006. The City of London police have not fired taser.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what regulations are in place governing the private sale and distribution of Tasers; and whether he plans to tighten these regulations. [44419]

Hazel Blears: Tasers are prohibited weapons and cannot be lawfully possessed or sold without the express authority of the Secretary of State under section 5 of the Firearms Act 1968. As such they are already strictly regulated and are not available for private use.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department at how many people Tasers have been fired by each police constabulary in England and Wales, broken down by *(a)* gender, *(b)* age and *(c)* ethnicity. [44420]

Hazel Blears: This information is not collected centrally by the Home Office. However, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) collect this information from all forces in England and Wales who complete a

Taser Deployment Form on each occasion a Taser is deployed. These force returns will be analysed in due course for the information requested and I will write to the hon. Member when complete.

In addition, the report prepared by PricewaterhouseCoopers into the pilot study by five police forces of the Taser electric stun gun, 'Independent Evaluation of the Operational Trial of Taser May 2004' (available on the West Mercia Constabulary's website at www.westmercia.police.uk) contains gender and ethnicity details from the trial.

Temporary Migrants

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many temporary migrants (*a*) were receiving NHS treatment, (*b*) had places in state schools and (*c*) were receiving in-work benefits on 1 December 2005. [44827]

Mr. McNulty: For all of the above requests, the information is not collated centrally, and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Terrorism Bill

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the occasions (*a*) before and (*b*) after 26 October on which (i) he and (ii) his representatives contacted Hammersmith and Fulham police about the Terrorism Bill, and what form that contact took. [45260]

Hazel Blears: Neither my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary nor his officials in the Home Office have contacted Hammersmith and Fulham police specifically in relation to the Terrorism Bill.

Traffic Offences

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many (*a*) males and (*b*) females were convicted of motoring offences in (i) Ruislip-Northwood constituency, (ii) the London borough of Hillingdon, (iii) Greater London and (iv) England in each of the last five years, broken down by offence; [40712]

(2) how many young people of school age have been found guilty of committing a crime in (*a*) Ruislip-Northwood constituency, (*b*) the London borough of Hillingdon, (*c*) Greater London and (*d*) England in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [40714]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform is provided in the following tables and gives the number of persons found guilty of motoring offences, broken down by sex and type of offence, and the number of young people of school age found guilty of committing a crime in Hillingdon petty sessional area, Greater London and England 2000–04.

In addition to court proceedings statistics, the number of young people of school age Cautioned in Greater London and England are also provided in the table.

It is not possible to identify those offenders in the Ruislip-Northwood constituency, as the data is not collected at this level of detail nor is it possible to identify the number of the Reprimands or Final Warnings given in Hillingdon petty sessional area.

Court statistics for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006.

Number of offenders found guilty for motoring offences, by offence type and sex, Hillingdon Petty Sessional Area, Greater London and England, 2000–2004[1]

Hillingdon Petty Sessional Area

	Males					*Females*				
Offence type	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Dangerous driving	12	15	16	16	14	—	—	—	—	—
Driving etc. after consuming alcohol or taking drugs	334	311	386	394	450	37	29	44	41	50
Careless driving	142	102	115	91	112	22	8	13	18	19
Accident offences	4	5	10	8	4	1	—	—	—	1
Driving Licence related offences	130	153	174	228	281	9	6	5	6	24
Vehicle Insurance Offences	467	460	571	724	1,111	48	40	66	65	168
Vehicle Registration and Excise Licence offences	11	6	9	8	109		2	2	—	26
Work record or employment offences	42	26	18	44	60		1	1		2
Operator's Licence offences	7	1	1	14	7					1
Vehicle Test offences	10	8	13	21	17				1	1
Fraud, forgery, etc associated with vehicle or driver records	14	18	18	42	18				1	
Vehicle, or part, in dangerous or defective condition	134	116	133	176	107	6	7	11	9	10
Speed limit offences	497	424	598	306	182	67	49	93	39	59
Motorway offence (other than speeding)	3	24	61	3	5	—	3	6	1	
Neglect of traffic directions	149	129	129	156	93	13	19	11	18	15
Neglect of pedestrian rights	13	10	16	17	12	6	1	4	3	5
Obstruction, waiting and parking offences	48	46	79	81	44	6	4	8	8	5
Lighting offences	3	6	8	5	8	2	—	—	1	—
Noise offences	2	3	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
Road offences	23	29	36	50	21	—	—	—	—	1
Offences peculiar to motor cycles	1		1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous offences (including trailer offences)	23	25	27	10	72	2	4	1	1	4

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis.

Greater London[2]

Offence type	Males					Females				
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Dangerous driving	357	385	445	554	561	6	13	19	14	17
Driving etc. after consuming alcohol or taking drugs	9,953	9,556	10,934	10,520	10,507	1,006	965	1,132	1,093	1,233
Careless driving	4,187	3,555	3,062	2,901	2,963	839	635	528	520	519
Accident offences	394	374	387	339	283	69	55	50	60	48
Driving Licence related offences	3,712	3,993	4,883	5,900	7,239	250	295	257	357	562
Vehicle Insurance Offences	12,999	14,473	17,506	20,720	24,028	1,117	1,081	1,445	1,689	2,261
Vehicle Registration and Excise Licence offences	1,856	1,675	1,790	1,971	1,838	366	330	422	503	524
Work record or employment offences	357	362	199	280	190	3	5	2	1	5
Operator's Licence offences	91	72	53	47	48	3	2		1	1
Vehicle Test offences	326	328	296	379	246	38	33	35	37	32
Fraud, forgery, etc associated with vehicle or driver records	375	357	388	430	344	11	22	28	31	25
Vehicle, or part, in dangerous or defective condition	1,527	1,319	1,181	1,190	1,447	84	84	90	93	101
Speed limit offences	6,946	7,348	6,481	6,612	6,786	940	1,244	1,300	1,279	1,262
Motorway offence (other than speeding)	39	39	73	9	21	1	7	8	2	3
Neglect of traffic directions	6,804	6,902	5,211	4,776	4,788	1,295	1,413	1,161	924	805
Neglect of pedestrian rights	437	396	378	521	495	76	70	56	83	102
Obstruction, waiting and parking offences	2,232	1,547	1,555	1,578	1,645	245	223	228	243	240
Lighting offences	82	85	112	108	123	6	6	10	15	9
Noise offences	20	15	10	10	12	1	1			
Load offences	575	610	340	369	203	9	10	8	8	7
Offences peculiar to motor cycles	18	17	15	13	64	2	2	1		
Miscellaneous offences (including trailer offences)	1,735	1,424	1,793	953	1,456	341	460	490	210	289

England

Offence type	Males					Females				
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Dangerous driving	3,607	3,692	4,365	4,841	4,777	109	115	147	194	174
Driving etc. after consuming alcohol or taking drugs	64,053	63,538	67,837	69,456	71,534	7,418	7,316	8,354	8,834	9,452
Careless driving	23,958	21,439	18,871	17,070	16,720	5,055	4,203	3,710	3,205	2,986
Accident offences	4,354	4,613	4,520	4,790	4,924	753	770	722	823	825
Driving Licence related offences	34,964	36,031	38,834	45,796	48,580	2,662	2,464	2,645	3,209	3,730
Vehicle Insurance Offences	143,042	141,847	152,984	173,778	183,520	16,763	15,634	17,429	20,270	21,139
Vehicle Registration and Excise Licence offences	8,417	9,729	13,862	17,146	16,805	1,971	2,238	3,664	4,452	4,199
Work record or employment offences	3,802	3,284	2,710	2,466	2,064	58	65	38	40	34
Operator's Licence offences	1,104	841	657	488	467	34	22	25	23	20
Vehicle Test offences	14,411	12,405	11,372	12,129	11,674	1,817	1,369	1,373	1,401	1,341
Fraud, forgery, etc associated with vehicle or driver records	2,948	2,983	2,806	2,750	2,216	267	268	262	257	215
Vehicle, or part, in dangerous or defective condition	10,380	8,175	6,791	6,214	6,604	784	639	589	478	521
Speed limit offences	105,505	101,613	90,701	100,541	109,237	18,567	19,869	19,726	22,252	24,883
Motorway offence (other than speeding)	1,809	1,326	1,608	1,085	1,252	277	155	183	96	171
Neglect of traffic directions	21,123	19,474	17,515	17,071	18,460	4,352	4,094	3,975	3,743	3,905
Neglect of pedestrian rights	2,576	2,071	1,714	1,825	1,795	526	400	365	344	344
Obstruction, waiting and parking offences	9,318	8,680	8,389	8,752	7,321	2,555	2,512	2,453	2,596	2,048
Lighting offences	2,647	2,079	1,949	1,866	1,977	252	217	208	180	190
Noise offences	701	604	419	388	353	85	50	40	27	22
Load offences	7,442	5,957	4,876	4,968	4,496	190	162	130	124	122
Offences peculiar to motor cycles	243	236	109	211	288	16	13	14	15	7
Miscellaneous offences (including trailer offences)	30,930	29,133	33,311	44,002	56,025	7,428	6,830	7,509	8,738	11,742

[2] Includes Metropolitan police and City of London police force areas.

Number of offenders of school age cautioned or found guilty of all offences, Hillingdon Petty Sessional Area, Greater London and England, 2000–04[1,2]

Area	Cautioned[3]					Found Guilty				
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Hillingdon Petty Sessional Area[4]	..	..	..	..	..	197	221	210	191	215
Greater London[5]	10,553	9,452	7,499	7,470	8,859	6,497	7,554	7,562	6,948	7,200
England	76,410	77,666	66,652	70,792	83,248	52,419	55,310	54,327	53,426	56,891

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis.

[2] Defendants aged between 10 and 16.

[3] In June 2000 reprimands and final warnings replaced juvenile cautions..

[4] Cautions are issued by police forces and cannot be broken down by petty sessional area.

[5] Includes Metropolitan police and City of London police force areas.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Access to Work Grants

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of unmet demand for Access to Work grants. [43139]

Mrs. McGuire: In the 2004-05 financial year, a total of 6,037 Access to Work applications nationally were rejected or not pursued by the customer. This represents just under 19 per cent. of the total number of applications received that year. Access to Work Business Centres consider all applications very carefully and only reject applications when they do not meet the Access to Work eligibility criteria.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the projected annual budget is for Access to Work in each of the next three years. [43140]

Mrs. McGuire: Along with other programmes, the figures are currently under consideration in the light of overall priorities.

Adviser Discretion Fund

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many jobcentres are imposing a £50 limit on the maximum amount from the Adviser Discretion Fund which can be granted without a business case. [39308]

Margaret Hodge: The Adviser Discretion Fund enables the purchase of virtually anything that will help people obtain a job, or, if already offered a job, to enable them to accept that offer.

Jobcentre Plus is responsible for the effective management of the Adviser Discretion Fund (ADF). In order to maintain effective controls on ADF expenditure, the payment that advisers can make to a customer was reduced to £100 within a 12 month period. However it remains the case that if individual circumstances justify it, that limited can be raised.

The chief executive of Jobcentre Plus has ensured that field directors and district managers adhere to the national limits and cease, with immediate effect, any variation which reduce the discretionary limit.

Allied Steel and Wire

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of expenditure under the Financial Assistance Scheme on deferred pensioners in the Allied Steel and Wire (Cardiff) pension scheme in (*a*) 2005-06, and (*b*) each year from 2006-07 to 2010-11, under the three-year rule. [44259]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 20 January 2006]*: The estimated expenditure under the Financial Assistance Scheme on deferred pensioners in the Allied Steel and Wire (Cardiff) pension scheme is £50,450 (before tax deductions) in 2005-06. This covers the first payments made in December and monthly payments for the months January to March.

It will not be possible to provide estimates for subsequent years until we have received full details on eligible members and the extent of their losses from the trustees of the pension scheme. This information is unlikely to be available until the scheme is close to finalising winding up.

Asbestos

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the possibility of material containing asbestos being sent to landfill if the European Union Asbestos Worker Protection Directive is implemented. [44557]

Mrs. McGuire: The disposal of asbestos and asbestos contaminated waste is regulated by the waste controls including those regulations implementing the Landfill and Hazardous Waste Directives. These regulations will not be affected by the implementation of amendments to the Asbestos Worker Protection Directive. The legal obligations that currently exist to manage and properly dispose of hazardous waste, such as waste containing asbestos, will remain in place.

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the risks associated with the application and removal of textured coatings containing asbestos. [44558]

Mrs. McGuire: The Health and Safety Laboratory has carried out research on the removal of asbestos-containing textured decorative coatings. The Health and Safety Commission's Consultative Document on proposals for revised Asbestos Regulations and an Approved Code of Practice includes a summary of this research and a wider risk assessment.

The Health and Safety Executive has also commissioned some further research on likely exposures to asbestos from textured coating removal, and will evaluate this and other available research, including on risks to the public, as part of the consultation. The supply and use (including application) of asbestos-containing textured decorative coatings is prohibited by the Asbestos (Prohibitions) Regulations 1999, and textured decorative coatings supplied today no longer contain asbestos.

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to remove certain processes from the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations; and if he will make a statement. [44559]

Mrs. McGuire: The Health and Safety Commission's (HSC) consultation on revised Asbestos Regulations and an Approved Code of Practice ends tomorrow, 31 January. HSC will take account of the views of consultees before making recommendations for final regulations.

The Consultative Document does not contain any proposals to remove processes from the Control of Asbestos at Work (CAW) Regulations; all processes currently covered by these regulations would remain so.

It is proposed that work with asbestos-containing textured decorative coatings is removed from the Health and Safety Executive's licensing regime, due to the much lower level of risk arising from work with these materials

than previously indicated. It would, however, still be a requirement under CAW Regulations that this work is undertaken by properly trained workers using suitable controls to reduce exposure, based on a written plan of work.

Benefits

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people claimed both incapacity benefit and income support in each year since 1997. [42541]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the following table.

Income support claimants also in receipt of incapacity benefit or severe disability allowance: Great Britain

May	*Number*
1997	1,012,800
1998	1,048,900
1999	1,076,900
2000	1,117,300
2001	1,184,000
2002	1,194,700
2003	1,209,700
2004	1,198,500
2005	1,183,800

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
2. Figures for 1997 to 1999 have been derived by applying 5 per cent. proportions to 100 per cent. totals.
3. Incapacity benefit (IB) figures include IB credits only cases.

Sources:
DWP Information Directorate Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study
Information Directorate 5 per cent. samples

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was spent on *(a)* jobseeker's allowance, *(b)* income support and *(c)* incapacity benefit claims later determined to be fraudulent in Wales in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [39556]

Mr. Plaskitt: The available information is in the table.

Benefit overpayments due to customer fraud in Wales

£

Year ending	*JSA*	*IS*	*IB*
2001-02	688,961	6,162,199	1,011,804
2002-03	535,633	4,490,391	990,922
2003-04	502,282	3,821,941	1,086,480
2004-05	845,657	5,529,937	1,109,785

Notes:
1. Figures obtained from the General Matching Service (GMS) include customer error and customer fraud, as these cannot be provided separately by GMS.
2. Figures are based on recoverable benefit overpayments identified during the years shown and may span previous years.
3. Information in this form was not captured before 2000-01.

Source:
FIBS (Fraud Information By Sector) and GMS (General Matching Service).

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he plans to locate administration of benefit services outside the United Kingdom. [45888]

Margaret Hodge: The Department has no intention of moving any of its jobs outside the United Kingdom.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress has been made on the simplification of *(a)* structures and *(b)* payment systems for in-work benefits. [45235]

Mr. Plaskitt: The in-work benefits administered by the Department for Work and Pensions are housing benefit and council tax benefits.

On 24 January 2006 we published our Green Paper "A new deal for welfare: empowering people to work". This details our proposals for simplification and reform of housing benefit in the private sector and consults on the direction of reform for social sector.

We are also continuing our programme of measures to simplify housing benefit and council tax benefits rules to align more closely with pension credit and tax credits.

No changes have been made in payment systems in respect of housing benefit.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many incapacity benefit claimants in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham have been receiving the benefit for five years or more. [45257]

Mrs. McGuire: As at May 2005, 3,900 people in the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham had been claiming incapacity benefit or severe disablement allowance for five years or more.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the value of *(a)* unemployment benefit, *(b)* income support, *(c)* invalidity benefit and *(d)* the basic state pension was as a proportion of average full-time earnings in each year from 1977-78. [41442]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of gross domestic product was spent on *(a)* unemployment benefits, *(b)* invalidity benefits, *(c)* disability benefits and *(d)* income support in each year since 1978-79. [41441]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the following table.

Percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), cash terms

	Unemployment benefit	*Invalidity benefit*	*Disability benefit*	*Income support (under 60)*
1978-79	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.3
1979-80	0.6	0.8	0.4	0.3
1980-81	0.9	0.8	0.4	0.3
1981-82	1.2	0.8	0.5	0.3
1982-83	1.4	0.8	0.6	0.4
1983-84	1.5	0.8	0.6	0.4
1984-85	1.6	0.8	0.7	0.5
1985-86	1.6	0.8	0.7	0.5
1986-87	1.6	0.8	0.8	0.6
1987-88	1.3	0.8	0.8	0.6
1988-89	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.6
1989-90	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.6
1990-91	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.6
1991-92	1.0	1.1	0.7	0.8
1992-93	0.9	1.2	0.8	0.9
1993-94	0.9	1.2	0.9	1.0
1994-95	0.8	1.3	1.0	1.0
1995-96	0.7	1.2	1.0	1.1
1996-97	0.6	1.1	1.1	1.1
1997-98	0.5	1.0	1.1	1.0
1998-99	0.4	0.9	1.1	0.9
1999-2000	0.4	0.8	1.1	0.9

Percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), cash terms

	Unemployment benefit	Invalidity benefit	Disability benefit	Income support (under 60)
2000-01	0.3	0.8	1.1	0.9
2001-02	0.3	0.8	1.1	1.0
2002-03	0.2	0.7	1.0	0.9
2003-04	0.2	0.7	1.1	0.9
2004-05	0.2	0.6	1.1	0.9

The following table covers those who are over 60 and are on income support/minimum income guarantee/ pensions credit (guarantee credit) and pension credit (savings credit).

	Income support (over 60)
1978-79	0.3
1979-80	0.3
1980-81	0.3
1981-82	0.4
1982-83	0.3
1983-84	0.3
1984-85	0.4
1985-86	0.4
1986-87	0.4
1987-88	0.4
1988-89	0.4
1989-90	0.4
1990-91	0.4
1991-92	0.5
1992-93	0.6
1993-94	0.6
1994-95	0.6
1995-96	0.5
1996-97	0.5
1997-98	0.5
1998-99	0.4
1999-2000	0.4
2000-01	0.4
2001-02	0.4
2002-03	0.4
2003-04	0.4
2004-05	0.4

Notes:
1. Figures are for Great Britain.
2. Unemployment benefit includes unemployment benefit from 1978-79 to 1996-97, supplementary benefit for the unemployed from 1978-79 to 1987-88, income support for the unemployed from 1988-89 to 1996-97, contribution-based jobseeker's allowance and income-based jobseeker's allowance from 1996-97 to 2004-05.
3. Invalidity benefit are a total of sickness, incapacity and invalidity benefits and severe disablement allowance.
4. Disability benefit covers mobility allowance, attendance allowance, disability living allowance, industrial injuries benefits, motability specialised vehicle fund, vaccine damage payments and war disablement pensions (to 2002-03). Carers allowance is not included.
5. Income support under 60 excludes the income support paid to unemployed people.

Source:
DWP Medium-term Expenditure Forecasts and HM Treasury Gross Domestic Product figures at 2005 pre-Budget report.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many housing benefit claims were subject to each rate of non-dependant deduction for the most recent year for which figures are available; how many claimants were living in *(a)* council housing; *(b)* registered social landlord housing and *(c)* the private rented sector, broken down by each rate; and what each figure represents as a percentage of total housing benefit claims in that year. [28784]

Mr. Plaskitt: The most recent available information is in the following table.

Housing benefit non-dependants by deduction type and tenure, Great Britain: May 2003

	All tenures	Registered social landlord	Local authority	Private
Total with non-dependants	[1]270,0000	80,000	158,000	32,000
As a percentage of all HB claimants	7.1	2.1	4.2	0.9
of which				
Attracting deductions for non-dependants	128,000	36,000	77,000	15,000
As a percentage of all HB claimants	3.4	1.0	2.0	0.4
Non-dependants				
Total	[2]304,000	92,000	176,000	36,000
Attracting deductions	136,000	39,000	81,000	16,000
Status of non-dependants				
In remunerative work	59,000	19,000	33,000	7,000
of which				
Gross weekly income < £92	6,000	[3]2,000	4,000	[3]1,000
Gross weekly income £92-	8,000	3,000	4,000	[3]1,000
Gross weekly income £137-	12,000	4,000	6,000	[3]2,000
Gross weekly income £177-	10,000	3,000	6,000	[3]1,000
Gross weekly income £235-	6,000	[3]1,000	4,000	[3]1,000
Gross weekly income £293 and	16,000	6,000	8,000	[3]2,000
Not receiving IS JSA(IB) nor working	28,000	6,000	18,000	4,000
Receiving IS JSA(IB), not in work	49,000	14,000	31,000	4,000
On Government training allowance	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—
Unknown	[3]2,000	[4]—	[3]1,000	[4]—

[1] This figure is the number of housing benefit recipients with at least one non-dependant.
[2] This figure is the total number of non-dependants.
[3] Figures under £2,500 are subject to a high degree of sampling variation and should be used only as a guide to the situation.
[4] Denotes nil or negligible.

Notes:
1. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
2. The caseloads are rounded to the nearest thousand, and percentages to one decimal place. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
3. Housing benefit figures exclude any extended payment cases.

Source:
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System, Annual 1 percent sample, taken in May 2003.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the 20 councils with the longest times for processing new housing benefit claims according to the most recent figures available; and what that time was in each case. [42767]

Mr. Plaskitt: The available information is in the table.

Housing benefit (HB) and council tax benefit (CTB) processing times—20 longest

Days

Local authority	*HB and CTB claims*	*HB claims*	*CTB claims*
Great Yarmouth	112	110	114
Newcastle under Lyme	108	92	124
Bracknell Forest	93	112	76
North Wiltshire	88	88	88
Copeland	83	81	85
Staffordshire Moorlands	82	87	79
Ipswich	80	80	79
Stoke on Trent	79	77	81
Broxtowe	76	74	78
Walsall	72	n/a	n/a
Northampton	70	69	71
Dover	68	66	71
Thurrock	68	64	71
Hinckley and Bosworth	68	61	71
Herefordshire	65	68	64
Sefton	64	63	64
Oadby and Wigston	63	n/a	n/a
Mid Devon	63	57	69
Coventry	63	58	67
Hackney	62	64	60

Notes:

1. n/a = breakdown for performance on HB and CTB not available.

2. Not all LAs have returned data in every quarter and therefore the reported figures are the weighted averages of those that have returned figures.

3. Where possible we have provided average processing times for housing benefit and council tax benefit, with an overall average, to ensure consistency with DWP published statistics.

4. Number of days relates to average calendar days taken to decide a new HB or CTB claim from the date the authority first receives a claim, to the date a decision is made.

Source:

Local authority (LA) quarterly statistical returns to DWP; second quarter of 2005–06.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Peterborough constituency were receiving incapacity benefit in *(a)* 2002–03, *(b)* 2003–04 and *(c)* 2004–05. [40987]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit and severe disability allowance claimants in the Peterborough parliamentary constituency

May	*Number*
2003	4,700
2004	4,700
2005	4,700

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

2. 'Claimant' figures include all incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disability allowance claimants including IB credits only cases.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the additional cost of incapacity benefit resulting from a rise in the retirement age to *(a)* 66, *(b)* 67 and *(c)* 68 years. [41144]

Mrs. McGuire: The information necessary from which to make such an estimate is not currently available. It is expected that it will become available later in the year.

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Easington constituency aged *(a)* 20 to 25, *(b)* 25 to 30, *(c)* 30 to 35, *(d)* 35 to 40, *(e)* 40 to 45, *(f)* 45 to 50, *(g)* 50 to 55, *(h)* 55 to 60 and *(i)* 60 to 65 years are in receipt of incapacity benefit. [42006]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimants in the Easington parliamentary constituency, at 31 May 2005

	Number
All Ages	9,700
Under 20	100
20 to 24	400
25 to 29	600
30 to 34	700
35 to 39	900
40 to 44	1,100
45 to 49	1,200
50 to 54	1,400
55 to 59	2,000
60 to 64	1,300
65 and over	100

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

2. 'Claimant' figures include all Incapacity Benefit (IB) and Severe Disability Allowance, including IB credits only cases.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many incapacity benefit claimants in Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency have been receiving benefits for five years or more. [42404]

Mrs. McGuire: As at May 2005, there were 1,300 people in the parliamentary constituency of Westmorland and Lonsdale who had been in receipt of incapacity benefit or severe disability allowance for five years or more.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what proportion of new claimants of incapacity benefit in each year since 1997 were already in receipt of another benefit; and what proportion were new benefit claimants; [42545]

(2) what proportion of new claimants of incapacity benefit in each year since 1997 were already in receipt of another benefit; and what proportion were new benefit claimants. [43342]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit commencements already in receipt of income support by quarter

Thousands and percentage

	All incapacity benefit commencements	*Those already in receipt of income support*	*Percentage of all incapacity benefit commencements*
May 1997	231.8	33.8	15
August 1997	234.6	28.7	12
November 1997	230.3	24.8	11
February 1998	209.7	21.9	10
May 1998	200.5	20.5	10
August 1998	202.6	20.7	10
November 1998	211.9	20.7	10
February 1999	198.1	20.0	10
May 1999	200.4	19.2	10
August 1999	195.1	20.5	11
November 1999	199.8	20.8	10
February 2000	190.3	20.7	11
May 2000	193.1	20.5	11
August 2000	192.2	21.1	11
November 2000	193.1	20.5	11
February 2001	186.2	20.3	11
May 2001	194.8	23.7	12
August 2001	183.9	18.7	10
November 2001	186.9	19.0	10
February 2002	173.1	20.4	12
May 2002	183.4	20.9	11
August 2002	181.6	19.9	11
November 2002	186.7	20.9	11
February 2003	173.5	21.8	13
May 2003	177.9	21.2	12
August 2003	174.5	20.0	11
November 2003	181.0	22.4	12
February 2004	167.4	18.6	11
May 2004	170.5	18.5	11
August 2004	166.9	15.8	9
November 2004	167.7	17.2	10
February 2005	153.9	14.9	10
May 2005	133.7	12.4	9

Notes:
1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred and expressed in thousands.
2. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
3. Numbers are based on a 5 per cent. sample, and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation. These figures should be used as a guide to the current situation only.
4. Figures for the latest quarter do not include any late notifications and are subject to major changes in future quarters. For illustration purposes, total commencements for May 2004 increased by 18 per cent. in the year following their initial release.
5. Income support figures will include a small number of minimum income guarantee and pension credit claimants.
6. Incapacity benefit figures exclude severe disability allowance, since there are no new severe disability allowance commencements.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate 5 per cent. sample.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the average duration of an incapacity benefit claim was in each year since 1997; [42759]

(2) what the average duration of an incapacity benefit claim has been in each year since 1997. [42768]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimants by duration of claim each May since 1997

As at May each year	*All durations*	*Up to 3 months*	*3 to 6 months*	*6 months to 1 year*	*1 to 2 years*	*2 to 5 years*	*Over 5 years*
1997	2,848,800	173,000	156,500	227,600	352,000	1,871,700	68,000
1998	2,795,200	154,500	132,300	223,300	357,300	1,441,300	486,600
1999	2,754,800	149,600	129,300	198,300	320,100	1,064,100	893,400
2000	2,737,800	170,900	136,800	206,500	308,800	745,500	1,169,300
2001	2,808,600	170,500	143,900	214,700	311,500	704,000	1,264,000
2002	2,822,200	163,500	132,600	196,300	313,000	673,000	1,343,800
2003	2,829,700	158,700	133,600	195,800	286,700	662,600	1,392,300
2004	2,825,000	152,900	130,900	188,400	286,100	639,000	1,427,600
2005	2,784,000	138,200	118,400	180,600	271,500	614,900	1,460,400

Notes:
1. Figures for the years 1997 to 1999 have been produced using 5 per cent. data and have been rated up in accordance with the Great Britain WPLS 100 per cent. IB SDA totals.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. 'Claimant' figures include all Incapacity Benefit (IB) and Severe Disability Allowance claimants, including IB credits only cases.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. Samples from 1997 to 1999 and Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data thereafter.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* male and *(b)* female incapacity benefit claimants there were in Blackpool, South (i) in total, (ii) broken down by age and (iii) broken down by category of claim in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [43099]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants in the Blackpool, South parliamentary constituency; by age and sex each May since 2000

Thousands

	IB/SDA	*IB*	*SDA*
May 2000			
All persons	8.0	7.2	0.9
Under 25	0.4	0.3	0.1
25–49	3.6	3.2	0.4

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants in the Blackpool, South parliamentary constituency, by age and sex each May since 2000

Thousands

	IB/SDA	IB	SDA
50–59	2.8	2.6	0.2
60–64	1.1	1.0	0.1
65 and over	0.1	¦	0.1
Men	5.0	4.7	0.4
Under 25	0.2	0.1	¦
25–49	2.1	2.0	0.2
50–59	1.6	1.6	0.1
60–64	1.1	1.0	0.1
65 and over	¦	¦	¦
Women	3.0	2.5	0.5
Under 25	0.2	0.1	¦
25–49	1.5	1.3	0.2
50–59	1.2	1.1	0.2
60–64	¦	¦	¦
65 and over	¦	¦	¦
May 2001			
All persons	8.1	7.3	0.8
Under 25	0.4	0.3	0.1
25–49	3.7	3.3	0.4
50–59	2.9	2.6	0.2
60–64	1.1	1.0	0.1
65 and over	0.1	¦	0.1
Men	5.1	4.7	0.4
Under 25	0.2	0.2	¦
25–49	2.2	2.0	0.2
50–59	1.6	1.5	0.1
60–64	1.0	1.0	¦
65 and over	¦	¦	¦
Women	3.1	2.6	0.5
Under 25	0.2	0.2	¦
25–49	1.5	1.3	0.2
50–59	1.3	1.1	0.2
60–64	¦	¦	¦
65 and over	¦	¦	¦
May 2002			
All persons	8.1	7.3	0.8
Under 25	0.4	0.3	¦
25–49	3.7	3.3	0.4
50–59	2.9	2.6	0.2
60–64	1.1	1.0	0.1
65 and over	0.1	¦	0.1
Men	5.0	4.7	0.3
Under 25	0.2	0.2	¦
25–49	2.2	2.1	0.2
50–59	1.6	1.5	0.1
60–64	1.0	1.0	¦
65 and over	¦	¦	¦
Women	3.0	2.6	0.5
Under 25	0.2	0.2	¦
25–49	1.5	1.3	0.2
50–59	1.3	1.1	0.2
60–64	¦	¦	¦
65 and over	¦	¦	¦
May 2003			
All persons	8.2	7.4	0.7
Under 25	0.4	0.4	¦
25–49	3.9	3.5	0.4
50–59	2.8	2.6	0.2
60–64	1.1	1.0	0.1
65 and over	0.1	¦	0.1

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants in the Blackpool, South parliamentary constituency, by age and sex each May since 2000

Thousands

	IB/SDA	IB	SDA
Men	5.1	4.8	0.3
Under 25	0.2	0.2	¦
25–49	2.3	2.1	0.2
50–59	1.5	1.5	0.1
60–64	1.0	1.0	¦
65 and over	¦	¦	¦
Women	3.1	2.7	0.4
Under 25	0.2	0.2	¦
25–49	1.6	1.4	0.2
50–59	1.3	1.1	0.1
60–64	¦	¦	¦
65 and over	¦	¦	¦
May 2004			
All persons	8.3	7.6	0.7
Under 25	0.4	0.4	¦
25–49	4.0	3.6	0.4
50–59	2.9	2.7	0.2
60–64	1.0	0.9	0.1
65 and over	0.1	¦	0.1
Men	5.1	4.8	0.3
Under 25	0.2	0.2	¦
25–49	2.4	2.2	0.2
50–59	1.6	1.5	0.1
60–64	0.9	0.9	¦
65 and over	¦	¦	¦
Women	3.2	2.8	0.4
Under 25	0.2	0.2	¦
25–49	1.6	1.4	0.2
50–59	1.3	1.2	0.1
60–64	¦	¦	¦
65 and over	¦	¦	¦
May 2005			
All persons	8.2	7.5	0.7
Under 25	0.4	0.4	¦
25–49	4.0	3.6	0.4
50–59	2.8	2.6	0.2
60–64	0.9	0.9	0.1
65 and over	0.1	¦	0.1
Men	5.0	4.7	0.3
Under 25	0.2	0.2	¦
25–49	2.3	2.2	0.1
50–59	1.5	1.5	0.1
60–64	0.9	0.9	¦
65 and over	¦	¦	¦
Women	3.2	2.8	0.4
Under 25	0.2	0.2	¦
25–49	1.6	1.4	0.2
50–59	1.2	1.1	0.1
60–64	¦	¦	¦
65 and over	¦	¦	¦

¦ Denotes nil or negligible.

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and shown in thousands.
2. '—' denotes nil or negligible.
3. 'Claimant' figures include all IB/SDA claimants (including IB credits only cases)

Source:

DWP Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many incapacity benefit claimants in Gravesham constituency have been in receipt of the benefit for *(a)* less than six months, *(b)* between six months and one year, *(c)* one to three years, *(d)* three to five years and *(e)* five years or more. [43266]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants by duration in the Gravesham parliamentary constituency as at May 2005

	Number
All Durations	3,500
Up to 6 months	400
6 months up to 1 year	300
1 year and up to 3 years	800
3 years and up to 5 years	500
5 years and over	1,700

Notes

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
2. 'Claimant' figures include all IB/SDA claimants, including IB credits only cases.

Source

Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total expenditure was for those on incapacity benefits due to *(a)* mental ill health and *(b)* behavioural reasons in each year since 1997. [43332]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available broken down as requested. The available information is in the tables.

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance expenditure for those with a primary diagnosis in the mental and behavioural disorders group of diagnoses— Cash terms

£ million

	Incapacity benefit	*Severe disablement allowance*
1997–98	1,435	354
1998–99	1,532	361
1999–2000	1,562	375
2000–01	1,663	384
2001–02	1,765	402
2002–03	1,900	371
2003–04	1,999	368
2004–05	2,079	367

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance expenditure for those with a primary diagnosis in the mental and behavioural disorders group of diagnoses— Real terms (2005–06 prices)

£ million

	Incapacity benefit	*Severe disablement allowance*
1997–98	1,725	426
1998–99	1,796	423
1999–2000	1,795	432
2000–01	1,886	436
2001–02	1,954	445
2002–03	2,039	398
2003–04	2,090	385
2004–05	2,129	376

Note

Expenditure figures are rounded to the nearest £1 million.

Source

PBR 2005 Expenditure Tables and DWP Information Centre 5 per cent. sample data.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people received incapacity benefit on the grounds of dependency on *(a)* drugs and *(b)* alcohol in each year since 1997. [43336]

Mrs. McGuire: The available information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants with a diagnosis of "Alcoholism" or "Drug Abuse" in Great Britain

As at May each year	*Alcoholism*	*Drug Abuse*
1997	27,100	21,900
1998	30,100	25,300
1999	32,800	27,900
2000	35,800	31,300
2001	38,900	36,900
2002	41,300	41,300
2003	43,700	44,600
2004	46,200	46,600
2005	48,000	48,300

Notes

1. Figures for the years 1997 to 1999 have been produced using the 5 per cent. data and have been rated up proportionally using the Great Britain WPLS 100 per cent. IB/SDA totals.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. 'Claimant' figures include all IB and SDA, including IB credits only cases.
4. All diagnoses are coded using the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Edition, published by the World Health Organisation.

Source

DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples from 1997 to 1999 and Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data thereafter.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of claims for incapacity benefit were unsuccessful in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [43337]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claims refused as a percentage of those received

Calendar year (January to December)	*Percentage of IB and SDA claims refused*
2005	43.90
2004	47.41
2003	53.34

Note

Claims refused are all those claims where no monetary amount of incapacity benefit or severe disablement allowance was awarded. Many of these claims will be National Insurance contribution-only cases. Other benefits may be awarded.

Source

Central Data Unit for figures up to and including July 2004 and Management Information Systems Programme 04(MISP04) from August 2004 to December 2005.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people leaving incapacity benefit in *(a)* the last six months, *(b)* the last 12 months and *(c)* the last seven years represented (i) transfers to other social security benefits, (ii) people moving from benefit into employment and (iii) people moving off benefit to unknown destinations. [43338]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) leavers by destination during periods shown

	IB/SDA claims ending in the last six months[1]	IB/SDA claims ending in the last 12 months[2]	IB/SDA claims ending in the last seven years[2]
Total number of claims ending	355,400	707,400	5,336,800
Transfer to other benefits[4]	83,900	166,000	1,334,000
Return to IB/SDA[5]	16,700	32,400	268,600
Reach retirement age or are recorded as moving to state pension	29,000	60,900	448,500
Recorded as death of claimant	13,100	25,800	183,400
Recorded as returned to work[6]	14,500	26,700	136,500
Residual unknown destinations	198,200	395,500	2,965,800

[1] IB SDA claims ending in the last 12 months includes IB/SDA claims terminating from 1 March 2004 to 28 February 2005, this is the latest year for which figures are available.
[2] IB SDA claims ending in the last seven years include IB/SDA claims terminating from 1 March 1998 to 28 February 2005.
[3] Those transferring to other benefits include those moving onto income support pension credit, jobseeker's allowance, working families tax credit, disabled persons tax credit within 90 days of the IB/SDA claim ending.
[4] Return to IB/SDA includes those claimants who make another claim to IB/SDA within 90 days of their previous claim terminating.
[5] It is known that the number recorded as returning to work underestimates the true situation. It is not possible to determine the number that moved to employment, however the "Destinations of Benefit Leavers 2004" report showed that 62 per cent. of IS, JSA and IB leavers entered employment of 16 hours or more a week.
[6] Destinations of terminated IB/SDA claims are assigned in the priority order shown above.

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. IB/SDA claims ending in the last six months include IB/SDA claims terminating from 1 September 2004 to 28 February 2005.
3. Figures for the "last six months" and "last 12 months" given above will increase significantly following receipt of late notifications.

Source:
Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples (terminations dataset).

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of people making a fresh claim for incapacity benefit in each year since 2000 had been in receipt of incapacity benefit during the previous 12 months. [43340]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit (IB) commencements where the claimant had formerly claimed IB in the previous 12 months: Great Britain

	All commencements	Commencements with former IB claim in previous 12 months	
			Percentage
May 2001	194,800	36,400	19
May 2002	183,400	33,300	18
May 2003	177,900	31,600	18
May 2004	170,500	31,700	19
May 2005	133,700	26,600	20

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. Commencement figures for the latest quarter do not include any late notifications and are subject to major increases in future quarters.
3. Earlier quarters have been updated to include late notified terminations, including terminations for state pension.

Source:
Terminations—DWP Information Directorate 5 per cent. samples.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will list other benefits available to incapacity benefit recipients; and what changes there have been in recipient numbers of each benefit in each of the last five years; [43344]

(2) how many claimants of incapacity benefit were in receipt of *(a)* incapacity benefit only, *(b)* incapacity benefit in combination with each other benefit to which a claimant may also be entitled and *(c)* each other (i) benefit and (ii) combination of benefits to which a claimant may be entitled in each of the last five years; and what the average weekly level of benefit received by a claimant was in each case. [43346]

Mrs. McGuire: The key benefits that can be paid with incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) are: income support (IS); disability living allowance (DLA); housing benefit (HB); and council tax benefit (CTB).

IB and SDA claimants may also have underlying entitlement to bereavement benefits and carers allowance, although there would be no monetary value.

Industrial injuries disablement benefit and war disablement pension can be paid in addition to incapacity benefit, where a claimant is entitled to these benefits.

The available figures for the key benefits are in the tables. Because they are from different data sources, the housing benefit and council tax benefit figures cannot be combined with the other benefits and an overlap exists between the figures in the tables.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants with combinations of income support (IS) and disability living allowance (DLA), claimant numbers and average benefit amounts: May 2001 to May 2005

	May 2001		May 2002		May 2003		May 2004		May 2005	
Benefit combination	*Thousand*	*£pw*	*Thousand*	*£pw*	*Thousand*	*£pw*	*Thousand*	*£pw*	*Thousand*	*£pw*
Total IB/SDA	2,749.6	111.25	2,764.6	137.82	2,771.2	142.81	2,767.9	142.78	2,726.9	144.28
IB and DLA	n/a	n/a	495.4	146.79	510.9	147.35	580.9	148.70	589.7	152.10
IBS, IS	1,046.4	123.74	691.8	116.08	692.7	122.53	616.5	122.72	601.3	116.90
IB and IS and DLA	n/a	n/a	401.9	187.96	438.1	193.55	405.5	195.13	415.1	195.77

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants with combinations of income support (IS) and disability living allowance (DLA), claimant numbers and average benefit amounts: May 2001 to May 2005

	May 2001		May 2002		May 2003		May 2004		May 2005	
Benefit combination	*Thousand*	*£pw*	*Thousand*	*£pw*	*Thousand*	*£pw*	*Thousand*	*£pw*	*Thousand*	*£pw*
IB only	1,369.2	89.46	879.6	86.40	849.5	86.19	900.0	86.51	869.3	87.84
SDA and DLA	n/a	n/a	67.9	119.98	62.0	122.74	64.4	125.85	61.2	130.13
SDA and IS	239.6	155.07	23.7	108.08	20.0	114.95	16.4	116.98	14.1	116.63
SDA and IS and DLA	n/a	n/a	191.3	170.12	186.7	174.38	173.5	174.62	166.4	178.46
SDA only	94.5	55.28	13.0	56.12	11.2	57.47	10.8	59.19	9.8	61.23

n/a = not applicable.

Notes

1. Caseload figures are shown in thousands and rounded to the nearest hundred. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
2. IB/SDA 'Claimant' figures include all IB and SDA, including IB credits only cases.
3. 'IB and DLA' and 'SDA and DLA' claimants are not in receipt of IS.
4. 'IB and IS' and 'SDA and IS' claimants are not in receipt of DLA.
5. 'IB only' and 'SDA only' claimants are not in receipt of IS or DLA.
6. Each amount is a combined average weekly amount of all benefits listed in the category.

Source

DWP Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data.

Incapacity benefit (IB) claimants with housing benefit: May 2000 to May 2004

	Caseloads (thousand)			*Average weekly amount of housing benefit (£ pw)*		
	All	*Not also in receipt of IB*	*Also in receipt of IB*	*All*	*Not also in receipt of IB*	*Also in receipt of IB*
May 2000	4,033	3,626	407	48.43	48.74	45.71
May 2001	3,874	3,474	400	50.34	50.70	47.27
May 2002	3,813	3,410	403	54.55	54.98	50.91
May 2003	3,796	3,401	396	55.85	56.48	50.47
May 2004	3,879	3,469	410	60.30	61.06	53.87

Incapacity benefit (IB) claimants with council tax benefit: May 2000 to May 2004

	Caseloads (thousand)			*Average weekly amount of council tax benefit (pw)*		
	All	*Not also in receipt of IB*	*Also in receipt of IB*	*All*	*Not also in receipt of IB*	*Also in receipt of IB*
May 2000	4,830	4,314	516	9.40	9.35	9.78
May 2001	4,673	4,163	511	10.14	10.11	10.42
May 2002	4,602	4,090	512	10.87	10.83	11.14
May 2003	4,628	4,129	498	12.06	12.06	12.09
May 2004	4,759	4,267	492	13.00	13.02	12.78

Severe disablement allowance (SDA) with housing benefit: May 2000 to May 2004

	Caseloads (thousand)			*Average weekly amount of housing benefit (£ pw)*		
	All	*Not also in receipt of SDA*	*Also in receipt of SDA*	*All*	*Not also in receipt of SDA*	*Also in receipt of SDA*
May 2000	4,033	3,919	114	48.43	48.23	55.46
May 2001	3,874	3,760	115	50.34	50.08	59.07
May 2002	3,813	3,699	114	54.55	53.89	76.04
May 2003	3,796	3,685	112	55.85	55.69	61.11
May 2004	3,879	3,767	112	60.30	60.19	64.15

Severe disablement allowance (SDA) with council tax benefit: May 2000 to May 2004

	Caseloads (thousand)			*Average weekly amount of council tax benefit (£ pw)*		
	All	*Not also in receipt of SDA*	*Also in receipt of SDA*	*All*	*Not also in receipt of SDA*	*Also in receipt of SDA*
May 2000	4,830	4,718	112	9.40	9.37	10.45
May 2001	4,673	4,561	113	10.14	10.12	10.97
May 2002	4,602	4,492	110	10.87	10.85	11.74
May 2003	4,628	4,531	97	12.06	12.05	12.62
May 2004	4,759	4,664	95	13.00	12.99	13.45

Notes:
1. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple
2. Caseloads are expressed in thousands and rounded to the nearest thousand. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
3. Average amounts are rounded to the nearest penny and refer to the amount of housing benefit or council tax benefit only.
4. Housing benefit figures exclude any Extended Payment cases
5. Council tax benefit figures exclude any Second Adult Rebate cases
6. There will be overlaps in the housing benefit and council tax benefit figures as it is possible to be in receipt of both benefits.

Source:
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Annual 1 per cent. sample taken between May 1999 and May 2004

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will list the main medical reasons for payment of incapacity benefit; [43348]

(2) how many people were claiming incapacity benefit and severe disability allowance in the last period for which figures are available, broken down by disease. [45221]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants by diagnosis group: Great Britain, May 2005

	Number
All diagnoses	2,784,000
Certain Infectious and Parasitic Diseases	21,000
Neoplasms	39,900
Diseases of the Blood and Blood forming organs and certain diseases involving the immune mechanism	4,500
Endocrine, Nutritional and Metabolic Diseases	39,700
Mental and Behavioural Disorders	1,086,100
Diseases of the Nervous System	166,300
Diseases of the Eye and Adnexa	19,700
Diseases of the Ear and Mastoid Process	12,100
Diseases of the Circulatory System	168,900
Diseases of the Respiratory System	65,600
Diseases of the Digestive System	43,300
Diseases of the Skin and Subcutaneous System	16,900
Diseases of the Musculoskeletal system and Connective Tissue	524,300
Diseases of the Genitourinary System	19,800
Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Puerperium	4,700
Certain Conditions Originating in the Perinatal Period	-
Congenital Malformations, Deformations and Chromosomal Abnormalities	25,200
Symptoms, Signs and Abnormal Clinical and Laboratory findings, not elsewhere classified	331,400
Injury, Poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes	157,500
Factors influencing Health Status and Contact with Health Services	37,100

'—'denotes nil or negligible.

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and quoted in thousands.
2. 'Claimant' figures include all IB/SDA claimants, including IB credits only cases.
3. Causes of incapacity are based on the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision, published by the World Health Organisation.

Source:
Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average length of time for an appeal by a claimant against a decision on non-entitlement to incapacity benefit to be heard was in each year since 2000. [43349]

Mrs. McGuire: This is a matter for Dr. Christina Townsend, chief executive of the Appeals Service. She will respond to the hon. Member.

Letter from Christina Townsend, dated January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to respond to your question regarding what the average length of time for an appeal by a claimant against a decision on non-entitlement to incapacity benefit to be heard was in each year since 2000.

The information you have asked for is set out in the table below.

Average Appeal Durations from Lodged to Outcome

Weeks

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005[1]
All IB	22.59	22.28	20.72	19.63	18.9
IBPCA	21.88	21.79	20.59	19.63	18.78
IB Non-PCA	27.05	25.61	21.64	19.64	19.83

[1] Years are represented from January to December in each instance except 2005 where January to September has been used.

Notes:
1. All figures are subject to change as more up to date data becomes available.
2. "Lodged" denotes when an appeal is submitted to the first tier agency. Lodged data only enters the GAPS database when the Appeal reaches the Appeals Service.
3. Duration is derived by calculating the time difference from when an appeal is lodged until when it is cleared. It is represented in weeks.
4. PCA is the Personal Capability Assessment.

Source:
100% download of the Generic Appeals Processing System.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of incapacity benefit claimants were aged over *(a)* 40, *(b)* 50, *(c)* 55, *(d)* 60 and *(e)* 65 years in each of the last seven years. [43350]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants by age group

Thousand and percentage

	Claimants	Percentage
May 1999		
All Ages	2,755.2	100.0
Under 40	793.5	29.0
40–49	663.4	24.2
50–59	946.4	34.6
60–64	331.1	12.1
65 and over	31.7	1.2
May 2000		
All Ages	2,737.8	100.0
Under 40	807.5	29.5
40–49	593.1	21.7
50–59	930.4	34.0
60–64	381.2	13.9
65 and over	25.6	0.9
May 2001		
All Ages	2,808.6	100.0
Under 40	837.2	30.6
40–49	615.2	22.5

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants by age group

Thousand and percentage

	Claimants	*Percentage*
50–59	956.7	34.9
60–64	373.3	13.6
65 and over	26.0	1.0
May 2002		
All Ages	2,822.2	100.0
Under 40	841.2	30.7
40–49	629.9	23.0
50–59	960.9	35.1
60–64	363.5	13.3
65 and over	26.7	1.0
May 2003		
All Ages	2,829.7	100.0
Under 40	844.2	30.8
40–49	645.6	23.6
50–59	960.3	35.1
60–64	352.1	12.9
65 and over	27.6	1.0
May 2004		
All Ages	2,825.0	100.0
Under 40	838.5	30.6
40–49	659.7	24.1
50–59	955.8	34.9
60–64	342.8	12.5
65 and over	28.2	1.0
May 2005		
All Ages	2,784.0	100.0
Under 40	810.6	29.6
40–49	667.0	24.4
50–59	944.4	34.5
60–64	333.0	12.2
65 and over	29.0	1.1

Notes

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and shown in thousands.
2. Figures for the year 1999 have been produced using the 5 per cent. data and have been rated up proportionally using the Great Britain WPLS 100 per cent. IB/SDA totals.
3. 'Claimant' figures include all IB/SDA claimants, including IB credits only cases.

Source

DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples for 1999 and Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data thereafter.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people living abroad have been in receipt of incapacity benefit in each year since 1997; and what the cost was in each year. [43351]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Number of claimants and expenditure for incapacity benefit and severe disability allowance paid in respect of people living abroad

	Caseload	*Expenditure (Nominal Terms) (£ million)*	*Expenditure (Real Terms) (£ million)*
1997–98	8,500	34	40
1998–99	8,200	34	39
1999–2000	8,150	33	38
2000–01	8,350	33	38
2001–02	8,600	34	38
2002–03	9,500	38	40
2003–04	9,800	39	41
2004–05	9,250	41	42

Notes

1. Expenditure figures are rounded to the nearest £1 million.
2. Caseload figures have been rounded to the nearest 50.
3. Real Terms Expenditure is at 2005–06 prices.
4. All expenditure figures are consistent with the PBR 2005 Report.

Source

Data from the DWP's administrative systems was used to calculate the proportion of total incapacity benefit and severe disability allowance expenditure in respect of people living abroad.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many doctors were employed *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time to conduct medical examinations of claimants for incapacity benefit in each of the last seven years. [43352]

Mrs. McGuire: The following table shows the number of full-time, part-time and sectional doctors employed to conduct medical examinations for the past 6 years. Figures for full-time and part-time doctors for the year 1999 are not available.

	Full time	*Part time*	*Sessional*
2005	176	92	1,380
2004	175	37	1,627
2003	179	28	1,380
2002	181	29	1,896
2001	153	24	2,060
2000	161	22	2,319
1999	—	—	2,039

Full-time and part-time doctors are directly employed by Medical Services. Sessional doctors are contracted to undertake benefit work on an as and when required basis.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department monitors the number of incapacity benefit claims that are supported by each *(a)* general practitioner practice and *(b)* individual general practitioner in (i) Pathways to Work areas and (ii) non-Pathways to Work areas. [44430]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants of incapacity benefit have undertaken permitted work in each of the last five years. [44434]

Mrs. McGuire: The rules for permitted work were introduced in April 2002. Information is available only from November 2002. The available information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit claimants undertaking permitted work: Great Britain

	November 2002	*May 2003*	*May 2004*	*May 2005*
Permitted Work Lower Level	2,100	8,500	14,500	17,900
Supported Permitted Work	1,900	6,500	10,300	11,500
Permitted Work Higher Limit	5,800	13,700	10,700	10,900
Permitted Work Higher Limit Supported	—	—	—	[1]400

'—' Nil or negligible

[1] Figures are subject to a high degree of sampling error and should only be used as a guide.

Notes:
1. Figures have been produced using the 5 per cent. data and have been rated up proportionally using the Great Britain WPLS 100 per cent. IB/SDA totals.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
Source:
DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people left jobseeker's allowance for incapacity benefit in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [44503]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the following table.

Jobseeker's allowance (JSA) claimants moving to incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) during periods shown

Period	*Total JSA terminations*	*IB/SDA is claimed within 90 days of JSA claim terminating*
Total (March 2002 to February 2005)	7,497,000	600,500
1 March 2004 to 28 February 2005	2,337,000	181,700
1 March 2003 to 29 February 2004	2,536,000	203,800
1 March 2002 to 28 February 2003	2,624,000	215,000

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100. Figures may not sum due to rounding.
2. Numbers are based on 5 per cent. samples, and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
3. Figures are given for JSA terminations where the claimant goes on to claim IB/SDA within 90 days of the JSA claim ending. It is possible that claimants may not move directly from JSA to IB, e.g. they may cease claiming JSA, find work and then claim IB within the given 90 day period.
4. Number of terminations in the last year will increase following receipt of late notifications.
Source:
Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples (terminations dataset)

Judy Mallaber: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in *(a)* Derbyshire and *(b)* Amber Valley were in receipt of incapacity benefit in each year since 1997. [42941]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants in Derbyshire and the Amber Valley parliamentary constituency

	Derbyshire	*Amber Valley constituency*
May 1997	33,900	4,500
May 1998	34,200	4,600
May 1999	33,700	4,700
May 2000	35,100	4,400
May 2001	36,300	4,600
May 2002	37,000	4,800
May 2003	36,900	4,800
May 2004	36,100	4,600
May 2005	35,000	4,600

Notes:
1. The parliamentary constituency figures for the years 1997 to 1999 have been produced using the 5 per cent. data and have been rated up proportionally using the Great Britain WPLS 100 per cent. IB/SDA totals.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. Claimant' figures include all IB and SDA, including IB credits only cases.
4. 'Derbyshire' includes: Amber Valley, Bolsover, Chesterfield, Derbyshire Dales, Erewash, High Peak, North East Derbyshire and South Derbyshire local authorities.
Source:
DWP Information Directorate, five per cent samples from 1997 to 1999 and Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data thereafter.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the Eastern region had their invalidity benefit reduced because of failure to attend interviews in each of the last five years. [45714]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available on a regional basis.

British Sign Language

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on *(a)* his Department's projects to support access to British Sign Language and *(b)* the recruitment of tutors for this purpose. [45242]

Mrs. McGuire: My Department has recently provided a total of £1.5 million funding for:

six initiatives to contribute to establishing a GB wide framework to support the recruitment, training and deployment of BSL tutors, to enhance their numbers, status and levels of qualification; and

four initiatives to promote access for BSL users through awareness raising among employers, among service providers and in the wider community.

Examples of these projects include:

a project which developed online curriculum material and established online learning facilities;

a project which developed a family sign language curriculum that will allow BSL tutors to deliver appropriate training in BSL to the families of deaf children;

and a project providing practical workplace solutions at the point of need for interaction between deaf BSL users and hearing people—an extensive online resource covering BSL awareness for employers and colleagues, including the deaf person's first day in a new job; opportunities to learn BSL from basic signs through to quite advanced levels; and work specific BSL dictionaries to be accessed by both deaf and hearing people.

BSL tutors were involved in developing, piloting and using the materials produced by the projects. A conference was held on 7 December 2005 to disseminate lessons learned and to raise awareness of and promote take-up of project outputs and products.

Child Maintenance

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many deduction of earnings orders were imposed by the Child Support Agency in each year from 1991 to 1994; and if he will make a statement. [44737]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Child Support Agency did not start operating until 1993. The information requested is not available covering the period 1993–94.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what plans he has to give the Child Support Agency powers to use *(a)* travel bans and *(b)* passport withdrawal as a child support enforcement tool; and if he will make a statement; [44779]

(2) what plans he has to tag non-resident parents who are not compliant with child maintenance assessments issued by the Child Support Agency, and if he will make a statement. [44732]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Secretary of State will make an announcement on child support shortly.

Child Support

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many parents have been found to be avoiding paying the correct amount of child support in (*a*) Jarrow constituency, (*b*) South Tyneside, (*c*) the North East and (*d*) the UK in each year since 1997. [21041]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 30 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many parents have been found guilty of avoiding paying the rightful amount of child support in (*a*) Jarrow constituency (*b*) South Tyneside (*c*) the North East and (*d*) the UK in each year since 1997.

Detailed information relating to committal proceedings is only available from the period from March 1999. Owing to the format in which this data is held, it is not possible to provide this data for the specific geographical areas requested on a yearly basis and only total numbers to date can be provided.

	Number of non resident parents sentenced since March 1999
South Tyneside	2
North East of England	[1]41
Nationally	496

[1] includes two sentences passed in the South Tyneside court.

It is not possible to identify which, if any, cases were heard in the Jarrow court.

These sentences will include suspended sentences, committal to prison or disqualification from holding or obtaining a driving licence.

I hope you find this response helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff have left the Child Support Agency in each of the last six years; and if he will make a statement. [21855]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 30 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff have left the Child Support Agency for each of the last six years.

Please see the table below detailing the number of staff who have left the Child Support Agency for each of the last six operational years.

Operational year	*Total leavers*
1 April 1999 to 31 March 2000	1656
1 April 2000 to 31 March 2001	1512
1 April 2001 to 31 March 2002	1757
1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003	1694
1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004	1887
1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005	1960

I hope you find this response helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the latest estimate is of the time taken to action a Child Support Agency case clerically; and if he will make a statement. [21962]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 30 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the latest estimate is of the time taken to action a Child Support Agency case clerically; and if he will make a statement.

The latest estimate of the average time taken to clear a case once it has been set up clerically is 16 weeks. This is based upon a sample of a third of the clerical caseload of 15,000 cases.

I hope you find this answer useful.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Child Support Agency cases there were in each year from 1997 to 2005 in (*a*) England, (*b*) Northamptonshire and (*c*) Wellingborough. [26799]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 30 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Child Support Agency cases there were in each of the years 1997 to 2005 in (*a*) England (*b*) Northamptonshire and (*c*) Wellingborough.

Such information as is available is presented in the attached table. I apologise for the fact that this information cannot currently be disaggregated to the geographical level requested from February 2003 onwards.

I hope you find this helpful.

Number of CSA cases with a full maintenance assessment for England, Northamptonshire and Wellingborough 1997–2003

As at February	*England*	*Northamptonshire*	*Wellingborough*
1997	420,000	4,000	1,000
1998	558,000	7,000	1,000
1999	693,000	8,000	2,000
2000	789,000	9,000	2,000
2001	833,000	10,000	2,000
2002	862,000	10,000	2,000
2003	796,000	8,000	2,000

Notes

1 The figures are rounded to the nearest thousand, and are a 'snapshot' at end of February each year.

2 The analysis presented includes those cases with a full maintenance assessment only, as it is not possible to provide disaggregated volumes for pre-assessed cases or those with an interim maintenance assessment.

3 Northamptonshire is based on the following local authority areas: Corby, Daventry, East Northamptonshire, Kettering, Northampton, South Northamptonshire, Wellingborough.

4 Wellingborough analysis is based on Wellingborough parliamentary constituency.

5 Robust information covering the period from March 2003 to present is not currently available.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many requests to HM Revenue and Customs for information regarding the income of non-resident parents were made by the Child Support Agency in each month over the last three years; and what the average time taken to respond was. [30001]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 30 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many requests to HM Revenue and Customs for information regarding the income of non-resident parents were made by the Child Support Agency in each month over the last three years; and what the average time taken to respond was.

The Agency requests earnings information from two areas of HMRC, they are the Centre for Revenue Intelligence and the National Insurance Contributions Office.

Requests for earnings information originate from the Agency's caseworkers who are familiar with the standards underpinning the Service Level Agreement which details the services to be provided and the timescales for the provision of those services. Where these are not met, caseworkers will escalate on a case by case basis either directly with HMRC via their "Trace Champion" or through a central Service Level Agreement Team to resolve any specific issues.

Because of these arrangements the Agency does not generate internal management information on either requests or timescales.

The Centre for Revenue Intelligence does hold information on requests made for earnings from the Agency. These are shown in the table at annex A.

The arrangements with National Insurance Contributions Office are similar to that of The Centre for Revenue Intelligence although caseworkers will go directly to the central Service Level Agreement Team if the service falls below the required standard.

The National Insurance Contributions Office holds information on total Department of Work and Pensions referrals, however this is not disaggregated for the Child Support Agency.

I hope you find this useful.

Annex A

Financial year	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
Month					
April	1,709	1,243	1,576	2,727	2,581
May	1,559	2,111	1,887	2,130	1,942
June	1,931	1,217	2,072	2,030	1,930
July	1,567	1,153	1,658	2,856	2,351
August	1,898	1,591	2,319	2,143	2,058
September	1,143	1,283	1,980	2,101	2,210
October	1,478	1,405	2,877	2,714	2,219
November	1,711	2,009	2,225	1,919	—
December	1,184	1,431	1,444	1,810	—

Annex A

Financial year	*2001-02*	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
January	1,170	1,837	1,619	2,024	
February	1,257	1,587	2,082	2,227	
March	1,712	1,814	2,369	2,255	
Total	18,319	18,681	24,108	26,936	15,291

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the effect of change requests made by Ministers in relation to the CS2 computer system on the operations of the Child Support Agency. [30016]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 30 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the effect of change requests made by Ministers in relation to the CS2 computer system on the operations of the Child Support Agency.

Change requests are made by the Agency not Ministers. Senior Agency officials rigorously review the reason for any change request to ensure it will deliver significant operational benefit. EDS are then asked to conduct impact assessments against all aspects of their IT service and provide a documented response. This response is reviewed by senior Agency officials who, based on the information provided, make a final decision on whether to proceed with the change.

Change requests are primarily made to incorporate new or amended functionality. This may be required for various reasons, but predominantly to address needs that could not be foreseen at the system development stage—such as incorporating the requirement to transfer responsibility for payment of maintenance from Girobank to the Alliance and Leicester, for example.

The changes requested have improved the degree of support that the system provides to staff while processing cases and delivering customer service. This has included enhancements to our mechanisms for distributing workload, our automated exchange of information with Jobcentre Plus and the quality of automatically produced customer notifications.

I hope you find this helpful.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the *(a)* absence rates due to sickness and *(b)* turnover rates for Child Support Agency staff were for each month of the last calendar year. [30025]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 30 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the *(a)* absence rates due to sickness and *(b)* turnover rates for Child Support Agency staff were for each month of the last calendar year.

The tables below provide the information requested.

(a) Absence rates due to sickness

In month	Sickness 2004-05	Sickness 2005-06
April	15.0	12.6
May	15.3	12.1
June	15.2	11.8
July	16.0	11.4
August	15.3	11.5
September	15.6	11.2
October	16.6	11.2
November	16.4	
December	17.1	
January	17.5	
February	16.3	
March	14.6	

Note
The table above shows the Average Working Days Lost to sickness each month on an annualised basis.

(b) Turnover rates for Child Support Agency staff

In month	Turnover (percentage) 2004-05	Turnover (percentage) 2005-06
%		
April	0.7	1.4
May	1.0	0.8
June	0.7	0.8
July	1.1	0.8
August	1.0	1.0
September	1.3	1.0
October	1.1	0.8
November	1.1	
December	0.7	
January	1.1	
February	0.8	
March	0.8	

Note
The table above reflects the percentage monthly staff turnover rate for CSA Great Britain. The figures include both internal and external leavers (permanent, fixed term and temporary staff).

I hope you find this response helpful.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total cost of compensation payments made to clients of the Child Support Agency for administrative errors was in each of the last five years. [30030]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 30 January 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the total cost of compensation payments made to clients of the Child Support Agency for administrative errors was in each of the last five years.

Financial redress is made to clients in cases where maladministration has occurred. The Agency does not hold robust information to distinguish administrative errors from other acts of maladministration.

The following table summarises the financial redress payments made to clients in each of the last five financial years, as outlined in the Agency's Annual Report and Accounts.

	£ Financial redress paid to clients
2000-01	3,053,000
2001-02	2,590,000
2002-03	2,478,000
2003-04	2,331,000
2004-05	3,043,000

I hope you find this information useful.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many stuck cases were held by the Child Support Agency during the last calendar year, broken down by month. [30040]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 30 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many stuck cases were held by the Child Support Agency during the last calendar year broken down by month.

There are still a number of defects in the CS2 computer system which can prevent some cases from progressing. The figures in the table below show the total number of cases requiring technical intervention to progress against all identified defects. These figures include cases currently being progressed clerically and cases for which no further action is required but which cannot be closed without technical intervention. The clerical process allows staff to progress these cases off-line to ensure that any money paid in by the non-resident parent is paid out to the parent with care.

Month	Total number of cases unable to progress without technical intervention
November 2004	36,128
December 2004	25,931
January 2005	30,109
February 2005	28,983
March 2005	25,420
April 2005	25,877
May 2005	21,295
June 2005	23,713
July 2005	25,557
August 2005	26,757
September 2005	28,237
October 2005	29,354
November 2005	32,830

Work is ongoing to remedy these problems, and future IT releases are planned during 2006 and 2007 to resolve the various system performance issues and build on the improvements already made.

I hope you find this helpful.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* face-to-face interviews have been provided, *(b)* complaints have been received, *(c)* cases have been referred to the Independent Case Examiner and *(d)* cases have been raised by hon. and right hon. Members with the Child Support Agency in each year since 1997; what the average cost of each has been in each year; and how policy on each has changed since 1997. [33431]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 1 December 2005]:* The information requested is as follows:

(a) Information on face-to-face interviews is only available for 2002-03 for old scheme cases on CSCS, and in 2004-05 for all schemes. Details are included in the following table.

Face to face interviews carried out by the CSA

	Number
2002-03	67,195
2003-04	[1]
2004-05	26,136

[1] Robust information covering the period 2003-04 is not currently available.

Under the new legislation (introduced in March 2003), calculating maintenance requires less information and is quicker to establish therefore reducing the need for face-to-face interviews. This will have contributed to the fall in the numbers of interviews between 2002-03 and 2004-05.

The agency's face-to-face service was replaced in September 2005 with the Client Interviewing Service. This service provides interviews for clients who require assistance. It also uses Compliance Inspector Teams to pursue clients, employers and other parties who fail to co-operate with the agency when required to do so.

Unfortunately, it is not possible currently to provide estimates of the average cost of carrying out face-to-face interviews.

(b) The following table provides information on the number of complaints received by the agency since 1997.

During 2003-04 a three-tier complaints process was introduced. Stage 1 complaints are dealt with by the complaints resolution team located within each of the agency's six business units. Stage 2 complaints are an escalation to the relevant area director when the client is not satisfied with the outcome of stage 1; and stage 3 is an escalation to the chief executive if the client remains dissatisfied.

Unfortunately, it is not possible currently to provide estimates of the average cost of dealing with agency complaints.

Agency complaints—number of cases received by the agency 1997 to 2005

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Stage 1 complaints received (written)	27,875	28,073	21,015	19,634	15,493	15,182	24,809	29,213
Stage 1 complaints received (telephone)	[1]					[2]	7,458	10,570
Chief executive complaints	[3]			4,096	4,555	7,804	[4]	[5]
Treat official complaints	[6]			2,609	2,869	1,344	1,521	1,108
MP complaints to business units	[3]			4,175	4,818	4,537	5,317	8,871

[1] While the agency did receive stage 1 telephone complaints prior to 2002-03, their volumes were not recorded, thus preventing meaningful comparison with later years.
[2] Although 671 stage 1 telephone complaints were recorded between December 2002 and March 2003, their volumes were not recorded throughout the whole year, thus preventing meaningful comparison with later years.
[3] While the agency did receive complaints directly to the chief executive, treat official complaints, and MP complaints to business units prior to 2000-01, their volumes were not recorded, thus preventing meaningful comparison with later years.
[4] During 2003-04 complaints sent directly to the chief executive were not recorded separately from those complaints which were escalated to him as part of the three stage process. Therefore, although 7,183 complaints in total were received during 2003-04, it is not possible to separate out those complaints received by the chief executive directly (as opposed to those escalated via the complaints process), thus preventing meaningful comparison with data for earlier years.
[5] In April and May of 2004, the chief executive received a total of 1,435 complaints but it is not possible to separate out those complaints received by the chief executive directly, as opposed to those escalated to stage 3 of the complaints process. From June 2004 to March 2005, after which time such complaints were recorded separately, the chief executive received 4,352 direct complaints and 2,549 complaints escalated upwards from stage 2. Again, these recording issues prevent meaningful comparison of this category with earlier years.
[6] Treat official letters are those received by a Minister from a member of the public, and referred for initial consideration to an official of the agency.
Note:
The agency has a three-tier complaints process which comprises of: stage 1 complaints from clients which are dealt with by the Complaints Resolution Team located within each of the agency's six business units; stage 2 complaints which are an escalation to the relevant area director when the client is not satisfied with the outcome of stage 1; and stage 3 which is an escalation to the chief executive if the client remains dissatisfied.

(c) The following table shows the volume of complaints received, accepted and cleared by the Independent Case Examiner (ICE), together with the annual budget and cost per cleared case.

The ICE can only accept cases that have completed the final stage of the agency's complaints process in the six months prior to the referral to ICE. Cases that concern matters of law, Government policy, have been (or are being) investigated by the parliamentary and health service ombudsman, cannot be accepted. Cases which cannot be accepted are referred back to the agency.

CSA complaints (UK) received, accepted and cleared by ICE

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Complaints received	1,087	1,536	1,226	1,488	1,520	1,444	2,190	3,028
Complaints accepted	471	704	584	765	793	717	941	1,285
Cleared by investigation on resolution or withdrawn	204	474	692	619	691	901	890	1,225
Annual budget (£)	1,025,675	920,960	1,040,811	1,176,087	1,623,765	1,873,880	2,224,374	2,469,933
Unit cost (£)	5,028	1,943	1,504	1,900	2,350	2,080	2,499	2,016

Notes:
1. Figures shown represent complaints received into ICE from Great Britain and Northern Ireland CSA clients.
2. Unit cost is annual budget divided by the volume of cleared cases.

(*d*) Unfortunately, it is not possible to say how many case specific complaints have been raised by hon. and right hon. Members. While the information presented in the table at part (*b*) shows complaints sent to business units by MPs; these can relate to both case specific and general issues, and cannot be broken down to identify the former. In addition, cases shown as being received by the chief executive are from MPs and also other bodies such as solicitors, pressure groups, local councillors and citizens advice bureaux. Again, this information recorded cannot be broken down further.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total amount of compensation paid to clients by the Child Support Agency (CSA) has been since 1997; and (*a*) how many and (*b*) what proportion of complaints about the CSA have been upheld by the Independent Case Examiner since 1997. [35395]

Mr. Plaskitt: The following table summarises the compensation payments made to clients in each year since 1997, as outlined in the agency's Annual Report and Accounts.

£ million

	Amount of compensation paid
1997–98	1.101
1998–99	4.351
1999–2000	3.075
2000–01	3.053
2001–02	2.590
2002–03	2.478
2003–04	2.331
2004–05	3.043

The following table shows how many full investigations were carried out by ICE on complaints raised about the CSA, and the outcome of those investigations.

CSA (GB) complaints fully investigated by ICE

	Cases fully investigated	*Fully upheld*	*Partially upheld*	*Not upheld*
1997–98	148	57 (39%)	80 (54%)	11 (7%)
1998–99	229	73 (32%)	148 (65%)	8 (3%)
1999–2000	219	43 (20%)	155 (71%)	21 (9%)
2000–01	286	68 (24%)	195 (68%)	23 (8%)
2001–02	213	46 (22%)	141 (66%)	23 (12%)
2002–03	390	105 (27%)	214 (55%)	71 (18%)
2003–04	436	163 (37%)	214 (49%)	59 (14%)
2004–05	478	183 (37%)	241 (51%)	54 (11%)

Note:
Figures shown represent complaints received into ICE from Great Britain CSA clients.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many customer complaints were made to the Child Support Agency in each year from 1996–97. [41332]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the requested information.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 30 January 2006:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many customer complaints were made to the Child Support Agency in each year from 1996–97 to 2005–06 to date.

The volumes of complaints received direct from clients, their representatives and MPs to the Child Support Agency or to our Ministers, for which information is available, are in the attached table.

It should be noted that it is difficult to use this information to make meaningful comparisons over time due to changes in the way that information has been recorded. In particular whilst the volume of stage 1 written complaints undoubtedly rose between 2002–03 and 2003–04, this is likely to have been due in part to more rigorous recording of complaints received at the time, and the introduction by the Agency of a three tier complaints process during 2003–04.

It should also be noted that the volume of complaints has stabilised. In the twelve months up to November 2005, the Agency received a total of 54,000 complaints, this compares to 55,000 for the 12 months up to May 2005 (the earliest period for which comparable data for total numbers of complaints received is available).

Further, to put the attached figures into context, the 54,000 complaints received in the 12 months to November 2005 represent less than 4% of the 1.4 million cases dealt with by the CSA.

I hope you find this answer useful.

Agency complaints—number of cases received in the agency 1997 to 2005

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*April–November 2005*
Stage 1 complaints received (written)	27,875	28,073	21,015	19,634	15,493	15,182	24,809	29,213	18,087
Stage 1 Complaints received (telephone)	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[2]	7,458	10,570	7,038
Chief Executive Complaints	[3]	[3]	[3]	4,096	4,555	7,804	[4]	[4]	3,857
Treat Official Complaints	[3]	[3]	[3]	2,609	2,869	1,344	1,521	1,108	817
MP Complaints to Business Units	[3]	[3]	[3]	4,175	4,818	4,537	5,317	8,871	6,488

[1] While the agency did receive stage 1 telephone complaints prior to 2002–03, their volumes were not recorded, thus preventing meaningful comparison with later years.

[2] Although 671 stage 1 telephone complaints were recorded between December 2002 and March 2003, their volumes were not recorded throughout the whole year, thus preventing meaningful comparison with later years.

[3] While the agency did receive complaints directly to the Chief Executive, treat official complaints, and MP complaints to Business Units prior to 2000–01, their volumes were not recorded, thus preventing meaningful comparison with later years.

[4] During 2003–04 complaints sent directly to the Chief Executive were not recorded separately from those complaints which were escalated to him as part of the 3 stage process. Therefore, although 7,183 complaints in total were received during 2003–04, it is not possible to separate out those complaints received by the Chief Executive directly (as opposed to those escalated via the complaints process), thus preventing meaningful comparison with data for earlier years.

[1] In April and May of 2004, the Chief Executive received a total of 1,435 complaints but is not possible to separate out those complaints received by the Chief Executive directly, as opposed to those escalated to stage 3 of the complaints process). From June 2004-March 2005, after which time such complaints were recorded separately, the Chief Executive received 4,352 direct complaints and 2,549 complaints escalated upwards from stage 2. Again, these recording issues prevent meaningful comparison of this category with earlier years.
[2] Treat official letters are those received by a Minister from a member of the public, and referred for initial consideration to an official of the agency.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many child support cases were referred to the special payments department at the Child Support Agency in each year since 2001; how many special payments were made; what the total cost of the special payments was; and how many people were paid special payments. [42010]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer on 16 January 2006]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the right hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 30 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many child support cases were referred to the special payments department at the Child Support Agency in each year since 2001; how many special payments were made; what the total cost of the special payments was; and how many people were paid special payments.

The Agency does not hold sufficiently robust information to give you precisely the information requested. I apologise for this but can give you information on the number of cases referred to special payments, how many special payments have been made and the total cost of special payments between the period 1 December 2001 and 31st December 2005.

I am unable to state how many people received payments from the Child Support Agency because the Agency records the number of payments made and an individual may have received more than one payment.

The table below contains the available information.

Period	*Cases referred to special payments*	*How many special payments made*	*Total cost of special payments in £ million*
1 December 2001 to 31 March 2002	4,053	2,758	0.662
1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003	11,513	9,522	2.478
1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004	10,482	6,883	2.331
1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005	13,112	10,144	3.043
1 April 2005 to 31 December 2005	10,340	7,616	2.760

Notes:
1. The Agency does not hold sufficiently robust information prior to 1 December 2001 to provide data over the entire period requested.
2. Compensation payments cover financial redress, which are made to clients in cases where maladministration has occurred. The Agency does not hold robust information to distinguish administrative errors from other acts of maladministration.
3. Consolatory payments are made in support of an apology made by the Agency to any individual. Actual financial loss payments are made in those cases where maladministration has directly caused the customer to incur additional expenditure that would not have been incurred otherwise.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what powers the Independent Case Examiner has (*a*) to award and (*b*) to recommend the awarding of compensation by the Child Support Agency (CSA) in cases where the Examiner considers that the CSA has failed claimants. [44231]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Independent Case Examiner has no statutory authority to award compensation. However, she has authority to recommend the consideration of financial redress by the Child Support Agency in cases where she has identified maladministration in the way that the agency dealt with a client. Such recommendations may include the consideration of compensation for actual financial loss and consolatory payments in recognition of difficulties, anxiety and distress caused by agency maladministration.

The agency has agreed to implement her recommendations in all but exceptional circumstances, giving written reasons for not doing so to both the Case Examiner and the client. The agency decides the amount of the award in line with Department for Work and Pensions Guidance.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in how many cases in each of the last five years the Independent Case Examiner has found failure by the Child Support Agency; and in how many cases the Examiner recommended that the Agency should pay compensation. [44232]

Mr. Plaskitt: The following table describes all of the information requested.

	2000-01		*2001-02*		*2002-03*	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Cleared by Investigation						
Fully upheld	68	23.6	47	21.9	110	27.0
Partially upheld	197	68.4	142	66.0	221	54.3
Not upheld	23	8.0	26	12.1	76	18.7
	288	—	215	—	407	
Cleared by Resolution[1]	307	—	431	—	412	
Number of cases with recommendations[2]	n/a	—	n/a	—	519	
Number of financial redress recommendations[3]	1,117	—	1,080	—	868	

	2003-04		2004-05		All	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Cleared by Investigation	—	—	—	—	—	—
Fully upheld	164	37.3	184	37.6	573	31.1
Partially upheld	216	49.1	243	49.6	1,019	55.4
Not upheld	60	13.6	63	12.9	248	13.5
	440	—	490	—	1,840	—
Cleared by Resolution[1]	376	—	618	—	2,144	—
Number of cases with recommendations[2]	569	—	856	—	1,944	—
Number of financial redress recommendations[3]	1,004	—	1,604	—	5,673	—

n a = Not available.
[1] Complaints are cleared by resolution on the basis that the Agency will take agreed action to address the issues raised.
[2] Some cases include more than one recommendation where several instances of maladministration have been identified.
[3] For similar reasons, some cases will include more than one recommendation for financial redress. Financial redress may include consolatory payments, ex gratia payments, actual financial loss, deferment of arrears, advance payments of maintenance, interest payments, or refunds of maintenance paid.
Note
All figures include the Northern Ireland Child Support Agency.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what account is taken by the Child Support Agency of jointly incurred debts when assessing maintenance payments; [44570]

(2) why an overdraft incurred as a result of being unable to pay maintenance and debt repayments is not considered in Child Support Agency assessments. [44602]

Mr. Plaskitt: In the new scheme a non-resident parent can apply for a "variation" to the maintenance calculation to have "special expenses" taken into account. In the old scheme either parent can apply for a "departure" from the formula. One of the grounds on which a variation or departure can be applied for is where the non-resident parent (or in the old scheme the absent parent or parent with care) has expenses relating to debts which arose before the non-resident parent became a non-resident parent, and at the time that the non-resident parent and the parent with care were living together.

The debts must have been incurred for the joint benefit of both parents, or their children, or for the benefit of the other parent but where the person applying remains legally responsible for the repayments.

Expenses relating to a bank overdraft can be taken into account but only where at the time it was taken out it was agreed to be for a specified amount and repayable over a specified period.

Only the expenses exceeding a certain threshold are allowed. In the current scheme the threshold is set at £10 a week where the non-resident parent's net weekly income is below £200, and £15 a week where it is £200 or more. In the old scheme the threshold is £15 a week for all cases.

A departure or variation is only allowed where it is "just and equitable" to do so. Broadly this means that the result of the variation or departure must be fair taking account of all the circumstances of the case, and, in particular, the welfare of any child likely to be affected. This includes the child for whom maintenance is paid as well as any other children living with either parent.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 611W, on the Child Support Agency, how many outstanding applications from people in *(a)* Guildford and *(b)* Surrey were received more than (i) six months and (ii) 12 months ago. [45645]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available at the geographical level requested.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many formal complaints his Department has received regarding the Child Support Agency from people in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in each year since 1997. [45960]

Mr. Plaskitt: This information requested is not available at the geographical level requested.

Customer Management Computer Systems

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost was of implementing the Customer Management computer systems *(a)* CMS, *(b)* CMS2 and *(c)* CMS3. [34251]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 30 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your questions concerning what the cost was of implementing the Customer Management computer systems *(a)* CMS, *(b)* CMS2 and *(c)* CMS3. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Firstly, the CMS system is not yet fully deployed across the Jobcentre Plus network of local offices and contact centres and consequently there will be implementation costs not yet incurred.

CMS and CMS2 were inter-related developments of the system and the costs were not separated. CMS3 was a release designed to improve the operation of the system based on lessons learned from the earliest deployment in a live environment.

The total cost of CMS and CMS2 to 31 October 2005 was £243.6 million. The cost of CMS3 is estimated to be £9.98 million.

A copy of the CMS business case was given to the Work and Pensions Parliamentary Select Committee in November 2005 and shows that savings of £61.5 million are estimated for each year when CMS is fully deployed and the resulting changes in working practices and culture have become the norm. Total savings are expected to exceed total costs over the 10 years up to 2012–13 by £98 million.

I hope this is helpful.

Departmental Computers (Identity Theft)

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department is taking to change departmental computer systems to prevent identity theft. [45367]

Mr. Plaskitt: DWP operates a formal security accreditation process for all departmental computer systems to ensure that confidence can be placed in the appropriateness and effectiveness of security controls within these systems, and to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

DWP recognizes that Identity and Access Management is a critical element of a robust IT system security capability. DWP are working closely with leading IT security vendors and integrators to ensure that effective Identity and Access Management IT controls are designed into new DWP IT systems and which will complement and strengthen existing security controls within legacy IT systems.

The Department is continuously reviewing and revising its strategy, capabilities and operations in this area to ensure that the Department's security controls remain effective and are capable of addressing emerging threats such as identify theft.

Departmental Efficiency Savings

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what efficiency savings have been made by his central Department since 1 January 2004; and if he will make a statement. [41460]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is on track to meet its Gershon review efficiency targets, the baselines for which are March 2004. Progress against the targets has been reported in the Department's Autumn Performance Report which was laid before Parliament on 15 December 2005.

Disability

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make a statement on the initial activity undertaken by his Department in response to those recommendations in the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit Report Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People where lead responsibility was assigned to all Government Departments. [37082]

Mrs. McGuire: The new Office for Disability Issues (ODI) will report annually to the Prime Minister on cross-government progress in implementing the Strategy Unit report, Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People. The first report is due to be published by summer 2006. It will contain an assessment of the activity undertaken both by the ODI and by relevant Government Departments to fulfil the responsibilities and recommendations set out in Strategy Unit's report.

The Department for Work and Pensions has responded positively to the recommendations of the Strategy Unit report and, working closely with colleagues from other Departments, established the cross-government ministerial steering group that is taking forward the Government's strategy to deliver substantive equality for disabled people by 2025. The Department co-ordinated cross-government efforts in setting up the Office for Disability Issues, which was launched on 1 December this year, and partnered with the Department of Health and ODPM in the development of the pilots for individual budgets, announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health on 21 November 2005. The Department is also leading an exercise to appoint people onto an advisory group that will work with disability organisations, disabled people, and Government officials to develop proposals for a national forum for organisations of disabled people.

The Department for Work and Pensions is also committed to taking forward the recommendations in the Life Chances report on employment, working with other Government Departments to achieve these. Progress against these recommendations will be published in the ODI annual report. The Life Chances report, and the recommendations within it are key in helping the Department for Work and Pensions in reviewing the employment services offered to disabled people, and in considering how best to reform incapacity benefit to ensure that disabled people are empowered and supported within the labour market.

Work is underway on a project to research information and advice required by disabled people and review existing cross-government provision. We will work with other Departments to develop proposals to improve the provision of information and advice about services to disabled people. The Directgov website for disabled people, www.directgov.uk/disability is now the central point for all information from Government. It has been warmly received by disabled people and organisations and continues to grow in popularity and interest. All Departments contribute to the information and services and it is now written and co-ordinated within the Office for Disability Issues.

Disability Benefits Unit

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what assessment he has made of the Disability and Carers Service's reorganisation of the Disability Benefits Unit to operate on a regional basis; and if he will make a statement; [41112]

(2) if he will list the private sector firms that have been contracted for the reorganisation of the Disability and Carers Service; and what the value was of each such contract; [41113]

(3) how many staff hours he expects to be taken up by the *(a)* reorganisation of the Disability Benefits Unit and *(b)* subsequent training of staff; and what this represents in terms of financial cost; [41114]

(4) what advice he has received from the Disability and Carers Service on the likely impact on assessment of claims during the reorganisation of the Disability Benefits Unit; and if he will make a statement. [41115]

Mrs. McGuire: The reorganisation of the Disability Benefits Unit is a matter fro the chief executive of the Disability and Carers Service, Mr. Terry Moran. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Terry Moran, dated January 2006:

In reply to four of your recent Parliamentary Questions about the reorganisation of the Disability Benefits Unit, the Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire MP, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, promised you a substantive reply from the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service.

You asked what assessment he had made of the Disability and Carers Service's reorganisation of the Disability Benefits Unit to operate on a regional basis.

The Disability Benefit Unit (DBU) is the largest of the Disability and Carers Service's (DCS) operational sites and has responsibility for the ongoing management of approx 4.5 million cases where Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance is in payment. It also deals with new claims for these benefits from people living in the south of England.

The decision to reorganise on a regional basis was made in order to improve service delivery to customers and their representatives, by reducing the number of people and teams that have to be involved in handling claims and changes of circumstances. Under the current organisation, a claim or change of circumstances could be dealt with by one of a number of functional teams dealing with customers from any part of Britain. The new model joins holistic benefit teams in the DBU with their counterparts dealing with new claims in our regional centres, the Disability Benefit Centres (DBC). Customers will continue to contact DCS through the national Customer Care Helpline (CCH) and the underlying structural changes should not be obvious to them, except that their business will be dealt with more efficiently and effectively.

You also asked if he would list the private sector firms that have been contracted for the reorganisation of the Disability and Carers Service, and what the value was of each such contract.

The total cost of accommodation, infrastructure and IT changes has been budgeted at £444,000. The changes are being made through the DWP's normal partners, Land Security Trillium, EDS and BT.

You also asked how many staff hours he expected to be taken up by the *(a)* reorganisation of the Disability Benefits Unit and *(b)* subsequent training of staff; and what this represents in terms of financial cost.

In answer to part *(a)* of your question, the notional staff cost associated with the move is 79,617, based on an assumption that each member of staff will be non-productive for half a day during implementation.

In answer to part *(b)* of your question, most staff will continue to carry out the same work as they are currently but, over the coming months, a programme of learning and development will be used to refresh or broaden the skills of those who require it. A skills audit of all staff is being carried out currently and that will be used to assess the training needs and costs. Whilst the full cost has not yet been assessed, it is worth mentioning that some training of this nature would have been undertaken as part of the normal life of the unit; the key difference is that the skills audit will facilitate precise targeting of the training.

Finally, you asked what advice he had received from the Disability and Carers Service on the likely impact on assessment of claims during the reorganisation of the Disability Benefits Unit.

The expectation is that, in the immediate term, there will be minimal disruption to services. Pre-implementation activities have included the deployment of a dedicated team that has ensured there are no bottlenecks of work in the DBU and contingency plans exist should, unexpectedly, there be difficulties in the immediate period after the changes. The CCH will be open for its normal hours, and provide the full range of services, throughout the implementation period. In the medium term, the expectation is that the unit will function more effectively and efficiently and there will be gains in terms of improvements in quality, time taken to deal with cases, overall customer care and efficiency.

I hope this is helpful.

Disability Living Allowance

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people claimed the mobility component of disability living allowance in each year since 1997 in *(a)* Leeds West constituency and *(b)* Leeds metropolitan district. [41869]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of disability living allowance is a matter for the chief executive of the Disability and Carers Service, Mr. Terry Moran. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Terry Moran, dated 30 January 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people claimed the mobility component of disability living allowance in each year between 1997 to 2005 in *(a)* Leeds West constituency and *(b)* Leeds Metropolitan district.

The Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire MP, promised you a substantive reply from the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service.

The information requested is not available. Such information as is available is in the following table:

Numbers in receipt of disability living allowance mobility component as at May in each year shown

Thousand

	Leeds West parliamentary constituency	*Leeds local authority*
May:		
2005	3.6	28.3
2004	3.5	27.7
2003	3.4	26.8
2002	3.2	25.6
2001	3.1	24.5
2000	2.9	23.0
1999	2.8	22.0
1998	3.1	21.9
1997	2.8	21.1

Notes:

1. Totals show the number of people where the mobility component is in payment.
2. Local authorities and parliamentary constituencies are assigned by postcode using ONS data.
3. Leeds local authority is equivalent to Leeds metropolitan district.
4. Information is not available for the number of people who have "claimed" the mobility component.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study for totals and 5 per cent. for older time series.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants of disability living allowance there were in each year since its introduction, broken down by type of disability; and what the expenditure was in each case in each year. [42542]

Mrs. McGuire: The available information is in the following tables.

Table 1—Disability living allowance: Numbers of recipients in Great Britain in each year from 1992 to 2005 by recorded main disabling conditions

Thousand

	1992	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*
All recipients recorded main disabling condition	1,048.9	1,229.5	1,367.9	1,578.9	1,761.9	1,941.5	2,054.1
Arthritis	234.5	269.4	295.2	340.5	381.1	423.2	444.1
Muscle/Joint/Bone Disease	91.3	95.6	106.4	122.2	134.6	147.2	155.6
Blindness	23.3	32.1	36.9	42.4	46.0	49.6	52.2
Stroke-related	69.5	74.7	76.0	80.8	83.8	87.7	90.1
Learning Difficulty	95.4	133.4	151.5	168.5	182.0	193.3	204.4
Other mental health causes	55.8	66.2	81.6	108.8	139.2	169.3	199.2
Epilepsy	20.1	24.4	28.9	35.9	40.0	45.0	48.0
Deafness	8.3	9.4	10.0	11.8	13.6	16.2	20.2
Malignant Disease	22.1	24.1	26.3	32.7	35.7	41.1	42.9
Chest Disease	61.0	69.7	72.8	79.4	83.7	87.0	87.4
Back ailments	79.1	88.6	101.9	122.7	145.6	168.0	178.6
Heart Disease	98.5	110.4	118.6	130.3	140.9	149.8	151.2
Parkinsons Disease	6.6	7.9	8.6	9.6	10.5	11.2	12.0
Diabetes Mellitus	19.9	23.1	24.8	28.8	32.8	35.7	37.6
Renal disorders	6.0	6.7	7.3	8.5	9.3	9.4	9.5
Skin diseases	2.8	4.0	5.5	7.0	8.1	9.8	10.8
Other	154.8	190.0	215.3	249.2	275.1	297.9	310.4

Thousand

	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
All recipients recorded main disabling condition	2,121.4	2,192.6	2,305.8	2,423.9	2,546.7	2,643.4	2,715.5
Arthritis	453.5	465.0	481.4	416.0	442.5	465.7	478.5
Muscle/Joint/Bone Disease	161.2	166.6	177.9	160.4	176.3	188.9	198.1
Blindness	54.2	56.0	58.0	55.6	57.6	59.2	60.6
Stroke-related	92.5	94.7	97.9	77.9	82.3	85.4	87.4
Learning Difficulty	212.7	219.8	228.6	218.3	228.6	237.7	246.6
Other mental health causes	221.9	243.4	275.3	311.6	350.2	385.2	414.3
Epilepsy	48.3	50.0	53.0	50.9	53.5	55.1	56.5
Deafness	23.0	25.0	27.3	28.2	29.7	31.0	32.0
Malignant Disease	45.5	47.2	52.1	52.9	56.1	58.4	61.5
Chest Disease	86.1	85.2	85.1	72.1	76.0	78.2	79.2
Back ailments	184.6	191.4	202.3	181.9	191.9	199.1	204.5
Heart Disease	150.7	150.7	153.6	124.3	130.4	132.8	133.2
Parkinsons Disease	12.3	12.7	13.1	11.8	12.7	13.5	14.1
Diabetes Mellitus	39.2	41.2	43.5	43.6	47.5	49.8	51.3
Renal disorders	9.8	10.0	10.7	10.3	10.9	11.3	11.5
Skin diseases	11.5	11.4	11.8	13.1	13.8	14.0	14.1
Other	314.5	322.4	334.2	595.0	586.6	577.9	572.1

Notes:

1. Figures show number of recipients as at 31 August in 1992 and as at 31 May in each of the years from 1993 to 2005.
2. Figures for 1992 to 2001 are based on 5 per cent. sample data, and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation; figures for 2004 and 2005 are taken from 100 per cent. work and pensions longitudinal study data.
3. Figures are in thousands and rounded to the nearest hundred. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate

Table 2—disability living allowance: estimated expenditure in Great Britain in each financial year from 1992–93 to 2004–05, by recorded main disabling condition of recipients

(£ million in real terms at 2005–06 prices)

Recorded main disabling condition	*1992–93*	*1993–94*	*1994–95*	*1995–96*	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*
Arthritis	567	766	864	1,039	1,205	1,297	1,350
Muscle/Joint/Bone Disease	237	292	325	377	424	446	469
Blindness	43	65	73	88	99	105	113
Stroke-related	232	284	279	303	319	325	333
Learning Difficulty	254	387	413	466	517	540	562
Other mental health causes	146	200	235	311	403	480	555
Epilepsy	55	79	93	115	132	142	147
Deafness	18	24	25	30	36	41	48
Malignant Disease	77	103	117	144	161	178	188
Chest Disease	145	200	212	241	261	270	267
Back ailments	183	249	294	371	455	502	523
Heart Disease	217	291	319	371	415	429	433
Parkinsons Disease	22	31	32	38	42	45	47

Table 2—disability living allowance: estimated expenditure in Great Britain in each financial year from 1992–93 to 2004–05, by recorded main disabling condition of recipients

(£ million in real terms at 2005–06 prices)

Recorded main disabling condition	*1992–93*	*1993–94*	*1994–95*	*1995–96*	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*
Diabetes Mellitus	49	64	72	85	98	104	111
Renal disorders	15	21	23	28	31	30	31
Skin diseases	7	11	14	17	20	23	24
Other	439	643	727	850	953	999	1,030
Total expenditure	2,708	3,709	4,118	4,873	5,569	5,957	6,231

(£ million in real terms at 2005–06 prices)

Recorded main disabling condition	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002/03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Arthritis	1,405	1,472	1,540	1,587	1,641	1,691
Muscle Joint Bone Disease	491	516	556	589	627	656
Blindness	119	125	132	137	142	146
Stroke-related	345	357	368	367	371	377
Learning Difficulty	588	613	652	661	692	724
Other mental health causes	611	687	782	868	975	1,069
Epilepsy	152	161	171	178	186	191
Deafness	52	57	63	68	71	74
Malignant Disease	195	211	230	240	253	268
Chest Disease	272	276	281	284	287	293
Back ailments	547	578	622	652	682	711
Heart Disease	443	455	472	479	489	494
Parkinsons Disease	49	51	53	54	56	59
Diabetes Mellitus	116	125	133	139	144	153
Renal disorders	31	33	35	37	38	39
Skin diseases	25	26	28	31	32	32
Other	1,065	1,115	1,167	1,200	1,241	1,291
Total expenditure	6,506	6,858	7,286	7,568	7,927	8,270

Notes:

1. Figures are in real terms at 2005–06 prices using GDP deflators published by HM Treasury on 28 September 2005, and are consistent with outturn expenditure published in the DWP benefit expenditure tables for PBR 2005.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest million pounds and totals may not sum due to rounding.
3. Expenditure for 1992–93 and 1993–94 has been apportioned using recorded main disabling condition data from the August 1992 and August 1993 DLA Quarterly Statistical Inquiries. Expenditure for 1994–95 to 2004–05 has been apportioned using the average caseloads from all four Quarterly Statistical Inquiries in those years. Figures for 2004–05 are estimated outturn.
4. DLA Quarterly Statistical Inquiry data is based on a 5 per cent. sample and is therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.

Source:

DWP Cross Cutting Strategy and Analysis Directorate

Discretionary Housing Payments

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department is taking to ensure that local authorities make use of discretionary housing payment funding to help those facing *(a)* unsustainable housing benefit shortfalls, *(b)* eviction and *(c)* homelessness. [43098]

Mr. Plaskitt: Discretionary Housing Payments can be made, subject to an annual cash limit, where a person is entitled to housing benefit or council tax benefit and the local authority consider that they are in need of further financial help with their eligible rent or council tax.

When the Discretionary Housing Payments scheme was introduced in July 2001, general guidance was issued all local authorities, setting out the conditions for entitlement to an award. However, the decision on whether to make a Discretionary Housing Payment is entirely at the discretion of the local authority concerned so we cannot prescribe whether or not an authority must make a payment in any particular circumstances.

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2253W, on discretionary housing payments, if he will prioritise the use of the returned funding to help those affected by unsustainable housing benefit shortfalls, eviction and homelessness. [44303]

Mr. Plaskitt: Discretionary housing payments are intended for people who have a shortfall between their housing benefit or council tax benefit and their eligible rent or council tax liability.

The level of Government contribution, which currently stands at £20 millon, is reviewed on an annual basis. Where a local authority does not use its Government contribution in full, the amount is recovered in the subsequent financial year.

While the award of discretionary housing payments is entirely at the discretion of the local authority concerned, we would expect those at risk of eviction and homelessness to be among those considered for such awards.

Employment (Over-60-year-olds)

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether over-60-year-olds who are seeking work are *(a)* included in unemployment statistics and *(b)* required to sign on at Jobcentre Plus. [46743]

Margaret Hodge: To be entitled to jobseeker's allowance (JSA) a claimant has to be under state pension age, currently 60 for women and 65 for men. Anyone who claims jobseeker's allowance has to be available for and actively seeking work, and has to sign on at their local jobcentre.

The Office for National Statistics publishes information each month on the number of JSA claimants. It also publishes the International Labour Organisation (ILO) measure of unemployment, derived from the Labour Force Survey. This is based on criteria set down by the ILO, and counts all those who are actively seeking and available for work, regardless of their benefit status. The ILO measure includes those who are claiming JSA, but also those who are actively seeking work but are not eligible for, or choose not to, claim benefit.

EU Presidency (Outcomes)

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the significant outcomes of the recent British EU presidency in the areas of responsibility of his Department. [45196]

Mr. Plaskitt: The main focus of legislative work was the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council which took place on 8 and 9 December 2005. A written statement on the outcomes of this council appeared in *Hansard* on 14 July, but the main item of interest to my Department was that partial political agreement was reached on the Progress social spending programme.

External Consultants

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department has paid since 2004 to external consultants who had previously been employed by the Department in any capacity within the previous five years. [41207]

Margaret Hodge: The information required to answer this question is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Individuals who have previously been employed by the Department are required to obtain permission before being given work as external consultants but details of such approvals are not collated centrally.

Financial Assistance Scheme

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of expenditure under the Financial Assistance Scheme in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* each year from 2006–07 to 2010–11, under the three-year rule. [44260]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* It will not be possible to provide firm estimates until we have assessed the eligibility of each scheme and its members. Our latest estimates in current cash terms, based on data provided by a limited number of schemes in late 2004, are shown in the following table. The estimates will change in light of improved information. Over the longer term we estimate expenditure to average £20 million over 20 years.

£ million cash

	Pay 80 per cent. to those within three years of scheme pension age
2005–06	0.5
2006–07	10
2007–08	15
2008–09	25
2009–10	30
2010–11	30

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of expenditure under the Financial Assistance Scheme over each of the next five financial years if the three-year rule were to be extended to a five-year rule. [44270]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* It will not be possible to provide firm estimates until we have assessed the eligibility of each scheme and its members. Our current estimates, based on data provided by a limited number of schemes in late 2004, in current cash terms are shown in the following table. These estimates will change in light of improved information.

£ million cash

	Pay 80 per cent. to those within five years of scheme pension age
2005–06	0.5
2006–07	10
2007–08	15
2008–09	30
2009–10	40
2010–11	40

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in respect of how many company pension funds in wind-up and eligible for assistance under the Financial Assistance Scheme the three-year rule will apply to *(a)* 0 to 5 per cent., *(b)* 5 to 10 per cent., *(c)* 10 to 15 per cent., *(d)* 15 to 20 per cent., *(e)* 20 to 25 per cent., *(f)* 25 to 30 per cent. and *(g)* more than 30 per cent. of deferred pensioners; and what the total number of deferred pensioners is in each category. [44272]

Mr. Timms: We are not yet able to provide the information required. We will not know how many deferred members will be eligible for assistance from the Financial Assistance Scheme until we have assessed the eligibility of each scheme and its members. It is therefore unlikely that this information will be available until a significant proportion of pension schemes have completed winding up.

Job Vacancies (Easington)

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many notified job vacancies there were in the Easington travel to work area in each year since 2002. [44302]

Margaret Hodge: The number of monthly job vacancies notified to Jobcentre Plus in Easington parliamentary constituency since November 2004 is shown in the table.

Period	Number of notified job vacancies
November 2004	521
December 2004	601
January 2005	418
February 2005	515
March 2005	439
April 2005	381
May 2005	313
June 2005	409
July 2005	504
August 2005	388
September 2005	450
October 2005	561
November 2005	353
December 2005	474

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Labour Market System

Easington is not a defined travel to work area in its own right. Additionally, Jobcentre Plus handles only a proportion of vacancies notified by employers. Consequently the figures do not represent the total number of job vacancies available in Easington. Jobcentre Plus vacancy data by parliamentary constituency was made available for the first time in June 2005 with back data to November 2004.

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the time taking to issue new contracts to training providers of Government-funded Jobcentre Plus training programmes. [42249]

Margaret Hodge: We are introducing new contracting procedures to reduce bureaucracy and improve performance. Bringing in these changes has been complex and we had to be sure that they delivered the outcomes we wanted.

New contracts will be in place from July 2006.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many calls to helplines dealing with claims for jobseeker's allowance *(a)* were received, *(b)* were handled, *(c)* received an engaged or busy tone and *(d)* were abandoned by the caller in each month since January 2004; and if he will make a statement. [24951]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 30 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning the calls to helplines for Jobseeker's Allowance, since January 2004. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

It may be helpful if I explain that Jobcentre Plus is introducing a new approach to claiming working age benefits where customers call a contact centre to establish their claim. This approach is being rolled out gradually across the country.

The information provided in this response relates to these rolled out areas only and covers the period from June 2004 when we started to collate information centrally.

	Calls offered	Calls answered	Calls abandoned[1]
June 2004	314,085	247,607	68,815
July 2004	414,980	322,863	91,128
August 2004	319,777	253,283	66,891
September 2004	440,131	358,975	75,832
October 2004	321,743	280,409	39,560
November 2004	336,494	296,002	37,790
December 2004	357,550	293,692	63,073
January 2005	410,165	328,861	82,138
February 2005	356,548	305,519	54,074
March 2005	457,642	345,015	111,564
April 2005	400,621	284,399	110,243
May 2005	393,297	291,769	101,057
June 2005	561,180	391,730	168,700
July 2005	525,392	303,090	221,686
August 2005	533,636	280,233	251,922
September 2005	717,701	419,703	296,864

[1] Calls answered and calls abandoned do not equal calls offered, because of short abandoned calls. Short abandoned calls are calls that are abandoned before the end of the greeting message and are therefore not offered to an agent and could never be answered.

Your question also includes reference to engaged or busy lines. The telephony system used allows calls to enter into a queue without receiving an engaged or busy tone. If all operators are busy an appropriate message is placed on incoming calls and customers are placed in a queue.

I hope this is helpful.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total cost was of providing interviews, signing on and job referrals for jobseeker's allowance recipients in 2004-05. [44957]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to my right hon. Friend.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 30 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning what the total cost was of providing interviews, signing on and job referrals for Jobseeker's Allowance recipients in 2004-05. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The total cost of providing interviews, signing on and job referrals for Jobseeker's Allowance recipients is not available from our records. The information you require could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Medical Examining Centres

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many medical examining centres there were in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2001 and *(c)* 2005; what plans there are to close any medical examining centres over the next five years; what assessment he has made of (i) average distances and (ii) furthest distances travelled by benefit claimants for medical assessments in each year; and what assistance is available for transport costs. [36738]

Mrs. McGuire: In August 1997 there were 137 medical examination centres (MECs), in December 2001 there were 121, and in July 2005 there were 125. These figures relate to permanent sites. In addition medical services use up to 40 casual hire centres, which are used as and when required.

Under plans agreed with the Secretary of State, the contractor (Atos Origin) is to close 11 MECs. However, three large regional centres are to be opened to service the areas affected by the MECs closures.

Information on actual distances travelled by benefit claimants is not collected. However, no customer is required to travel more than 90 minutes each way on public transport to attend a MEC. Where customers cannot get to an examination centre within 90 minutes using public transport, or where it is clear that they would have health-related difficulties in travelling, alternative arrangements are made.

All claimants who attend an appointment at a MEC are entitled to claim full reimbursement of pubic transport fares or where they have travelled by other means, such as by car, expenses can be claimed at set rates. Details of expenses which can be claimed are sent to the customer with their appointment documentation.

National Insurance Number

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many national insurance numbers have been issued. [44115]

Mr. Plaskitt: There are approximately 72 million national insurance numbers currently in issue. This exceeds current UK adult population because the total includes numbers retained for deceased people, for those in receipt of benefit living outside of the UK and for customers who are abroad.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to answer questions *(a)* 18786, *(b)* 18787, *(c)* 18634, *(d)* 18859, *(e)* 19631, *(f)* 20012, *(g)* 21436, *(h)* 21433, *(i)* 21437, *(j)* 21434, *(k)* 21441, *(l)* 21445, *(m)* 21444, *(n)* 21439, *(o)* 21442, *(p)* 21438, *(q)* 21452, *(r)* 21451, *(s)* 21586, *(t)* 21581, *(u)* 21582, *(v)* 21590, *(w)* 21857, *(x)* 21962, *(y)* 21957, *(z)* 21961, *(aa)* 24135, *(bb)* 21854, *(cc)* 21853, *(dd)* 21855, *(ee)* 23680, *(ff)* 23393, *(gg)* 24538, *(hh)* 24540, *(ii)* 24573, *(jj)* 24951, *(kk)* 28422, *(ll)* 28420, *(mm)* 28385, *(nn)* 29986, *(oo)* 30004, *(pp)* 30001, *(qq)* 29988, *(rr)* 30002, *(ss)* 30068, *(tt)* 30064, *(uu)* 30566, *(vv)* 29999, *(ww)* 30066, *(xx)* 30971, *(yy)* 31021, *(zz)* 31208, *(aaa)* 31196, *(bbb)* 32506, *(ccc)* 32505, *(ddd)* 32250, *(eee)* 32726, *(fff)* 33295, *(ggg)* 33701, *(hhh)* 33435, *(iii)* 34170, *(jjj)* 35360, *(kkk)* 35371, *(lll)* 35361, *(mmm)* 35364, *(nnn)* 35372, *(ooo)* 35373, *(ppp)* 35376, *(qqq)* 35395 and *(rrr)* 35359, tabled by the hon. Member for Yeovil. [40858]

Mr. Plaskitt: My ministerial colleagues and I have replied to 28 of these 70 questions tabled by the hon. Member.

We attach importance to answering parliamentary questions promptly and will endeavour to respond to all questions within parliamentary deadlines where possible.

Pathways to Work

Mr. David: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people on incapacity benefits in the Pathways to Work pilots have helped back into work since the initiative began. [44098]

Margaret Hodge: There have been almost 150,000 people started on the Pathways to Work programme, including 11,200 existing customers. Nearly 80,000 people have attended mandatory work focused interviews. Of these, 17,670 people volunteered to take advantage of the Choices programme.

With our support, 19,500 people have entered employment, including 3,220 who volunteered to take part in the Pathways initiative. This has resulted in an 8 percentage point increase in people leaving incapacity benefits after six months in the Pathways areas compared to the rest of the country.

Pathways to Work

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Pathways to Work pilots in getting existing incapacity benefit claimants back into work. [40759]

Margaret Hodge: The early evidence from our Pathways pilots is extremely positive and indicates that this is the most effective labour market intervention that has been tested anywhere in the developed world.

All new claimants have to join the pilot, but they can voluntarily select to take advantage of the employment support programmes. 150,000 started on the programme between October 2003 and August 2005 of whom 11,200 were existing customers.

There have been nearly 80,000 mandatory work focussed interviews. 17,670 voluntarily agreed to take advantage of the Choices package, including 8,540 new deal for disabled people registrations and 7,490 condition management referrals.

There have been 19,500 job entries, 3,220 from existing customers. As a result there has been an 8 percentage point increase in people leaving incapacity benefits within six months in Pathways areas compared to the rest of the country.

Pensions

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he plans to introduce legislation which requires *(a)* employers to contribute to their employees' pensions and *(b)* individuals to save for their retirement. [32758]

Mr. Timms: The Government is reflecting on the recommendations in the Pensions Commission's second report and is committed to consulting with the public and stakeholders on these key issues.

No decisions have been taken on any proposed changes and there are no plans to bring forward legislation in the current session of Parliament to reform the pensions system.

The Government plans to publish a White paper in the spring in response to the Pensions Commission's report. The White Paper will set out what legislation will be needed and a planned timetable for reforms.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have left incapacity benefit since 2001 owing to the receipt of an occupational pension. [44509]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available.

Personal Capability Assessment

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average time taken was for the completion of a Personal Capability Assessment for *(a)* incapacity benefit claimants and *(b)* income support claimants in each year since 2000. [43345]

Mrs. McGuire: The average examination time taken to complete a Personal Capability Assessment is set out in the following table:

	Average National PCA Exam Time
2000	37.8
2001	37.1
2002	35.2
2003	35.8
2004	37.8
2005	37.7

Note
The figures provided are in minutes, per calendar year.

The Personal Capability Assessment for incapacity benefit is identical to that for income support. Separate timings are, therefore, not kept.

Although an average examination time is provided, doctors spend as long as is required to carry out an appropriate assessment, depending on the nature of the individual's physical and /or mental disabilities.

Private Banks

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what representations his Department has *(a)* made to and *(b)* received from private banks regarding those who have been diagnosed as having a terminal illness and face financial hardship. [42974]

Mrs. McGuire: We have not made or received any such representations.

Terminally Ill People

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were diagnosed as terminally ill in the latest year for which figures are available; and how many of those claimed attendance allowance. [41287]

Mrs. McGuire: Information about the numbers of people diagnosed as terminally ill is not available. In the 12 months to 31 December 2005 there were 36,900 claims for Attendance Allowance under the Department's "Special Rules" which apply to terminally ill people who have a progressive illness and who are not expected to live longer than six months[1].

[1] *Source*
DCS Management Information Service.

Work and Pensions Insurance Office (Milton Keynes)

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to close the Work and Pensions Insurance Office in Central Milton Keynes. [44824]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what plans he has to close the Work and Pensions Insurance Office in Central Milton Keynes. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

I assume you are referring to the National Insurance number service provided from Bowback House in Milton Keynes. Bowback House is not closing. It is being developed to deliver Social Fund services for the whole of the South East region. However, it will no longer be a designated interview location for National Insurance number applications.

Under a new process being introduced to improve the National Insurance number allocation process, customers in the South East needing a National Insurance number will telephone a national contact centre where staff will book an interview at a convenient location.

Work-focused Interviews

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the unit costs are of work-focused interviews for *(a)* jobseeker's allowance, *(b)* incapacity benefit and *(c)* income support applicants. [44954]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to my right hon. Friend.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 30 January 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning what the unit costs are for work-focussed interviews for *(a)* jobseeker's allowance applicants, *(b)* incapacity benefit applicants and *(c)* income support applicants. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The information relating to work-focussed interviews is not gathered separately from the cost of administering benefits. In response to PSA target requirements, we do publish the unit costs for Job Broking and Benefit Processing every year in our Annual Report and Accounts. The PSA unit costs for job broking activities and benefit processing for 2004/05 were as shown in the table below.

Benefit	*Unit cost (£)*
Job Broking	197.64
Benefit Processing	28.07

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 31 January 2006

TRANSPORT

Concessionary Travel

Mr. Benyon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether local authorities running alternative concessionary travel token schemes will be required to discontinue such schemes under the free bus pass scheme. [46247]

Ms Buck: No. As now, a person entitled to the statutory minimum can agree to give up that entitlement and accept an alternative concessionary fare scheme instead (e.g. tokens). They would then forego their entitlement to the statutory minimum for an agreed period. However, they must have the option to choose the statutory minimum.

Mr. Benyon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of whether local authorities will discontinue concessionary travel token schemes other than the free bus pass scheme to fund the free bus pass scheme. [46253]

Ms Buck: None. However, the Department for Transport will be monitoring the introduction of the improvement in the statutory minimum, including the impacts on local schemes.

Cross-country Rail Links

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to improve cross-country rail links between the East and West Coast main lines. [46685]

Derek Twigg: The Trans-Pennine Express (TPE) franchise was specifically created to improve the links between the major cities of Yorkshire and the North East England and those in the North West. 51 new three-car diesel units will be delivered and phased into service by TPE during 2006 to enhance the quality of these links.

Crossrail

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the conclusions are of the most recent assessment carried out by or commissioned by his Department on the feasibility and viability of the Crossrail project; and if he will make a statement. [46691]

Derek Twigg: In 2003, the Department commissioned Sir Adrian Montague to review the business case for Crossrail. His report was published in July 2004 and is available on DfT's website at www.dft.gov.uk

The Department subsequently worked closely with Cross London Rail Links Limited (CLRLL)—the company held jointly by the Department and TfL to take forward the development of Crossrail to refine the scheme in preparation for the deposit of the Crossrail hybrid Bill in February 2005.

The Crossrail environmental statement (ES) and its accompanying technical reports, which were published alongside the Bill, set out the refined scheme in detail, how it would be constructed, and how it would be operated. It can be found at www.Crossrail.co.uk.

CLRLL has also published a revised economic appraisal of Crossrail taking into account the changes adopted as a result of Sir Adrian Montague's review, as well as changes to the DfT appraisal guidance. It can also be found at www.Crossrail.co.uk.

Free Bus Travel

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will extend off-peak free bus travel on weekdays, at weekends and on bank holidays to those under the age of 16 years. [45695]

Ms Buck: It is already open to individual local authorities to offer concessionary bus travel to those under 16. There are no plans at present to make such provision statutory.

Greater Western Franchise

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the passenger revenue for the Greater Western franchise was for each of the last five years, broken down by rail operator. [42159]

Derek Twigg: Franchise agreements do not normally require operators to provide passenger revenue figures as a matter of routine. Where operators do provide these figures, they do so on a commercially confidential basis.

M1

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reason the M1 motorway was closed on Monday 16 January in the vicinity of junction 28; upon whose authority the closure took place; why the closure was deemed necessary; and if he will make a statement. [46695]

Dr. Ladyman: At approximately 12:45 hours on Monday 16 January 2006, Derbyshire police firearms response team were called to attend a potentially serious incident on the M1 motorway, adjacent to the northbound off slip road at junction 29.

For reasons of safety to road users, the Derbyshire police closed the northbound carriageway of the M1 at junction 28 and traffic was prevented from entering the motorway.

The southbound carriageway of the M1 between junctions 28 to 30 was also closed by Derbyshire police, with the agreement of South Yorkshire police, at approximately 13.30 hours.

After investigating the incident and finding there was no cause for concern, the police reopened both carriageways and slip roads of the M1 at 14.15 hours.

M181

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he next expects the M181 motorway to be resurfaced. [46696]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency currently has no resurfacing works programmed for M181. However, the Agency will be undertaking a study of the M181 road surface, depending on the findings of this study, resurfacing on parts of this route may be carried out within the next three years. Localised repairs are expected to be undertaken sooner to ensure user safety.

The strategic road network is maintained in a safe and serviceable condition on a whole life cost principle, identifying the appropriate maintenance treatment at the optimum intervention time.

Ministerial Visits

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many times he has visited *(a)* Dacorum and *(b)* Hertfordshire in his official capacity in the last 12 months; and what the purpose was of each visit. [29924]

Ms Buck: The Secretary of State has not made any visits to *(a)* Dacorum or *(b)* Hertfordshire in his official capacity since November 2004.

Private Aircraft

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Chicago Convention requires private aircraft operators to request permission from the Government to land in the UK. [45976]

Ms Buck: The Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation sets out the rights and obligations that apply to contracting states. Article 5 of the Convention provides that non-commercial, privately operated aircraft may fly into, transit across and stop in other states' territories for non-traffic purposes (such as for refuelling) without requiring prior permission.

Railways

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will meet hon. Members from the north east to discuss *(a)* the Northern Rail franchise and *(b)* the north east England rail regional planning assessment. [45535]

Derek Twigg: I should be happy to arrange a meeting.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what safety provision is available for rail users at each rail station in Hampshire; what the times are of the first and last train at each station; at what times there is no staff cover at each station; at which stations security guards are located; what the name is of the lead train operating company in each case; and what improvement plans there are for *(a)* 2005-06 and *(b)* 2006-07. [47253]

Derek Twigg: These are matters for the train operator responsible for the station concerned. All stations in Hampshire are operated by South West Trains except the following:

Emsworth and Warblington which are operated by Southern,

Dean, Dunbridge and Romsey, which are operated by Wessex, and

Bramley which is operated by First Great Western Link.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of *(a)* Network Rail and *(b)* the British Transport police in preventing trespassing onto railway lines (i) in England and (ii) in West Lancashire constituency; and what further steps are planned. [45013]

Derek Twigg: Primary responsibility for preventing trespass on the national rail network lies with Network Rail, who work closely with the British Transport police, others in the rail industry and the wider community.

I have asked Network Rail to write directly to my hon. Friend about work to prevent trespassing on the network in West Lancashire.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what account he has taken of projected increases in rail passenger kilometres travelled when *(a)* allocating funding for (i) subsidies and (ii) rolling stock and *(b)* awarding franchises. [45355]

Derek Twigg: Invitations to tender for replacement franchises include an estimate of growth in passenger kilometres in the franchise area. Bidders are expected to take account of this when submitting their bids by specifying the rolling stock needed to deal with expected passenger numbers. Their proposals, and the resulting subsidy or premium profile, are taken into account in awarding the franchise.

Road Charging

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he plans to allow local authorities to impose levies or charges for road use; and if he will make a statement. [46692]

Dr. Ladyman: In the Future of Transport White Paper (Cm 6234) the Government set out that, without radical measures, including more effective demand management, road congestion would get worse. That is why we need to look at whether road pricing would allow us to get more out of the network, particularly at peak times.

A national scheme of road pricing which covered all roads, charging motorists on the basis of distance travelled and varied according to how congested a road is, could potentially cut urban congestion by nearly half. But moving to a national system of road pricing would be a huge and complex task. That is why the Road Pricing Feasibility Study, which was published alongside the White Paper, recommended that local or regional schemes should be used to pilot approaches to road pricing.

The Secretary of State announced on 5 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 172, that the Government would ensure that up to £200 million would be available from the Transport Innovation Fund to support local pilots that combine demand management, specifically road pricing, with better public transport. If more good schemes emerge, then more would be made available.

The Transport Innovation Fund guidance, *Official Report*, column 66WS, 27 January 2006, sets out how local authorities and areas can bid for this funding.

Because the development of these schemes will be a complex undertaking the Government have made £18 million of pump priming funding available between 2005–06 and 2007–08 to help support the work of local authorities in developing local demand management schemes. The first allocation to seven areas was announced in 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 4WS.

Local highway authorities in England and Wales already have discretionary powers under the Transport Act 2000 to introduce such road user charging (road pricing) schemes. For a scheme to come into force an Order has to be approved by the appropriate national authority, which is the Secretary of State for transport in England.

Off-road Cycleways

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the length in miles was of off-road cycleways in each local authority area in each of the last 20 years. [46077]

Derek Twigg: Information on cycle tracks (off-road cycleways) in English local authorities has only been collected since 2001–02 and is set out in the table, which has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

The information is provided by local authorities on an annual basis as part of their annual performance reports on the local transport plans. It is not verified by the Department. Responsibility for the accuracy of the data rests with individual authorities. The data are incomplete and include estimates.

A breakdown of cycle tracks by London borough is not available. Transport for London estimates that there are approximately 200 km of off-road cycle routes. The Welsh Assembly Government do not currently collect this information centrally.

Road Safety

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many fatalities have occurred in each year between 2000 and 2005 as a result of motor accidents caused by drivers *(a)* using mobile phones and *(b)* smoking while driving. [47489]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not available. However, from 1 January 2005, information on contributory factors to accidents has been collected for personal injury road accidents reported at scene by a police officer. One of the factors is "driver using mobile phone". Subject to quality tests, first results should be available in autumn 2006.

Trams (Leeds)

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department spent, including consultants' and civil servants' costs, considering the revised tram proposals in Leeds from May 2004. [47121]

Derek Twigg: We did not keep a record of the time civil servants spent considering the revised tram proposals. The Department did not commission any consultants directly to consider the revised tram proposals in Leeds from May 2004.

The Department did, however, commission consultants Atkins to carry out a study into a high quality bus alternative for Leeds. As part of this study, Atkins and West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive's (WYPTE's) advisers considered the revised tram proposals in the context of a comparison with a high quality bus alternative. The cost to the Department of commissioning Atkins, and paying a share of WYPTE's advisers, is £93,000.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Abandoned Vehicles

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many abandoned vehicles were removed and destroyed in each local authority in Gloucestershire in each of the last five years. [46432]

Mr. Bradshaw: Results for abandoned vehicles removed and destroyed have been reported in the Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey from 2000–01 until 2003–04. Results for 2004–05 onwards are being collected through WasteDataFlow and will be released when they are available. The results for local authorities in Gloucestershire are shown in the following table.

Local authority	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Cheltenham	n/a	648	696	n/a
Cotswold	67	154	368	119
Forest of Dean	186	360	466	360
Gloucester	700	896	1,200	685
Stroud	51	257	450	350
Tewkesbury	115	150	n/a	140

n/a = results not available

Animal Welfare Bill

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many times she has met representatives from the *(a)* RSPCA, *(b)* British Veterinary Association and *(c)* representative body of the Council of Docked Breeds to discuss the Animal Welfare Bill. [46830]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has held meetings at all levels with a variety of groups to discuss the Animal Welfare Bill.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what public meetings are planned to be held on avian influenza; and where they will be held. [46495]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra has not organised any public meetings on Avian Influenza, however, we are running a series of regional meetings for poultry producers and others associated with the industry on a range of Avian Influenza issues.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the cost to the (*a*) chicken, (*b*) turkey, (*c*) emu, (*d*) duck, (*e*) goose, (*f*) game bird and (*g*) ostrich and rhea farming industries of an avian influenza pandemic. [46597]

Mr. Bradshaw: No estimates have been made of the cost to the poultry industry in the event of an outbreak of avian influenza. Any action taken to control the disease should be proportionate and decided upon in the light of an overall assessment of the risks, costs and benefits in a particular situation.

The cost to the industry in the event of an outbreak will depend on the circumstances prevailing at the time—not least in respect of the scale of any outbreak.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if the Government will make funds available to (*a*) Vietnam, (*b*) Turkey and (*c*) other countries for the purposes of controlling the spread of avian influenza in those countries. [46954]

Mr. Bradshaw: As outlined at the pledging conference held in Beijing on 17 and 18 January this year, the UK Government will assist countries at-risk or affected by avian influenza. The Department for International Development will provide £20 million over the next three years to support country, regional or global activities.

UK research bodies are also keen to collaborate with affected and at-risk countries. The Medical Research Council recently announced a £10 million collaborative programme which can support such partnerships as required.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to ban the spreading of poultry manure as a measure against an outbreak of avian influenza; and if she will make a statement. [47499]

Mr. Bradshaw: Directive 2005/94/EC on the control of avian influenza, adopted on 20 December 2005, contains amended provisions on manure and would be implemented immediately in an outbreak of the disease.

Under the directive, following an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza, the movement of manure would be controlled in the surveillance zone, which extends for a minimum of 10 km around the infected premises. In these zones, no used litter or poultry manure may be removed from, or spread on, any premises unless authorised under biosecurity measures. This provision can be extended to a wider area if necessary to reduce the risk of the spread of disease.

The same measures will be put in place following an outbreak of low pathogenic avian influenza. However, the restricted zone would be of a minimum of 1 km around the infected premises.

Bovine TB

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions with farmers' representatives she has had on potential market distortions arising from pre-tested cattle from an infected area selling at a premium. [46158]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 30 January 2006]*: The effect of pre-movement testing on cattle prices was considered in the report of the Tuberculosis Pre-Movement Testing Stakeholder Group and in a Regulatory Impact Assessment, available on the Defra website at: www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/tb/premovement/index.htm

Pre-movement testing will be introduced in England on 20 February. We will keep the policy under review.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to investigate the effects of the new requirement to test for bovine TB in all cattle over 15 months before movement on the holding of live auction markets. [46350]

Mr. Bradshaw: Pre-movement testing will be introduced in England on 20 February and will apply to cattle over 15 months of age moving out of one to two year tested herds, unless the herd or the movement meets any of the exemptions as defined in the TB (England) Order 2005 (as amended).

The possible impact of pre-movement testing on markets was considered in the report of the Tuberculosis Pre-Movement Testing Stakeholder Group and assessed in the regulatory impact assessment, available on the Defra website at: www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/tb/premovement/index.htm.

We will keep the policy under review.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much has been spent on the random badger culling trial (RBCT) since 1998; and what estimate she has made of the total cost of the RBCT. [46731]

Mr. Bradshaw: The randomised badger culling trial began in December 1998. To the end of 2004–05 the cost was approximately £32 million. Surveying and analytical work is continuing and is expected to cost approximately £7 million in 2005–06.

Brazilian Beef

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the (*a*) use of slave labour and (*b*) clearing of rainforest in the production of Brazilian beef exported to the UK. [46623]

Mr. Morley: The information is as follows.

(*a*) The Brazilian Government is committed to eradicating slave labour practices. Legislation has now been prepared to confiscate farms that practise forced and child labour. This issue continues to be a matter of serious concern and our embassy in Brazil is monitoring developments closely. We welcome the engagement of civil society in Brazil and internationally on this issue.

More broadly, the Government have played a leading role in ensuring that the international framework to tackle abuses of workers' rights throughout the world is in place, particularly through its work with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) whose 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Up works towards the elimination of forced labour and child labour, the ending of discrimination in employment and the right to organise

and collective bargaining; and has provided specific support to the ILO's action programme on combating forced labour.

(b) With regard to deforestation, the UK has contributed £14 million to the multi-donor pilot programme for the preservation of Brazilian rain forests and is a major contributor to the global environment facility (GEF) which is creating and maintaining protected areas in the region through the Amazon Region Protected Areas Programme. The managers of the GEF have approved or endorsed funding for 29 projects in Brazil, with a value of approximately £150 million. The UK also continues to support projects in the Amazon through multilateral organisations, including the European Commission and the World Bank.

In terms of beef exports to the UK, our records indicate that there was a slight decrease in the amount of Brazilian beef entering the UK in 2005 compared to 2004. The UK still needs to import beef as, until very recently, we were only 70 per cent. self-sufficient in beef production. However, we do expect beef imports to now fall.

Climate Change

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what scientific monitoring her Department has (a) commissioned and (b) evaluated in relation to (i) climate change in general and (ii) temperature and salinity changes in the gulf stream; and if she will make a statement. [45599]

Mr. Morley: Climate change monitoring funded by DEFRA includes the accurate monitoring of global sea surface temperature by the AATSR (Advanced Along Track Scanning Radiometer) satellite instrument. DEFRA also contribute financially to the Argo project: a global array of over 2,000 free-drifting profiling floats that measure the temperature and salinity of the upper 2,000 m of the ocean. The Hadley Centre (UK Met Office), as part of their contract with DEFRA, monitor scientific developments in monitoring climate change that are relevant to DEFRA's needs.

The responses of the gulf stream and other components of the North Atlantic Thermohaline Circulation are being investigated in a major joint research programme by the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, (CEFAS) (funded by DEFRA and its predecessor Departments since 1985). This study monitors two components of the ocean circulation off SE Greenland that are of key importance to climate. This study and the measurement of warm, salty flows passing into Arctic to the NW of Scotland, funded by the Scottish Executive and predecessors for over 100 years, form important elements of the international Arctic-Subarctic Ocean Flux Study (ASOF), which investigates all aspects of the role of the Northern Seas in Climate; ASOF, now the largest ocean-observing system in the Northern Hemisphere, is chaired by CEFAS. The Hadley Centre, funded by my Department, is also investigating the issue of gulf stream stability and evaluating research by others in this field.

Departmental Vehicles

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average fuel efficiency of her Department's vehicles has been in each year since 1997. [21417]

Jim Knight: Information on fuel use is not collected for vehicles in the Defra or Executive Agencies fleet.

Domestic Water Rates

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average annual domestic water rates were for (a) each area of England and (b) each water supplier over the last five years. [45597]

Mr. Morley: Figures for average annual domestic water and sewerage charges are not collected on a regional basis.

Tables placed in the Library of the House show the average annual domestic water and sewerage bills for each of the water and sewerage undertakers in England and Wales for each of the last five years. For ease of comparison the figures are quoted in 2005–06 prices.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU (a) Committee for the adaptation to scientific and technical progress of the directive on a limit value for lead in the air, (b) Advisory Committee for the implementation of the directive on the reduction of sulphur content of certain liquid fuels, (c) Committee for the adaptation to technical progress and the implementation of the directive on the control of volatile organic compound emissions resulting from the storage of petrol and its distribution from terminals to service stations and (d) Committee for the implementation of the directive relating to the availability of consumer information on fuel economy and carbon dioxide emissions in respect of the marketing of new passenger cars have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if she will make a statement. [39021]

Mr. Bradshaw: There were no meetings of the Committee for the adaptation to scientific and technical progress of the directive on a limit value for lead in the air, the Advisory Committee for the implementation of the directive on the reduction of sulphur content of certain liquid fuels, or the Committee for the adaptation to technical progress and the implementation of the directive on the control of volatile organic compound emissions resulting from the storage of petrol and its distribution from terminals to service stations, during the UK presidency.

There were no meetings of the Committee for the implementation of the directive relating to the availability of consumer information on fuel economy and carbon dioxide emissions in respect of the marketing of new passenger cars, during the UK presidency.

EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Government will publish the draft National Allocation Plan for phase II of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. [46608]

Mr. Morley: A National Allocation Plan (NAP) for Phase II (2008 to 2012) must be submitted to the European Commission by 30 June 2006, with a final installation-level allocation by 31 December. The Commission has recently published additional guidance on the preparation of NAPs and member states' approaches to the second phase and we are assessing the impact of this on the development of policy options. We intend to publish a draft policy NAP this spring.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what methodology has been employed in the setting of the cap on emissions in the National Allocation Plan for phase II of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. [46609]

Mr. Morley: The Government are currently considering the total level of allowances (the cap) for the second phase of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. An announcement will be made in due course.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the EU Emissions Trading Scheme is the key lever with which the Government hope to meet their target of a 20 per cent. reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2010. [46610]

Mr. Morley: The EU Emissions Trading is a central plank of the Government's strategy to tackle climate change. The Government are currently considering the total level of allowances (the cap) for the second phase of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme and the proportion that the scheme should contribute to the UK's 2010 carbon dioxide goal. An announcement will be made in due course.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment has been made of the effect of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme on the profitability of the power generation sector in phase I of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. [46611]

Mr. Morley: A report commissioned by DTI was published in December 2005 that provides an assessment of the impact of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme on investment and pricing within the UK power generation sector in terms of electricity prices impacts, profitability and security of supply.

This report found that, in the event of full pass-through of marginal costs, the EU Emissions Trading Scheme would result in an estimated increased profitability for the UK power generation sector of approximately £800 million/year over phase I (based on the current annual allocation of 130MtCO2).

Fallen Goats

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will remove the requirement that fallen goats must be collected by her Department's approved agents; and if she will make a statement. [45702]

Mr. Bradshaw: All eligible fallen goats must be collected by approved agents because of our legal obligation to test for Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSEs).

Fallen Stock collections are undertaken within a preference list system organised by the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). This system is essential to ensure notified goats are collected promptly and submitted for testing. Goat keepers are required to report all eligible fallen goats to a free dedicated TSE Surveillance helpline, who co-ordinate the collection process with the appropriate contractor.

We expect the current goat surveillance requirements to be reviewed by the European Commission during 2006.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the names of agents approved by her Department for collecting fallen goats in Devon. [45703]

Mr. Bradshaw: Fallen Stock collections are carried out under a preference list system organised by the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). The RPA has contracts with Prosper De Maulder (Exeter) Ltd. and Cremtor to collect fallen goats in Devon.

The RPA is currently taking forward a competitive tender exercise, which may result in some changes to the collection network.

Farm Subsidies

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with farmers' representatives on compensation for *(a)* indebtedness and *(b)* interest paid thereon resulting from late single farm payments. [46157]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, and the rest of the Defra ministerial team meet regularly with farmers' representatives, when the timing of payments under the single payment scheme (SPS) and the related impact on the agricultural industry are regular topics of discussion. The most recent such meeting was with the President of the National Farmers Union on 25 January, when my noble Friend, Lord Bach, reconfirmed the Government's longstanding commitment to commence SPS payments, whether full or partial, in February.

Flood Defences

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department has spent on flood defences in 2005–06; and if she will make a statement. [46026]

Mr. Morley: Defra has paid £5.8 million to date in this financial year in capital grants to local authorities and Internal Drainage Boards in respect of flood defence works. Defra will pay £445.2 million to the Environment Agency as Flood Defence Grant in Aid for its flood defence work including the flood warning service.

In addition to Defra grants, £3.8 million in credit approvals (Supported Capital Expenditure (Revenue)) has been given to local authorities. These credit

approvals are used by the ODPM in the calculation which determines the Revenue Support Grant, paid to authorities.

Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade Processes

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the UK Government are taking to prevent circumvention through third party countries of the voluntary partnership agreements under the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade processes. [46426]

Mr. Morley: We recognise that a bilateral agreement such as the Voluntary Partnership Agreements outlined in the EU's Forestry Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) regulation will never be watertight. Partner countries can import and export timber to third countries outside of the FLEGT scheme. The Commission's original proposal attempted to tackle this issue by requiring all imports of timber into the EU to require a certificate of origin. Customs experts felt it would not work in practice and risked a challenge under the WTO by putting a requirement on third countries.

Despite concerted efforts by member states, no alternative measure to tackle this problem through the licensing system has been found. Instead, circumvention is tackled by making it explicit that timber defined as "legally produced" will include timber imported from third countries (and therefore which could be illegally felled) and making it a requirement for Partner Countries to report on timber import levels and their actions to tackle circumvention.

The Government see the bilateral approach of the Forests Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) dossier as an important way to develop experience in tackling illegal logging and to build the consensus that could lead to a multilateral agreement. The UK is working very hard with other consuming countries to address issues of trade with third party countries.

Illegal logging was one of two topics of discussion at the first ever G8 Environment and Development Ministerial meeting in Derbyshire in March 2005. Ministers agreed to a range of actions, and officials will meet in 2006 to review progress. The UK has also led in promoting and supporting Regional Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) processes in order to intensify national efforts and strengthen bilateral, regional and multi-lateral collaboration to address violations of forest law and forest crime.

Horses

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what steps her Department is taking to establish the ownership of horses that are *(a)* running free and *(b)* tethered on public land; [45755]

(2) what steps she is taking to protect the welfare of horses whose ownership is not clear and who are tethered on public land; [45756]

(3) if she will take steps to ensure that the relevant legislation is enforced where privately-owned horses are *(a)* running free and *(b)* are tethered on public land in Wellingborough constituency. [46070]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Animals Act 1971 and the Highways Act 1980 contain provisions that relate to stray horses. And responsibility for enforcing this legislation lies with the police and local authorities.

The Protection Against Cruel Tethering Act 1988 created a specific offence under the Protection of Animals Act 1911 of causing unnecessary suffering to a horse, ass or mule by the manner or condition of its tethering. Anyone can seek to bring a prosecution where there is evidence of cruelty, either by tethering or by allowing horses to run free.

The Animal Welfare Bill will introduce a positive duty to ensure the welfare of animals, and will allow for intervention before an animal suffers. Anyone deliberately abandoning a horse is likely to be found guilty under the Bill's new Welfare or Cruelty Offences. Alongside the Bill we intend to produce a code of practice on tethering and keeping of horses and ponies. This will also address issues relating to stray animals.

Illegal Timber

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the UK Government's policy is towards legislation to ban illegal timber imports into the EU. [46427]

Mr. Morley: As part of the 2003 FLEGT Action Plan, the European Commission committed itself to exploring additional options to tackle illegal logging. This includes looking at outright ban on the importation of illegal timber. Government will need to look at the impact and practicality of such an option carefully, particularly the impact of requiring all timber to be identified as "legal"; whether that could be enforced and the effect of such a measure on developing countries that rely on income from timber.

The UK Government believe that, in the long term, a multilateral approach would be the best way to tackle illegal logging. However, we recognise the need to build consensus with producing countries to achieve this. The Forestry Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) regulation, with its innovative approach of balancing bilateral trade agreements and development assistance for improving forest governance, will play a key role in realising this consensus.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make an assessment of the options for legislation to prevent illegal timber entering the UK. [46428]

Mr. Morley: As part of the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan agreed in 2003, the European Commission committed itself to looking at additional options for preventing the importation of illegally logged timber into the EU. Government are frustrated at the time that it has taken the European Commission to produce this report and have made efforts at official and ministerial level to assist with its delivery.

Preliminary research on additional options will now be discussed in Brussels on 31 January 2006. This will include an assessment of existing national legislation in the UK that could be used to prevent the entry of illegal timber by creating a market for legal timber supplies.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate the Government have made of the volume of illegal timber entering the UK in each of the past five years. [46628]

Mr. Morley: The UK is the world's fourth largest importer of wood products. However, we are unable to estimate how much illegally logged timber is coming into the UK as timber is not identified as legal or illegal at Ports of Entry.

Once the recently adopted EU Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Regulation comes into force it will enable member states to enter into Partnership Agreements with developing countries and provide them with assistance to tackle illegal logging. This assistance will include a licensing system designed to identify products and license them for export to the EU. It will be reinforced by powers for HM Customs to take a range of actions relating to unlicensed products from partner countries; this will allow member states to prohibit the import of illegal timber from those countries into the EU for the first time.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had about illegal timber in the past 12 months. [46629]

Mr. Morley: The Government have used their presidencies of the G8 and EU to really focus on the issue of illegal logging and to promote the FLEGT Action Plan.

Illegal logging was one of two topics of discussion at the first ever G8 Environment and Development Ministerial meeting in Derbyshire in March 2005. G8 Ministers agreed to a range of actions to tackle illegal logging and officials will meet in 2006 to review progress. Under the UK presidency of the EU, the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Regulation was adopted at the EU Agriculture Council in December 2005.

Defra works very closely with the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on illegal logging and Ministers continually raise the issue of illegal logging at appropriate bilateral and multi-lateral events. In particular my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for International Development (Mr. Thomas) was present at the first ministerial meeting of the Europe-North Asia (ENA) Forestry Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) process in St. Petersburg in December 2005.

Ministers have also engaged in dialogue through a range of outreach events; addressed international stakeholder meetings at Chatham House and participated in Round Tables with Industry. Ministerial evidence was submitted to the Environment Audit Committee in November 2005.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action the Government are taking to tackle imports of illegal timber. [46630]

Mr. Morley: The principal action being taken by Government to tackle the import of illegally logged timber is implementation of the Forestry Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) regulation. This developed out of the European Commission's FLEGT Action Plan, published in May 2003. It describes a package of measures to tackle illegal logging, including proposals that the EU enters into partnership agreements with timber producing countries to establish a licensing system designed to identify products and license them for export to the EU.

The Government are delighted that the proposal for a licensing system was adopted by the EU in December 2005, under the UK's Presidency. Government believe that as a first step to address illegal logging, it is necessary to build consensus with producing countries and make sure that we do not discriminate against legitimate trade. The EU FLEGT licensing scheme, with its innovative approach of bilateral trade agreements and development assistance for improving forest governance, will achieve this in the first instance.

Although formal negotiations have not yet started with any country, discussions leading to negotiations have been underway with several countries where illegal logging is recognised to be a problem, and we hope that the first agreements will be in place during 2006. The UK is leading the negotiations with Ghana.

The Department for International Development (DfID) has recently announced that it will be setting aside £24 million over the next five years for this FLEGT negotiation process and for tackling illegal logging more generally.

The FLEGT Action Plan also proposes that the Commission look at other options to tackle illegal logging, including using Government procurement and introducing legislation to prevent the importation of illegally logged timber at a member state or EU level. They will be preliminarily discussed in Brussels at the end of January, after which a final report will be presented at Council to EU Ministers later this year.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures the Government has in place to quantify the volume of illegal timber entering the UK; and what targets have been set for replacing such imports with legal and sustainable timber. [46631]

Mr. Morley: The UK is the world's fourth largest importer of wood products. However, we have been unable to estimate how much illegally logged timber is coming into the UK as timber is not identified as legal or illegal at Ports of Entry.

Once the recently adopted EU Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Regulation comes into force it will enable member states to enter into Partnership Agreements with developing countries and provide them with assistance to tackle illegal logging. This assistance will include a licensing system designed to identify products as legal and license them for export to the EU. This will allow us to quantify the amount of legal timber entering the UK for the first time.

The Department for International Development has committed £24 million for its illegal logging programme and we hope under Partnership Agreements, to establish licensing schemes with as many producer countries as possible.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what further plans the Government have for legislation on the import of illegal timber within the EU. [46632]

Mr. Morley: Following the adoption of the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Regulation by the EU in December 2005, the focus of Government is on its implementation and the development of Partnership Agreements with producer countries.

We are waiting the results of the European Commission's Alternative Options paper. We have, along with other member states and civil society groups, been frustrated at the time it has taken the Commission to produce this report. However, we have encouraged the Commission—at official and ministerial level—to make progress and we are pleased that there is now to be an open workshop on analysing future options for EU member states Governments, industry and green groups representatives in Brussels on 31 January 2006.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment the Government have made of the EU Commission's proposals for further action on tackling illegal timber imports. [46633]

Mr. Morley: When the European Commission published its proposal to tackle illegal logging, the Forestry Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan, it made the proposal for bilateral agreements and that it would investigate 'additional options' that went beyond this.

Government are frustrated at the time that it has taken the European Commission to produce this report and has made efforts at official and Ministerial level to assist with its delivery. Preliminary research on additional options will now be discussed in Brussels on 31 January 2006. This will include an assessment of existing national legislation in the UK that could be used to prevent the entry of illegal timber.

PG5/2(04)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 9 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 488W, on PG5/2(04), whether the Government are providing extra funding to local authorities to meet the cost of implementing the new regulations. [47076]

Mr. Bradshaw: In accordance with the Polluter Pays Principle, the Government do not provide funding for any sector regulated under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations to finance measures to reduce emissions.

Public Procurement

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government are taking to ensure that social criteria are included in decision-making on public procurement. [46646]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* The Department published its sustainable procurement strategy and toolkit in December and it can be found at http://defraweb/corporate/sdstrategy/operations/partf.htm

Defra is awaiting the note on social issues and criteria in public procurement being prepared by the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) and will, in the light of this note, the National Action Plan being prepared by the Sustainable Procurement Taskforce and the new public procurement rules coming into effect on 31 January 2006, take all appropriate steps to ensure social criteria are included in its public procurement. Public procurement policy in the UK is the responsibility of the OGC.

Sea Bass

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research she has commissioned on the effectiveness of the 12 mile ban on sea bass pair trawling. [45673]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is on-going research funded by the Department and carried out by the Sea Mammal Research Unit to monitor bycatch in all relevant UK fishery sectors and to develop mitigation measures to reduce the bycatch of marine mammals. The Department also obtains strandings data under the Defra-funded Cetacean and Turtle Strandings Scheme, carried out by the Natural History Museum in partnership with the Institute of Zoology and Scottish Agricultural College.

Post mortems from strandings can identify whether dolphins have died as a result of bycatch (if the carcasses are in a good enough state) but cannot at this stage identify individual fisheries such as the bass pair trawl fishery. Research into net marks found on cetaceans is also being undertaken but is at a very early stage.

Results for the 2004-05 pair trawl fishery for bass show a marked decrease from the preceding year for the total numbers of dolphins observed as bycatch and the number of dolphins stranding in the south west coast has similarly decreased this year. It would however be speculative on the basis of one year's data alone to link these reductions and further analysis of the effectiveness of the 12 mile ban on sea bass pair trawling will be undertaken as further data becomes available.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action the Government are taking at European Union level to protect sea bass. [45674]

Mr. Bradshaw: Current European Union legislation protects sea bass by specifying a minimum size of 36cm below which bass cannot be landed and corresponding mesh sizes to be used for both fixed and trawl gear when bass is targeted. The most recent scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea reports that stocks appear to be fished sustainably.

Defra is currently conducting a consultation to explore the potential to increase the number and size of bass available to commercial and recreational fishermen.

Solid Waste (Thermal Processing)

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the proportion of bottom ash produced as a portion of waste entering each solid waste thermal processing facility in England in each of the last three years. [46027]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Environment Agency conducted a study, 'Solid residues from municipal waste incinerators in England and Wales', which was published in 2002. This is the most recent collation of site-specific information available and contains information for the period 1996 to 2000 inclusive. The range of values is not anticipated to have changed significantly since the date of the report. For the plants operating at that time, the proportion of bottom ash produced in the years 1998 to 2000, expressed as a percentage by weight of waste input, is as follows:

	1998	1999	2000
Bolton	[1]	[1]	39.3
Coventry	22.6	20.2	16.5
Dudley	24.1	21.5	21.2
Edmonton	29.0	26.7	31.5
Nottingham	24.9	24.6	23.7
SELCHP	26.8	26.4	24.6
Sheffield	23.9	35.3	38.5
Stoke on Trent	25.6	25.6	24.8
Billingham	28.3	33.1	35.9
Tyseley	22.8	21.8	22.9
Wolverhampton	26.5	26.9	24.2

[1] Not in operation

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much bottom ash from each solid waste thermal processing facility in England was (*a*) used for bulk fill, road construction or asphalt, (*b*) used in construction blocks, (*c*) sent to landfill and (*d*) stockpiled in each of the last three years. [46028]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Environment Agency conducted a study, 'Solid Residues from Municipal Waste Incinerators in England and Wales', published in 2002. This report provides the most recent collation of information available, which is for the period 1996 to 2000 inclusive.

The plants identified in the report produced a total incinerator bottom ash (IBA) output of 642,000 tonnes in 2000. We are unable to identify specific fates for IBA from each incinerator.

The disposal and recovery options used for total IBA output (in 2000) were as follows:

	Percentage
(*a*) Bulk fill, road construction, asphalt, etc.	28.6
(*b*) Construction blocks	7.1
(*c*) Sent to landfill	46.9
(*d*) Stockpiled	14.1
(*e*) Other	3.3

Space Debris

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on space debris. [46497]

Barry Gardiner: I have been asked to reply.

Space debris can comprise either natural debris such as the remains of comets and asteroids or man made debris such as elements of non-operational satellites and launcher equipment.

Space debris is an important concern because of the damage that, potentially, it can do to operational satellites or occasionally through earth impact.

Managing space debris effectively requires an international consensus. The UK is working actively through the United Nations and the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Group to secure international agreement on space debris mitigation practices.

Whales

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many whales have become stranded and have perished around the shore of the United Kingdom in each year since 1997; and what research she has commissioned into the causes. [45930]

Mr. Bradshaw: Between 1 January 1997 and 23 January 2006 a total of 360 whales were reported as stranded in the United Kingdom, and three were reported as bycatch. Table 1 provides detailed figures, broken down by year.

These data are collected under the Defra-funded Cetacean and Turtle Strandings Scheme. The scheme is carried out by the Natural History Museum in partnership with the Institute of Zoology and Scottish Agricultural College. Not only are all stranded animals recorded, but post-mortem examinations are carried out on some of the animal carcasses to establish the exact cause of death.

The information received from this scheme has helped to inform the commissioning of two further research projects. The first is looking into the effect of acoustic noise on cetaceans, through examination of cetacean 'ears' removed during post-mortem examination. The second, an observer monitoring scheme, places observers on certain fishing vessels to observe whether there are any incidents of bycatch.

Table 1—Total numbers of stranded whales for 1997—up to 23 January 2006

		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Bycatch	Dead	1	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Live strandings	Died	4	2	2	–	5	3	8	1	1	1
	Survived	1	–	1	–	–	2	2	–	–	–
	Unknown fate	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Strandings	Dead	38	35	37	43	49	35	22	31	37	–
TOTAL		44	38	40	44	54	40	32	32	38	1

Whaling

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make representations to the Norwegian and Japanese Governments against their commercial whaling activities; and if she will make a statement. [46689]

Mr. Bradshaw: With colleagues from 16 other countries HM ambassador in Tokyo delivered a Demarche to the Government of Japan on 16 January, protesting in the strongest terms on Japan's plans to expand its so-called 'scientific' whaling activities. The UK Government, in common with those of a majority of International Whaling Commission (IWC) members, have regularly criticised Japanese scientific whaling programmes in both the North Pacific (JARPN) and the Southern ocean (JARPA) as being of little scientific value and urged Japan to terminate them forthwith.

We will continue to press Norway to desist from commercial whaling, which we believe contrary to the spirit of the IWC moratorium. We make our objections very clear to Norway regarding their whaling activities and will make further protests prior to and during the annual meeting of the Commission which takes place later this year.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Brazilian Beef

Mr. Crabb: To ask the honourable Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how much Brazilian beef was procured for use by the House Refreshment Department in the last year for which figures are available. [47119]

Nick Harvey: The Refreshment Department has not purchased any Brazilian beef in the last year.

Public Information

Mr. Gale: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how much the Commission allocated for public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [46039]

Nick Harvey: Public relations and information services are an integral part of a number of House activities for which budgets are not specifically allocated, and to which costs are not directly attributed. The figures that are available show:

£000

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Education Unit	305	294	315
Information Office	771	787	751
Visitor Tours (net of income)	47	37	62
Broadcasting	1,414	407	265
Media and Communications Services	54	79	172
Websites			
Explore Parliament	30	105	45
Early Day Motions	14	14	14
Other	89	96	77

Figures are not available for earlier years. Exceptional costs were incurred in 2002-03 for refitting broadcasting equipment in the House of Commons Chamber, and in 2003-04 on infrastructure as well as webcasting systems. Major projects being undertaken in 2005-06 include the establishment of a web centre and further web developments for which budgets totalling £1.3 million have been allocated. The table does not include the costs of the printing and publishing contract with The Stationery Office.

Recycled Waste

Keith Vaz: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission, what proportion of waste from offices of the House was recycled over the period 2000 to 2005. [47500]

Nick Harvey: Data are not separately collected which could distinguish between waste recycled from offices and from other parts of the estate. The proportion of waste recycled from the whole estate (including the House of Lords) since records began is as follows:

	Percentage
2002-03	38.8
2003-04	26.2
2004-05	29.3
2005-06	[1]36.7

[1] April to December 2005

Comparable figures for earlier years are not available.

PRIME MINISTER

Parliamentary Pay and Allowances

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Prime Minister when he expects to request the Senior Salaries Review Body to carry out a review of parliamentary pay and allowances. [46958]

The Prime Minister: A review of parliamentary pay and allowances carried out by the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB) in 1996 included a recommendation, accepted by the Government, that parliamentary pay should be reviewed every three years, starting in 2000.

Wilson Doctrine

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Prime Minister if he will publish those sections of the report from the Interception of Communications Commissioner which are relevant to the Wilson Doctrine; if he will put any proposed changes to the doctrine to a vote on the floor of the House; and if he will make a statement. [46813]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to my written ministerial statement, 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 173WS, and my answers at Prime Minister's questions on 18 and 25 January.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the extra £1 billion funding for the recent deployment to Afghanistan will be drawn from his Department's existing budget. [46976]

John Reid: The additional cost of operations is recovered from the Treasury Reserve.

Apache Helicopter Fleet

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many *(a)* pilots and *(b)* engineers for the Apache helicopter fleet are expected (i) to leave and (ii) to be recruited to the service in (A) one month and (B) three months' time; [43863]

(2) how many *(a)* pilots and *(b)* engineers for the Apache helicopter fleet have (i) left and (ii) been recruited to the service in each quarter of each of the last three years. [43864]

Mr. Touhig: No Apache pilots are expected to leave the service in the next three months.

Individuals are not recruited into the Army to pilot specific aircraft. Approximately 30 officers per year are directly recruited into the Army Air Corps following officer training at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. The Army Air Corps selects its non-commissioned pilots from either within the Army Air Corps or from other branches of the Army. Once trained, a pilot carries out conversion to type training for a particular aircraft.

Six Apache pilots have left the Army Air Corps since 2002.

Four engineers are expected to leave within one month and 13 engineers are expected to leave within three months.

Engineers are not directly recruited to maintain specific aircraft. Engineering support for the Apache aircraft is carried out by aeronautical engineering officers and aviation technicians who have previously completed training on a range of Army aircraft. The Apache training course throughput for 2004 was 166 engineers. The training throughput for 2005 was 132.

Aeronautical engineering officers, artificers and technicians in the Career Employment Groups (CEGs) of avionics and aircraft cover the full range of Army helicopters and aircraft. The following figures indicate how many soldiers in these CEGs left the Army in the last three years. Not all of these will have held specialist qualifications for the Apache.

Soldiers[1]

Financial year	*Quarter*	*Number leaving per quarter*	*Total per financial year*
April 2002 to March 2003	April to June	27	70
	July to September	17	
	October to December	14	
	January to March	12	
April 2003 to March 2004	April to June	10	64
	July to September	25	
	October to December	16	
	January to March	13	
April 2004 to March 2005	April to June	25	95
	July to September	16	
	October to December	30	
	January to March	24	

[1] The information relating to soldier discharge is recorded by financial year. The discharge figures are not yet available from April 2005.

Officers[1]

	Quarter	*Number leaving per quarter*	*Total per calendar year*
2003	January to March	0	3
	April to June	1	
	July to September	0	
	October to December	2	
2004	January to March	2	4
	April to June	0	
	July to September	1	
	October to December	1	
2005	January to March	2	11
	April to June	3	
	July to September	4	
	October to December	2	

[1] Officer-discharges are recorded by calendar year.

Bowman Digital Communications System

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what effect the planned conversion to the BOWMAN digital communications system will have on missions undertaken by 16 Air Assault Brigade in 2006; and if he will make a statement. [42996]

Mr. Ingram: The BOWMAN conversion programme has been drawn up to take full account of planned operational deployments. 16 Air Assault Brigade is scheduled to complete the full BOWMAN conversion package by the middle of 2007. Elements of the Brigade completed part of the conversion to the BOWMAN family of radios at the end of 2005, thus ensuring that, if deployed, they are equipped with an effective and appropriate suite of communications systems.

Correspondence/Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* letters from hon. Members, *(b)* letters from members of the public and *(c)* Parliamentary Questions from (i) hon. Members and (ii) Lords were dealt with by his Department in each year since 1995; in

respect of the percentage his Department took (A) more than one month and (B) more than three months to provide a substantive answer; and if he will make a statement. [37398]

Mr. Touhig: The Cabinet Office, on an annual basis, publishes a report to Parliament on the performance of Departments in replying to Members/Peers correspondence. The Report for 2004 was published on 6 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 137–140WS. Reports for earlier years are available in the Library of the House.

Details of the number of letters from members of the public are not held centrally, though every effort is made by the Department to handle all correspondence effectively and efficiently.

For parliamentary questions, Defence Ministers aim to ensure that Members receive a substantive response to their named day question on the day named and endeavour to answer ordinary written questions within a working week of being tabled. Unfortunately this is not always possible but the Department makes every effort to achieve these timescales.

Information relating to the percentage of answers that took more than one month and more than three months to answer is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, I am able to provide details of the total number of parliamentary questions from hon. Members and Lords dealt with by the Department in each year since 1995. This is set out in the following table:

	Ordinary Written	*Named Day Written*	*Oral*	*Lords Written*	*Lords Oral*	*Total*
1995	1,615	—	234	170	21	2,040
1996	1,281	—	257	143	25	1,706
1997	1,103	—	231	201	24	1,559
1998	1,176	—	254	232	21	1,683
1999	1,464	1,041	270	264	20	3,059
2000	1,427	1,225	336	227	21	3,236
2001	1,368	1,202	272	166	25	3,033
2002	2,798	1,261	267	242	21	4,589
2003	3,596	680	198	405	28	4,907
2004	3,163	687	226	440	44	4,560
2005	2,658	628	179	315	34	3,814

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Hemel Hempstead (Mike Penning) on 2 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1067–1068W, in which I advised of our plans to introduce a new toolkit to better track and handle all parliamentary questions and correspondence later in the year; this should enable us to better monitor our performance

Falklands Garrison

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 23 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2053W, on the Falklands garrison, if he will break down the costs of maintaining the Falklands garrison in 2004–05 by main cost area. [44607]

Mr. Ingram: The costs of maintaining the Falklands garrison in Financial Year 2004–05, broken down by main cost area, were as follows:

	£ million
Operating costs	
Personnel	31.5
Infrastructure	10.4
Consumables (including fuel)	13.2
Equipment Support	3.3
Contract Support	9.3
Receipts	-2.4
Non-cash costs	
Depreciation	38.4
Cost of capital	9.4

Identity Cards

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the *(a)* total and *(b)* net cost of (i) integrating the proposed identity card scheme into his Department's IT systems and (ii) the ongoing operation of the scheme within his Department. [31106]

Mr. Touhig: The Department has not finalised its estimates of the cost of using the ID Cards Scheme to support the services which it oversees.

Iraq

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information he has *(a)* sought and *(b)* received from (i) the US armed forces and (ii) other coalition armed forces concerning the administration to their forces of nerve agent pre-treatment tablets during the 2003 invasion of Iraq. [44220]

Mr. Touhig: My Department has no record of formal information exchange at a policy level with the US armed forces or other coalition armed forces concerning the use of Nerve Agent Pre-treatment Sets tablets by their armed forces during Operation TELIC. Day-to-day desk officer level exchanges of information may have taken place but this has not been formally recorded.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the security situation in Al-Samawah, Iraq. [46586]

Mr. Ingram: The security situation in As-Samawah is currently stable.

International Security Assistance Force

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what rules of engagement will govern the handling of captured prisoners by British forces under International Security Assistance Force command; and whether those rules will differ from those relating to prisoners captured by British forces participating in Operation Enduring Freedom. [45560]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1648–49, to the right hon. and learned Member for Devizes (Mr. Ancram).

MONUC

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what discussions he has had with his EU counterparts on the request by United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) for a deployment of an EU force for the purpose of enhancing MONUC's quick reaction capability during and immediately after the electoral process in the Democratic Republic of Congo; [45796]

(2) how many British troops will be deployed to the Democratic Republic of the Congo as part of the wider EU deployment. [45798]

Mr. Ingram: The request, from the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, sought possible support for its mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo by having available a force that could, if necessary, be deployed during the forthcoming election period. No decision has been taken on the nature of the EU response. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Defence, discussed this request during his meeting with the French Defence Minister, Michèle Alliot-Marie, on 24 January. They agreed that the EU should look to consider the request favourably. Any request for UK forces to be involved would need to be assessed taking into account our heavy operational commitments at that time.

Public and Commercial Services Union

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether Ministers from his Department met representatives from the Public and Commercial Services Union during the Union's lobby of Parliament on 25 January; and if he will make a statement. [46789]

Mr. Touhig: No Ministers from the Department met representatives from the Public and Commercial Services Union during their lobby of Parliament on 25 January.

The Department was disappointed that the TUs took the Day of Action as they had been fully consulted on the proposals for restructuring in the Ministry of Defence. MOD has had a number of meetings with the TUs to address their concerns and will continue to work with them through discussion, to deliver a more effective, efficient service.

QinetiQ

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what aspects of the QinetiQ flotation makes it unsuitable for private investors. [44179]

John Reid: The QinetiQ flotation is not unsuitable for private investors. Private investors are able to apply for shares through a private client stockbroker if they so wish, although there is no guarantee any specific applicant will be successful. Based on advice from our financial advisers, the Government do not believe that significant expenditure on a retail offering to encourage private investors to apply for shares would present value for money for the taxpayer. Once trading has commenced private investors will also be able to buy shares in the normal way.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether proceeds from the sale of QinetiQ will be kept by the Ministry of Defence. [42422]

John Reid: We have agreed with HM Treasury that the Ministry of Defence will be able to retain a substantial proportion of the QinetiQ receipts for reinvestment in the defence programme.

Sea Cadets

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many sea cadets there were in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [45686]

Mr. Touhig: Statistics on the number of sea cadets are published by the Defence Analytical Services Agency (DASA) and can be found in Tri-Service Publication number seven (TSP 07), a copy of which is available in the Library of the House. Details can also be found on the DASA website at: www.dasa.mod.uk/natstats/tsp7/tsp7tab2.html.

Territorial Army

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when a Territorial Army applicant becomes officially classified as a recruit; and what percentage of Territorial Army recruits did not complete basic Phase 1 and 2 training in each of the last five years. [43688]

Mr. Touhig: A Territorial Army applicant is officially classed as a recruit once he or she has been Attested. Information on the number of Territorial Army recruits who did not complete basic Phase 1 and 2 training in each of the last five years is not held centrally and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Tristars

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many Tristars are available to transport soldiers to and from *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan; [45585]

(2) how many C-17s are available to transport soldiers to and from *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan. [45687]

Mr. Ingram: Two of the RAF fleet of Tristars are typically available for use in moving passengers to and from Iraq. Two of the RAF C17s are also typically available for both Iraq and Afghanistan, but the service for Iraq normally carries only freight while that for Afghanistan carries a mix of passengers and freight.

War Pensions Committee

Mr. Benyon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the procedure is for resolving long-outstanding claims for war disablement pensions. [45286]

Mr. Touhig: The Veterans Agency is set key performance targets to process war pension claims.

Internal targets, specific to the measurement of performance of older cases, are set at the start of each financial year, thus ensuring that the momentum on each case is sustained. Additionally, operational managers within the Veterans Agency have access to information in respect of these cases, enabling them to direct action to keep them on track.

As a result of this proactive approach, the number of un-cleared claims in excess of 12-months-old has reduced considerably. At the end of December 2005, there were 82 such cases.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Alcohol Sales

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many 24-hour licences for the sale of alcohol were granted to *(a)* licensed premises, *(b)* supermarkets and *(c)* off-licences in 2005. [45962]

James Purnell: Based on a DCMS telephone survey of licensing authorities, we estimate that around 1,000 licences have been granted permitting the sale of alcohol for 24 hours. Of these, approximately 330 have been for pubs and nightclubs, approximately 360 for supermarkets, and approximately 130 for off-licences and convenience stores.

Anniversary Events

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much *(a)* Lottery funding and *(b)* grant in aid has been spent on commemorating anniversary events since 1990, broken down by event celebrated; and if she will make a statement. [45994]

Mr. Caborn: The amount of grant in aid funding spent on commemorating anniversary events since 1990, broken down by event, is not collected centrally. Similarly, the Lottery Awards Database does not hold this information in the form requested.

Grant in aid funding from a variety of Government Departments and other public bodies will have contributed to many anniversary and commemorative events since 1990. In addition Lottery funding will also have been used to support such events at the national level and may also have supported celebrations at a more local level.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with the Royal Pigeon Racing Association on a possible avian influenza pandemic in the United Kingdom. [46601]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have been asked to reply.

Regular meetings are held between my officials and a number of key stakeholders, including the Royal Pigeon Racing Association (RPRA), to discuss the latest issues and developments on avian influenza (AI). The RPRA are also provided with regular updates and informed if there are any AI press notices, statements or any AI related EU decisions.

Civil Servants (Overseas Visits)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what costs were incurred by her Department as a result of sending civil servants on overseas visits in each of the last 10 years. [46288]

Mr. Lammy: The following table shows overall departmental expenditure for overseas travel and subsistence by officials. Expenditure for the earlier year is not recorded in the format requested and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

All official travel is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the civil service management code.

Officials overseas travel and subsistence

	£
2005-06[1]	175,941.40
2004-05	278,761.80
2003-04	235,210.16
2002-03	195,442.41
2001-02	129,164.75
2000-01	188,337.76
1999-2000	193,742.97
1998-99	151,307.28
1997-98	175,061.96

[1] To 31 December 2005.

Departmental Sustainable Development

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what reduction in water consumption her Department made between 1 April 2002 and 31 March 2005. [46890]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport signed up for the Office for Government Commerce's "Watermark" project in 2002, but their consultants were unable to identify opportunities for reductions in water consumption.

The Department is about to undergo a water usage audit by the utility supplier, Thames Water, and will follow their recommendations.

The Department will commence refurbishment of its main headquarters building in the next financial year, and is planning to install water saving devices as part of the project.

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of non-office sites on her Department's estate where there are opportunities for significant savings in water consumption. [46891]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport does not have any non-office sites on its estate.

Film Council

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much funding the Government allocated to the UK Film Council in each of the last five years. [45706]

James Purnell: Government funding directly allocated to UK Film Council in each of the last five years is detailed in the table:

£ million

	Grant In Aid	Lottery	Other[1]
2004-05	24.11	29.9	0.8
2003-04	24.11	28.4	—
2002-03	24.11	32.4	—
2001-02	20.86	36.6	—
2000-01	21.76	34.1	—

[1] In 2004-05, a £0.8 million modernisation award was made to the British Film Institute by the DCMS and administered by UK Film Council.

Licensed Premises

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many licensed premises there were in *(a)* 1994 and *(b)* 2004. [45880]

James Purnell: The number of premises licensed for the retail sale of intoxicating liquor and registered clubs in England and Wales as at 30 June in each year was as follows:

	1994	2004
On-licence	111,212	113,370
Off-licence	47,735	46,582
Registered clubs	24,239	19,913

Source:
DCMS Statistical Bulletin 'Liquor Licensing, October 2004'

Statistics for theatres are not available for 1994 and 2004, but in 1995 there were 272 licensed theatres, and in 2001 there were 218.

Licensing Act

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the effects of the Licensing Act 2003 on levels of crime and disorder in Coventry South. [44629]

James Purnell *[holding answer 25 January 2006]:* It is too early to draw any firm conclusions about the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 on the level of crime and disorder, either across the country or in any one area.

The Government will continue to monitor the impact of the new legislation closely, including a programme of evaluation being conducted by the Home Office into the impact of the licensing reforms on crime and disorder.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what total revenue has been raised from sports and community clubs as a result of the Licensing Act 2003; and if she will make a statement. [45810]

James Purnell: The Department does not currently hold that information.

The level of fees under the Licensing Act 2003 is currently being reviewed by the Independent Licensing Fees Review Panel, chaired by Sir Les Elton. The Government published the Panel's Interim Report on 5 December. In their report, the Panel have identified nine areas of activity that they wish to consider further during the next stage of their work. Two of those areas are licensing authority income and costs and the consequence of the new fees regime on not-for-profit groups. The full Interim Report can be accessed at: http://www.culture.gov.uk/alcohol_and_entertainment/monitoring_and_evaluation/ifreview.htm. The Panel have recently written to all Licensing Authorities in England and Wales to request details of the income they have received under the new licensing regime from different licensed sectors, including sports clubs and village and community halls, which they believe they require in order to support them in the next stage of their work. The Panel are due to present their Final Report and recommendations to Government in the autumn.

Media Company Relocation (Manchester)

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with the North West Regional Development Agency on location of media companies in Manchester; and whether public funding will be made available to such companies to relocate. [45001]

James Purnell *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* I have corresponded with the North West Regional Development Agency (NWDA), regarding the BBC's Out of London initiative. Officials have also had contact with the agency. The NWDA, with other public sector partners, is supporting the relocation of media companies to the Northwest and has committed, in principle, up to £50 million, covering areas such as infrastructure and skills development. North West Vision, the regional screen agency sponsored by the NWDA, also operates the Regional Attraction Fund and the Merseyside Film and Television Fund for this purpose.

Public Houses

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will commission research into the role played by public houses in the culture of the United Kingdom. [45878]

James Purnell: I have no plans to commission specific research in this area, although my Department will be carrying out research into the provision of live music across all venues, including pubs, during 2006. My Department is also discussing issues around live music with the 10 Scrutiny Councils.

The Government recognises the cultural importance of public houses in the UK, as centres of entertainment, as hubs for local communities, as a diverse and vibrant part of the hospitality industry and as a unique British institution that helps make our country so attractive to overseas visitors. The reforms introduced by the Licensing Act 2003 will offer pubs greater flexibility to meet the demands of customers and to broaden their already important cultural role.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the number of rural pubs which have closed in each of the last 10 years. [45879]

James Purnell: The Department does not hold information specifically on rural pub closures. However, the Government recognise that access to local pubs, as well as other services, is essential to ensuring that rural communities thrive and helps combat social exclusion. That is why, in settlements of less than 3,000 people, the Government have extended 50 per cent. rate relief to pubs, as well as village shops, petrol stations and small scale, non-agricultural enterprises on farms.

Also, the Countryside Agency has been a key partner in supporting the 'pub is the hub' initiative which is encouraging diversification by rural pubs to further enhance their contribution and help sustain them as businesses. In the longer term, licensing reform will cut costs for such businesses and allow them to use the flexibility offered to better meet the needs of local people and visitors.

Sports Governance

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will implement an inquiry into the governance of rugby union; and if she will make a statement. [46900]

Mr. Caborn: It is not for the Government to implement an inquiry into the governance of rugby union.

However, by working with Sport England and UK Sport, the Government are keen to ensure that sporting national governing bodies are fit for purpose in the 21st century. As a result we have supported a number of sporting governing bodies as they have undergone the process of reviewing and modernising their governance structures.

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received on *(a)* governance, *(b)* regulation and *(c)* trading practices of association football. [46898]

Mr. Caborn: I have had numerous representations about the governance, regulation and trading practices of football.

I continue to urge the Football Association to implement the Burns Review recommendations.

The FA must use this review to ensure they are fit for purpose in the 21st century and make the necessary changes without delay.

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will implement an inquiry into sports governance; and if she will make a statement. [46901]

Mr. Caborn: Working with UK Sport and Sport England, the Government have supported a number of reviews into the governance of our sporting national governing bodies to ensure that these bodies are fit for purpose in the 21st century.

While it is not for Government to implement reviews into governance, we continue to encourage best practice in governance, and UK Sport and Sport England monitor each sport as part of their funding agreements.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Business Start-ups

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new business start-ups there were in *(a)* Swindon, *(b)* Wiltshire and *(c)* the South-West in (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005. [46825]

Alun Michael: According to Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation, which includes non-VAT registered firms, there were 1,800 business start-ups in Swindon Unitary Authority in 2004.

Barclays data show that there were 4,800 business start-ups in the county of Wiltshire that is, not including the Swindon Unitary Authority in 2004 and 48,100 business start-ups in the whole of the South West. Data for 2005 will be available in spring 2006.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Swindon Unitary Authority, Wiltshire County and the South West Government Office Region are shown in the table for 2004. Data for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006.

VAT registrations, 2004

Swindon UA	495
Wiltshire County	1,450
South West GOR	15,310

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2004, Small Business Service, available from the Library of the House and also at http://www.sbs.gov.uk/vats

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold. Only 1.8 million out of 4.3 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2004.

Compensation (UK Courts)

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will assess the merits of introducing legislation to allow individuals who are denied justice in their own country to seek compensation in UK courts for *(a)* environmental and *(b)* human rights abuses committed by United Kingdom companies abroad. [38686]

Ian Pearson: The Government are not considering legislation on this issue.

UK companies that operate overseas are subject to the laws applicable in those countries which will take account of the particular circumstances and practices of each host country.

We actively encourage UK-based international companies which operate in other countries to apply high standards of corporate behaviour, including adhering to relevant internationally agreed standards which respect human rights and the environment.

In April 2005, the UN Commission on Human Rights appointed a Special Representative of the Secretary General to take forward work on the area of business and human rights. The two year mandate of the Special Representative includes the identification and clarification of standards of corporate responsibility and accountability

for transnational corporations with regard to human rights, as well as an elaboration of the role of States in effectively regulating and adjudicating the role of business.

The UK also plays a leading role in ensuring that the international framework to promote and to tackle abuses of workers rights throughout the world is in place, particularly through its work with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), which is the UN specialized agency responsible for developing, promoting and monitoring labour standards. We play an active role in the ILO Committee on Multinational Enterprises and support the promotion and follow-up of the ILO Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy which seeks to enhance the positive social and labour effects of multinational corporations' operations throughout the world.

The Government also strongly supports the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises as a standard of good corporate behaviour and as a model to assist companies to develop their own codes of conduct. The issues they cover include labour relations and environmental and social impacts.

Directorships

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people are registered as directors who are under the age of 16 years. [47504]

Alun Michael: On 31 December 2005, there were 431 directors under the age of 16. All these appointments were to companies registered in England and Wales.

Employment Status Review

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the results of the employment status review initiated in 2002 will be announced. [47210]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government intend to respond to the Employment Status Review shortly.

Energy Review

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which organisations were invited to the launch of the Energy Review, Our Energy Challenge, on 23 January; and what criteria were used to decide upon suitability of invitees. [46565]

Malcolm Wicks: A range of organisations were invited to the launch of the Energy Review to ensure a broad and diverse set of participants and views. Attendees included representatives from unions; energy providers; energy generators; industry associations; network operators; non-governmental organisations with an interest in energy, environment or fuel poverty issues; regulatory bodies; official advisory bodies to the Government; national, devolved, regional and local government and Government Agencies; think tanks and academia.

The launch of the Energy Review, Our Energy Challenge, on 23 January was the first outreach event in a twelve week consultation period. In the weeks until April 14, Ministers and officials will continue to engage with the stakeholders invited to the launch event and others, including parliamentary bodies. The consultation is open to all and details of how to feed in comments are available on the DTI website (www.dti.gov.uk/energy/review).

Energy Technology Safety

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what aspects of *(a)* renewable energy technologies and *(b)* distributed generation are being examined by the Health and Safety Executive in respect of their potential risk to workers and the public. [46570]

Malcolm Wicks: In the context of the Energy Review, the Health and Safety Executive has been asked to prepare an expert report on the potential health and safety risks to workers and the public arising from recent and potential energy developments, including an increasing penetration of renewable technologies and distributed generation. The report will include an assessment of the health and safety risks associated with developments, such as wind, wave, and biomass generation projects, and their approach to ensuring that such risks are managed sensibly by industry.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for what contracts the Export Credits Guarantee Department has paid out claims in each of the last five years; and for what amounts in each case. [42566]

Ian Pearson: The Export Credits Guarantee Department has paid out claims totalling £1.1 billion over the last five financial years (2000–01 to 2004–05), which can be broken down as follows:

	£
2000–01	298,310,783
2001–02	249,952,289
2002–03	261,449,499
2003–04	211,431,465
2004–05	87,334,763

A breakdown of claims payments by financial year, sector and case will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Green Ministers

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry at which meetings his Department has been represented regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers. [16245]

Malcolm Wicks: Following the general election in May, the Cabinet Sub-committee of Green Ministers (ENV(G)) was replaced by the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development in Government (EE(SD)) whose members are departmental Sustainable Development Ministers.

As the Minister of State for Energy I was appointed as our departmental Sustainable Development Minister in June 2005. In July, I attended a breakfast seminar for

Sustainable Development Ministers to discuss the sustainable development strategy and Ministers role in delivering it.

Harworth Colliery

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects to respond to the loan guarantee proposal made by UK Coal with regard to Harworth Colliery. [45839]

Malcolm Wicks: The proposal is under active consideration. A response will be given to UK Coal plc as soon as possible.

Indian Companies

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the five Indian companies with a presence in the UK *(a)* information technology, *(b)* pharmaceutical and *(c)* food sector, which had the greatest turnover in the UK in 2004–05. [42727]

Ian Pearson: According to publicly accessible information from Companies House (2004 figures), the following Indian companies are the top five in their sector in the UK based on turnover:

IT sector

1. Mastek (UK) Ltd.—($46,586,000)
2. NUT Technology Ltd.—($38,444,000)
3. Patni Computer Systems (UK) Ltd.—($17,698,000)
4. Citisoft Public Limited Company—($16,955,000)
5. Zensar Technologies (UK) Ltd.—($14, 954,000)

Pharma sector

1. Wockhardt UK Ltd.—($77,154,000)
2. C P Pharmaceutical Ltd.—($75,311,000)
3. Wallis Licensing Ltd.—($23,471,000)
4. Niche Generics Ltd.—($20,881,000)
5. Wallis Laboratory Ltd.—(n.a)

Food and Drink sector

1. Tetley GB Ltd.—($287,380,000)
2. Associated Coffee Merchants (International) Ltd.—($42,310,000)
3. Complete Coffee Ltd.—($42,281,000)
4. The Tetley Group Ltd.—($8,147,000)
5. Tetley Overseas Ltd.—($2,259,000)

Miners Compensation

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which *(a)* law firms and *(b)* other organisations have received payments from his Department for work undertaken in relation to miners' compensation; and how much was paid in each case, listed in descending order. [45598]

Malcolm Wicks: On *(a)* , a table detailing the sums paid to individual law firms for handling miners' compensation claims has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

On *(b)* , other sums the Department has paid in relation to the coal health schemes since 2000 are set out in the following table:

Organisation	*Role*	*Sum paid (£ million)*
SEMA/ATOS	Medical assessment process	198.6
IRISC/Capita	Claims handling	125.4
Healthcall	Medical assessment process	117.2
Hays/Iron Mountain	Records management	24.9
Nabarro Nathanson	Legal advice	21.4
PWC	Audit/Consultancy	11.6
Deloitte	Consultancy	9.3
Irwin Mitchell	Legal costs	4.2
Hugh James	Legal costs	2.8
Thompson (Edinburgh)	Legal costs	2.5
Capita Health Solutions	Medical assessment process	2.3
Ernst and Young	Audit Consultancy	1.9
McClure Naismith	Legal advice	1.7
Business Healthcare	Records management	1.5
AON	Medical assessment process	1.1
Thompson and Co.	Legal costs	0.6

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much compensation has been paid to ex-miners in the Easington constituency in respect of *(a)* vibration white finger and *(b)* chronic bronchitis and emphysema in each year since 2002. [47007]

Malcolm Wicks: The level of compensation paid to claimants in Easington since 2002 is as follows:

£ million

	VWF	*COPD*
2002	7.7	7.0
2003	7.9	11.4
2004	8.4	11.5
2005	7.5	12.9
Total	31.5	42.8

The COPD scheme includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

National Debtline

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many additional staff are planned to be recruited by National Debtline; how long the training process takes before these staff will be able to take calls; and if he will make a statement. [45498]

Mr. Sutcliffe: National Debtline is planning to increase staff numbers from a total of 67 at present to 99 by January 2007 and 119 by January 2008. Typically, newly recruited advisers spend their first three months in classroom training and do not take calls during this period. They are then able to take calls but continue to be closely supervised for the next six months, until they are fully trained.

Non-Fossil Fuel

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he decided to transfer funds out of the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation Fund to the Treasury on 20 September; and for what reasons. [38362]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 19 December 2005]*: Funds in the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation Fund were transferred into the Consolidated Fund on 20 September 2005 after the Treasury concluded, in the

light of legal advice, that the funds were hereditary revenues and so were required by law to be paid into the Consolidated Fund. DTI concurred with this view.

HM Treasury notified Ofgem on 16 August 2005.

Small Business Service

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the national targets are for the Small Business Service; and what the performance of offices covering south Devon are in relation to those targets. [46614]

Alun Michael: The Small Business Service (SBS) is responsible for delivering results against the DTI public service agreement (PSA) target 6 as follows:

"To help build an enterprise society in which small firms of all kinds thrive and achieve their potential—with (i) an increase in the number of people considering going into business, (ii) an improvement in the overall productivity of small firms, and (iii) more enterprise in disadvantaged communities."

National performance against these targets is shown in the DTI Autumn Performance Report published in December 2005, a copy of which is available in the Libraries of the House, and also at www.dti.gov.uk/about_dti_documents.html.

For PSA 6 (iii) from the 2002 spending review, enterprise in disadvantaged areas is measured by the gap in VAT registrations per 10,000 resident adults in the 20 per cent. most and 20 per cent. least deprived areas of England. The area of south Devon is served by Business Link Devon and Cornwall. The latest figures are as follows:

VAT Registrations per 10,000 resident adults

England	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Rate per 10,000 adults—most deprived areas	25.4	25.5	26.2	28.6	27.7
Rate per 10,000 adults—least deprived areas	42.4	39.9	42.5	45.3	42.4
Gap	40	36	38	37	35
Devon and Cornwall Business Link area					
Rate per 10,000 adults—most deprived areas	34.8	32.1	37.0	44.8	38.4
Rate per 10,000 adults—least deprived areas	22.6	23.7	24.1	30.2	24.1
Gap	-54	-35	-53	-48	-59

The results for Devon and Cornwall show that there are more registrations per head of population in the most deprived areas than in the least deprived areas.

Data for Devon and Cornwall relating to all other targets are not available and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Sunday Trading

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which company has been appointed to undertake the independent economic cost-benefit analysis changes in Sunday trading law; what his estimate is of the total cost of this review; and if he will publish the analysis once completed. [45509]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Loughborough (Mr. Reed) on 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2001-02W. Indepen Consulting Ltd. have been chosen to conduct an independent cost-benefit analysis of the impact of further liberalisation of Sunday Trading. The cost of the study is commercially confidential. It is our intention to publish the cost benefit analysis after its completion in the spring.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

African Nations (Avian Flu)

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance his Department is giving to African nations to help them prevent an avian influenza pandemic. [46528]

Hilary Benn: The threats of avian and human pandemic influenza are of global significance and require a co-ordinated global response. On 18 January, at the International Pledging Conference on Avian and Human Pandemic Influenza in Beijing, the UK committed to providing £20 million of DFID funds through multilateral channels to help achieve this.

In addition, through our on-going involvement in Africa, DFID is keeping abreast of the country's own plans and the activities of donors relating to avian flu. We are discussing, with individual African countries the use of our bilateral aid programmes to help develop and implement integrated influenza strategies. For example, DFID have committed £1 million to prevention and control of the disease in Ethiopia. £700,000 will be used for early detection, prevention and control. An additional £300,000 will be used to establish a national focal point to address the threat posed by a human influenza pandemic.

DFID also continues to help African countries to build comprehensive, sustainable health services which will address human influenza in addition to other diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

Aid Criteria/Conditionality

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the difference between his Department's definitions of aid criteria and aid conditionality. [46524]

Hilary Benn: DFID's aid allocation to particular countries is guided by a formula which takes into account the country's level of poverty and consequent need for aid, and its institutional capacity to make effective use of aid. We also take account of how much aid countries receive from other donors. Once allocated, the aid is spent through a range of channels as appropriate in the country context. These can include support through Governments to deliver their poverty

reduction plans, support through civil society organisations or through international organisations such as the UN.

DFID believes that effective aid partnerships with developing country Governments depend on shared commitments to reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)s; respecting human rights and other international obligations; and strengthening public financial management to reduce the risk of corruption. DFID uses these commitments both as our criteria for deciding whether to provide aid through Government, and as conditions for our aid. Once aid has been committed to a partner Government, DFID will only reduce it if the Government moves away from one of these three partnership commitments.

Common Agricultural Policy

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had in the EU on amending its agricultural policies to assist developing countries. [45425]

Mr. Thomas: The Government have regular discussions with EU and other countries regarding their agricultural policies. Securing a good outcome to the current World Trade Organisation (WTO) trade negotiations, including on agriculture, is a Government priority.

Recently, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development hosted an informal meeting of EU Development Ministers during the WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong, where we discussed how Europe could contribute to a successful outcome to the talks, including on agriculture. The Hong Kong ministerial did not achieve as much as we had hoped but there was agreement to end all agricultural export subsidies by 2013, which will help to remove one source of unfair competition for developing country agricultural producers.

Departmental Websites

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the cost of maintaining his main departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46307]

Mr. Thomas: The cost of maintaining the main DFID website (http://www.dfid.gov.uk) for the last year was £121,983.

Numbers of unique visitors for the last 12 months were as follows:

	Number
December 2004	18,845
January 2005	20,001
February 2005	20,154
March 2005	19,631
April 2006	18,893
May 2005	23,455
June 2005	18,218
July 2005	19,894
August 2005	20,913
September 2005	24,166
October 2005	26,555
November 2005	28,208
Total	258,933

Eritrea/Ethiopia

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance he is providing to *(a)* Eritrea and *(b)* Ethiopia in 2005–06 to achieve the millennium development goal on drinking water supply and waste water. [46212]

Hilary Benn: In Eritrea, DFID is funding through the International Rescue Committee, an Emergency Environmental Health programme which provides access to potable water and sanitation facilities. We also contributed £1.3 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) 2005 Appeal for Eritrea which included water and sanitation work.

Water and sanitation is an integral part of our humanitarian policy for Eritrea and we expect to make further contributions in this sector next year.

DFID is working with key partners such as the African Development Bank and the World Bank to design a water and sanitation investment programme for Ethiopia. We are providing an adviser to assist the Ministry of Water in implementing the increasing number of water and sanitation programmes in the country. Ethiopia is the largest beneficiary among East African countries of the EU water facility's first phase of funding approvals.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he had with *(a)* members of the Prime Minister's African Commission *(b)* the President of Ethiopia before and after his decision to suspend UK bilateral aid to Ethiopia. [46559]

Hilary Benn: I have had a number of discussions with Prime Minister Meles of Ethiopia about developments in Ethiopia, most recently in Addis Ababa on 18 January, when I informed him that in the current political circumstances we will not provide general budget support which the Ethiopian Government can use for any purpose. I have had no discussions with other former members of the Commission for Africa regarding this subject.

Bilateral aid to Ethiopia has not been suspended. The UK remains committed to supporting poor people in Ethiopia. We are working with other donors and the Government of Ethiopia to design a new, more accountable mechanism for providing assistance, so that basic services can continue to be provided throughout the country.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action his Department is taking, in conjunction with the Global Fund, to tackle the spread of AIDS in Africa. [46450]

Mr. Thomas: HIV and AIDS in Africa is a priority for DFID, as outlined in "Taking Action: the UK government's strategy for tackling HIV and AIDS in the Developing World". The strategy commits the UK Government to spending £1.5 billion over the next three years on HIV-related work.

The UK has committed £359 million to the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria (2002–08). In July 2005, the UK doubled funding to the Global Fund to £100 million for 2006 and the same for 2007. Of total Global Fund resources, 56 per cent. of funding is spent on HIV/AIDS and 60 per cent. will go to sub-Saharan Africa.

Across its 16 priority countries in Africa, DFID is working closely with governments and other development partners (including the Global Fund) to strengthen national comprehensive HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment and care services. We also address broader issues which affect HIV and AIDS such as human rights and health and education services. In countries such as Mozambique, DFID focuses on supporting national government decision-making processes in line with the "3 ones" principles (ie developing one national HIV/AIDS strategy, one co-ordinating body and one monitoring and evaluation system). In countries where working with the Government has been more difficult, such as Zimbabwe, we have been supporting UN agencies and civil society organisations to provide a range of HIV and AIDS services to vulnerable populations.

Horn of Africa

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 925W, on the Horn of Africa, how much of the bilateral aid was diverted to *(a)* the Ethiopian Government, *(b)* non-governmental agencies and *(c)* other organisations operating in that country. [46652]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not diverted aid to non-governmental agencies. Although we are not providing general budget support, which the Government is able to use for any purpose, we continue to support other Government programmes such as the Productive Safety Nets programme and programmes with NGOs working in HIV/AIDS and other development activities.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 925W, on the Horn of Africa, what assessment he has made of the impact of his decision to suspend bilateral aid to the Ethiopian Government upon his Department's efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to those worst affected by the crop failure in that country. [46653]

Hilary Benn: I have not suspended bilateral aid to Ethiopia. In the current political circumstances I have decided that we will not provide general budget support which is a form of aid the Ethiopian Government can use for any purpose.

The UK remains committed to supporting poor people in Ethiopia. Along with other donors we continue to support the Government of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Nets programme which provides assistance specifically to those communities and households most vulnerable to crop failure. In addition, we are continuing to work with the Government and the United Nations to provide emergency humanitarian assistance where appropriate.

Kenya

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State, Department for International Development, what additional support he is making available to the World Food Programme in Kenya; what assessment he has made of the humanitarian situation in Kenya following his recent visit; and if he will make a statement. [47496]

Hilary Benn: The UK has committed a further £3 million UK contribution in response to the food crisis in Kenya. Of this new commitment, £1 million will be channelled through the World Food Programme (WFP) for food and the balance of £2 million will be used to help with access to water. The total UK contribution stands at £13.8 million since June 2004, out of which £6.3 million has been provided through the WFP.

An estimated total of £2.5 million people mostly in the north eastern and eastern parts of Kenya are affected by the drought. The results of a national assessment due in a week's time will determine the level of current and future needs but it is clear from my recent visit that the levels of malnutrition are unacceptably high and urgent action is needed by all parties; Government, donors, NGOs, and communities to help save the lives of those at risk.

Food aid is critical in saving lives in an emergency but, on its own, it will not prevent another crisis happening. Each drought increases the numbers of people facing hunger. People are unable to escape poverty even in good years because they have lost or sold the assets they need to rebuild their lives. If people are to escape from this trap they need concerted effort by Governments to invest in these areas. Our support to education and health go some way towards helping. The provision of safety nets such as timely, adequate and guaranteed payments of cash or food on a regular basis to the neediest also helps rebuild lives.

Millennium Development Goals

Andrew Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what arrangements have been made by the UK to deliver the commitment made at the Millennium Review Summit of September 2005 to adopt, by 2006, comprehensive national strategies to achieve the millennium development goals. [46588]

Hilary Benn: National strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals must be prepared and adopted by developing countries. The UK is encouraging partner countries to adopt new strategies, or to enhance their current national poverty reduction strategies, to plan for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. We are working with other donors to develop a programme of donor meetings with individual partner countries to agree aid support for these plans.

Pakistan (Earthquake)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding has been *(a)* pledged and *(b)* delivered by the British Government to assist in the aftermath of the Pakistan earthquake. [45807]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has pledged a total of £58 million (including £1.6 million of the UK share of EC humanitarian funding) to meet relief needs and a further £70 million towards reconstruction. To date, over £52 million out of the £58 million pledged for relief has been committed to United Nations agencies, the Red Cross Movement, non-governmental organisations and DFID direct action. We are continuing to support the relief effort and expect the balance of our pledge to be programmed through relief organisations during the winter months.

The European Commission has pledged €93.6 million (around £63.7 million) to relief and reconstruction. The UK's share of this is around £11 million.

Pan-African Trade

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to encourage pan-African trade. [46529]

Hilary Benn: Many African countries lack the physical, human and institutional capacity to take advantage of either regional or global trade opportunities. Infrastructure, an enabling climate for the private sector and more efficient customs at borders are high priorities for regional trade.

DFID has committed to trebling 'aid for trade' to £100 million by 2010—aid which will be used to build up the country's capacity to trade, develop infrastructure to facilitate trade and provide transitional support as global trade barriers are removed. For example, we have pledged $20 million in support of a new Infrastructure Consortium in Africa to better co-ordinate and target financing for regional infrastructure. We have also pledged $30 million towards an Investment Climate Facility which will help make Africa a better place for business and commerce (e.g. by reforming customs to support regional trade integration). Under the UK presidency, G7 Finance Ministers also endorsed Aid for Trade, calling on the international community to increase its global contribution to $4 billion.

In addition, DFID is helping build the trading capacity of pan-African institutions (such as the African Union-New Partnership for African Development and Regional Economic Communities in southern, east and west Africa). For example, DFID's Regional Trade Facilitation Programme in southern Africa has helped countries to analyse their trading interests so they can participate more effectively in trade negotiations. We are also developing trade programmes in southern Africa to facilitate cross-border trade by establishing One Stop Border Posts.

Public Information

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total expenditure on information campaigns and advertising was for his Department for each year since 1997. [45802]

Mr. Thomas: The expenditure on information campaigns which is managed by our publicity unit is as follows:

	£
1996–97	579,916
1997–98	399,755
1998–99	674,531
1999–2000	879,354
2000–01	1,484,281
2001–02	1,286,053
2002–03	[1]1,300,000
2003–04	773,772
2004–05	[1]496,616

[1] Estimate

The expenditure on advertising, which is principally for recruitment and tenders is only available from 2000; figures prior to 2000 are not available as records were not held centrally prior to this date.

	£
1999–2000	751,972
2000–01	1,208,192
2001–02	914,571
2002–03	849,196
2003–04	700,077
2004–05	397,776

Russia

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department's policy is regarding the Russian Government's new legislation restricting UK non-governmental organisation operations in Russia. [46526]

Mr. Thomas: In 2005, under our EU presidency as well as bilaterally, the UK ambassador and his staff in Moscow, advocated to the Russian Authorities that the non-governmental organisation (NGO) law be implemented in line with the Council of Europe standards. This was also a position supported by other partners. The new legislation comes into effect on 10 April 2006 and DFID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) will be monitoring the situation as the legislation is implemented.

DFID is not providing direct support to any UK NGOs operating in Russia at present. However there are international NGOs working in the North Caucasus that are being funded through DFID and the United Nations.

The international community, including international and Russian NGOs are concerned about the potential impact of the changes introduced in the new NGO law. DFID is concerned that the law is ambiguous and could have a serious impact on the legitimate activity of civil society organisations in Russia.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Education (Hammersmith and Fulham)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which further education colleges in Hammersmith and Fulham will receive *(a)* a decrease and *(b)* an increase in their funding for adult education, not including for basic skills courses, in 2006-07. [45268]

Bill Rammell: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has not yet made allocations to further education (FE) providers for 2006-07. On 21 October I set out the Government's priorities for the learning and skills sector and the impact on funding in 2006-07 and 2007-08, and full details can be found in "Priorities for Success" on the LSC's website. Following my Department's grant letter to the LSC, budgets have been allocated to LSC regions, and local LSCs will provide provisional allocations to FE colleges and providers for the 2006-07 academic year by the end of this month. Final agreed budgets are expected to be confirmed in May.

Bullying (Hammersmith and Fulham)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding will be made available to schools in Hammersmith and Fulham for anti-bullying campaigns in 2006-07. [45256]

Jacqui Smith: Ring-fenced funding for anti bullying campaigns is not made available on either a local authority or school by school basis. Rather it is a matter for schools and local authorities to decide how much of their budget they devote to this important work.

Support for anti-bullying work is embedded in the behaviour and attendance strands of the National Strategies which have at least one consultant in place in each local authority. In addition, support is also provided through DfES funded Anti Bullying Alliance co-ordinators in each Government Office region.

At a national level the Department has funded a number of initiatives to tackle bullying. Since 1997 this has included events to disseminate good practice, plus development of guidance and resources for schools. We have supported an award scheme to share and celebrate the excellent work of schools and young people. We have funded the voluntary sector to embed effective practice and offer training and support to schools. We have run public information campaigns encouraging children to 'tell someone' and to support their friends, as well as providing information and support to parents.

Class Sizes

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her Department's target is for the average class size in primary schools. [45450]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* There is a statutory requirement on local authorities and schools to limit the size of infant classes for five, six, and seven-year-olds taught by one teacher to 30 or fewer pupils. There is no legal requirement to limit class sizes in any other age group, but since 1997 the average class sizes in primary schools have fallen from 27.5 to 26.2.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by her Department in each year since May 1997. [39089]

Bill Rammell: The Department for Education and Skills spent the following sums from administration costs on consultancy (as defined by the Office for Government Commerce (OGC)):

£ million

	Amount
1997-98	3.9
1998-99	5.0
1999-00	3.7
2000-01	4.3
2001-02	5.0
2002-03	4.0
2003-04	4.7
2004-05	3.9

The total cost of consultancy charged to programmes from November to March 2004-05 was £4.4 million. A further £9.5 million was spent in this period on other external expert advisers on education and children's matters to assist with policy implementation and delivery. The costs charged to programmes before November 2004 were not recorded centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Consultancy firms also supply a range of services which are not consultancy under the OGC definition.

The Department does not hold the requested information on its NDPBs and other sponsored organisations. It could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Extended Schools Programme

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in which constituencies *(a)* (i) neighbourhood nurseries and (ii) children's trusts are located and *(b)* the extended schools programme is operating. [43932]

Beverley Hughes: Sure Start funding was made available to 142 of the 150 local authorities to support the development and delivery of Neighbourhood Nurseries in the most disadvantaged areas of the country. Information on the constituencies in which Neighbourhood Nursery projects are located could only be obtained at disproportionate cost, but the 142 participating LAs are listed as follows:

Barking and Dagenham
Barnet
Barnsley
Bath and North East Somerset
Bedfordshire
Bexley
Birmingham
Blackburn with Darwen
Blackpool

Bolton
Bournemouth
Bracknell Forest
Bradford
Brent
Brighton and Hove
Bristol
Bromley
Buckinghamshire
Bury
Calderdale
Cambridgeshire
Camden
Cheshire
Cornwall
Coventry
Croydon
Cumbria
Darlington
Derby
Derbyshire
Devon
Doncaster
Dorset
Dudley
Durham County
Ealing
East Riding of Yorkshire
East Sussex
Enfield
Essex
Gateshead
Gloucestershire
Greenwich
Hackney
Halton
Hammersmith and Fulham
Hampshire
Haringey
Hartlepool
Havering
Herefordshire
Hertfordshire
Hillingdon
Hounslow
Isle of Wight
Islington
Kensington and Chelsea
Kent County
Kingston upon Hull
Kirklees
Knowsley
Lambeth
Lancashire
Leeds
Leicester City
Leicestershire
Lewisham
Lincolnshire
Liverpool
Luton
Manchester
Medway
Merton
Middlesbrough
Milton Keynes
Newcastle upon Tyne
Newham
Norfolk
North East Lincolnshire
North Lincolnshire
North Somerset
North Tyneside
North Yorkshire
Northamptonshire
Northumberland
Nottingham City
Nottinghamshire
Oldham
Oxfordshire
Peterborough
Plymouth
Poole
Portsmouth City
Reading
Redbridge
Redcar and Cleveland
Rochdale
Rotherham
Salford
Sandwell
Sefton
Sheffield
Shropshire
Slough
Solihull
Somerset
South Gloucestershire
South Tyneside
Southampton
Southend
Southwark
St. Helens
Staffordshire
Stockport
Stockton-on-Tees
Stoke-on-Trent
Suffolk
Sunderland
Surrey
Sutton
Swindon
Tameside
Telford and Wrekin
Thurrock
Torbay

Tower Hamlets
Trafford
Wakefield
Walsall
Waltham Forest
Wandsworth
Warrington
Warwickshire
West Sussex
Westminster
Wigan
Wiltshire
Windsor and Maidenhead
Wirral
Wolverhampton
Worcestershire
York

Children's trusts are partnerships between local authorities, primary care trusts and others who have an interest in improving outcomes for children and young people. There is progress towards putting these partnerships in place in all local authorities, when children's trusts will impact on every constituency.

All 150 local authorities have received Government funding for 2005–06 to enable them to start up, or expand, extended services available through their schools; and since April 2005, the National Remodelling Team has been working with all local authorities to support them. It is, however, for individual authorities to decide whether to roll out the programme to all schools simultaneously, or on an area by area basis. Information on the constituencies in which extended schools are located could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Faith Schools

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new faith schools have been set up in each year since 1997. [46532]

Jacqui Smith: The following table shows the numbers of new maintained schools with a religious character that have been established each year since 1997:

Faith	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*Total per Faith*
Roman Catholic	4	1	5	1			1		1	13
Roman Catholic Church of England					1			1		2
Church of England	2	5	2	3	6	10	10	10	7	55
Church of England Methodist						1		1	1	3
Jewish	3	3	1					2	2	11
Muslim	2				2			1	1	6
Sikh		2								2
Greek Orthodox			1							1
Seventh Day Adventist	1									1
Total per year	12	11	9	4	9	11	11	15	12	94

The table excludes schools established from the amalgamation or reorganisation of existing schools with a religious character.

In addition to the above, eight Academies with a religious character (six Christian, one Roman Catholic and one Church of England) have opened since 1997, three of which replaced existing schools with a religious character.

Grants (West Lancashire)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much West Lancashire constituency has received from the *(a)* Excellence in Cities, *(b)* Education Action Zone and *(c)* Leadership Incentive Grant Scheme in each year since the schemes began. [45012]

Jacqui Smith: Schools in the West Lancashire constituency have benefited from Excellence in Cities (EiC) funding since September 2001 and the Leadership Incentive Grant scheme (LIG) since September 2003. There was no Education Action Zone (EAZ) in the constituency and the EAZ programme has now finished. From September 2004, under the EiC Primary Expansion, funding has been allocated to local authorities in respect of all primary schools with 35 per cent. or more pupils eligible for free school meals. This includes all primary schools in West Lancashire that meet the criteria. Actual allocations vary as the funding formula is linked to pupil numbers, but funding is in the region of £110 per pupil.

A breakdown of the EiC/Excellence Cluster and LIG funding by year for West Lancashire is given in the following table.

	Excellence cluster	*LIG*
2001–02	389,000	n/a
2002–03	666,500	n/a
2003–04	666,500	500,000
2004–05[1]	703,560	520,000
2005–06[1]	731,702	540,000

[1] All figures for 2004–05 and 2005–06 include a 4 per cent. uplift on the previous year.

Heritage Restoration

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to increase skills training opportunities for those wishing to pursue skills relevant to heritage restoration; and what support she has made available to the Heritage Academy partnership between Woodchester Mansion Trust, Cirencester College, the Royal Agricultural College and Stroud College. [42186]

Phil Hope: ConstructionSkills is part of the Government's Skills for Business Network and jointly funds the National Heritage Training Group (NHTG) with English Heritage. The NHTG has a UK-wide remit

to develop skills and training provision for the traditional building crafts sector carrying out skills research, action planning, and work on qualifications. The NHTG is also part of a partnership with English Heritage, the National Trust Commission and others that recently submitted a successful application for a £900,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This will support a Traditional Building Skills Bursary Scheme for England and Wales to encourage the uptake in qualifications in conservation from January 2006. The Heritage Lottery Fund is also supporting a further nine partnerships providing training in heritage restoration skills with total funding of just under £7 million.

ConstructionSkills and English Heritage were actively engaged in a conference on designing heritage skills training partnerships held at Woodchester Mansion in September 2005 and are providing ongoing advice and support through the NHTG as the academy takes forward plans to develop a Centre of Excellence in the South West.

Key Stages

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many schools were included in the 2005 Key Stage 4 Contextual Value Added Pilot Scheme; [47058]

(2) what plans her Department has to use fine grades as a measure of pupil performance; [47059]

(3) what assessment she has made of the results of the 2005 Key Stage 4 Contextual Value Added Pilot Scheme; [47057]

(4) whether she plans to include the *(a)* contextual value added and *(b)* value added measure in the 2006 achievement and attainment tables. [47060]

Jacqui Smith: On 19 January 2006 the Department published the Contextual Value Added (CVA) Pilot Achievement and Attainment Tables, showing results for the 430 schools who have been involved in the CVA pilot. The pilot was designed to test the feasibility of including CVA in the tables, the methodology for which includes the use of fine grades.

The pilot is currently being evaluated, both in terms of the impact on schools, and from a data handling and processing perspective. Evaluation of the pilot will be completed by the end of March 2006. Subject to the evaluation findings, we intend to replace the existing value added measure with the new CVA measure in the 2006 secondary achievement and attainment tables.

List 99

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many appeals against a ban on working with children have been made by people on *(a)* the Sex Offenders Register, but not on List 99 and *(b)* on List 99 in each of the last 10 years. [43926]

Ruth Kelly: Someone who is on the Sex Offenders Register but not on List 99 is not banned from working with children to the extent that he is not subject to a complete or partial bar from doing work to which section 142 of the Education Act 2002 applies.

The annual number of appeals, to the Care Standards Tribunal in respect of listing on List 99, lodged in each calendar year is as follows:

	Number
2001	1
2002	3
2003	3
2004	3
2005	6

Prior to 2000 there was no right of appeal to an independent tribunal. The first hearing was heard in 2001.

Pupil Exclusions (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupil exclusions there have been in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Coventry, South in each year since 1997. [46167]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools: number of permanent exclusions 1996/97 to 2003/04—Coventry, South parliamentary constituency

	Number of permanent exclusions			
	Primary		*Secondary*	
	Number	*Percentage*[1]	*Number*	*Percentage*[1]
1996/97	[3]	[3]	23	0.36
1997/98	9	0.10	25	0.38
1998/99	[3]	[3]	29	0.43
1999/2000	8	0.09	26	0.38
2000/01[2]	3	0.04	11	0.16
2001/02[2]	[3]	[3]	18	0.25
2002/03[2]	0	0.00	14	0.19
2003/04[2]	[3]	[3]	0	0.00

[1] The number of exclusions expressed as a percentage of the total number of pupils on the school roll in January of the same school year. Excludes dually registered pupils.
[2] There are known quality issues with exclusions data for these years. Figures shown here are as reported by schools but are unconfirmed and should be used with caution.
[3] 1 or 2 exclusions, or a rate based on 1 or 2 exclusions.

Source:
Annual Schools Census

Safeguarding Children

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to her oral statement of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 966–70, on safeguarding children, whether all *(a)* health professionals, *(b)* social workers and *(c)* peripatetic teaching staff who work with children in schools will be subject to Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks; and what level of CRB checks will be made on those workers for whom checks will be required. [45377]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* Child care organisations proposing to offer employment in a child care position are, subject to limited exceptions, required to check whether a person is on the Protection of Children Act List of people who are unsuitable to work with children. If a person is on that list, the organisation must not offer the position. In practice, a check against the Protection of Children Act List can

only be made by carrying out a CRB check. Child care organisations include organisations concerned with the provision of social services or health care services to child.

Current guidance advises that a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure at enhanced level is applicable for a position whose normal duties include caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children and for all other individuals whose normal duties include working in a school or an educational establishment a standard level Disclosure is applicable.

In addition, I said in my statement of 19 January that I will require mandatory Criminal Records Bureau checks for all newly appointed school employees and that my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary would be restating how the current system operates, what will change and the priority that is attached to this area.

School Performance Data

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the cost was to her Department of producing the performance and assessment data for schools issued in December 2005; [46392]

(2) what estimate she has made of the cost of correcting and re-issuing the performance and assessment data for schools first published in December 2005; [46645]

(3) when schools will receive corrected performance and assessment data. [46644]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 30 January 2006]*: The performance and assessment reports are produced by Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, Maurice Smith, has written to my hon. Friend and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Maurice Smith, dated 30 January 2006:

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS 46392 46644 46645: PANDA REPORTS

Your recent parliamentary questions have been referred to me, as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of schools, for reply.

In sum, you asked:

the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost was to her Department of producing performance and assessment data for schools issued in December 2005. (PQ 46392)

the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the cost of correcting and re-issuing the performance and assessment data for schools first published in December 2005. (PQ 46645)

the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when schools will receive corrected performance and assessment data. (PQ 46644)

In response to PQ 46392, the PANDA (Performance and Assessment) report issued to all mainstream maintained secondary schools in England on 23 December 2005 was part of a series of reports published in 2005/06. Six sets of PANDA reports have been produced and made available to schools so far in 2005/06.

For all 18,000 mainstream maintained primary schools in England the following PANDAs were produced:

A PANDA based on 2004 validated data

A "New Style" PANDA based on 2004 validated data

A "New Style" PANDA based on 2005 unvalidated data

For all 3,400 mainstream maintained secondary schools in England the following PANDAs were produced:

A PANDA based on 2004 validated data

A "New Style" PANDA based on 2004 validated data

A "New Style" PANDA based on 2005 unvalidated data

The total cost to Ofsted of developing, producing and supporting schools and inspectors in using the PANDAs in 2005/06 was £290,000. Appendix A provides a breakdown of these costs.

This annual cost includes the development costs associated with the release of a "New Style" PANDA in September 2005. This and subsequent PANDAs contained new analysis using more sophisticated techniques and improved presentations.

It is not possible to identify the exact cost of producing the PANDA reports released on 23 December 2005 since the direct staff costs incurred cannot be attributed separately to the development, production and support to schools and inspectors in their use of the PANDA. However the cost of developing, producing and supporting schools and inspectors in the use of this particular PANDA has been estimated to be £50,000, equal to 1/6th of the annual cost of producing the six sets of PANDA reports released in 2005/06.

In response to PQ 46645, the "New Style" PANDA based on 2005 unvalidated data and released on 23 December 2005 contained an error. The analysis in table 3.4.14 excluded A* grades from the calculations. The error required one line of programming code to be corrected. Following the correction, the production of the revised documents required IT processing time which incurred no additional cost. The only additional cost was for a letter sent to all secondary schools informing them of the error and the remedial action being taken. This additional letter cost £1,500.

In response to PQ 46644, a corrected "New Style" PANDA based on 2005 unvalidated data was made available for schools to download from the Ofsted website on 26 January 2006.

A copy of this reply has been sent to Jacqui Smith and will be placed in the library of both Houses.

APPENDIX A

2005/06 costs for PANDA development, production and support

Direct staff costs (including staff on-costs, NI, pension etc) = £210,000

Comprising of:

0.5 FTE Band A (Grade 7 equivalent)

1 FTE B1 (SEO equivalent)

2 FTE B2s (HEO equivalent)

2 FTE B3s (EO equivalent)

1 FTE C1s (AO equivalent)

Cost of distribution of 66,000 letters to schools = £30,000

Cost of website hosting and maintenance = £50,000

Total 2005/06 cost for PANDA development, production and support = £290,000

Schools (Leicestershire)

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Leicestershire were classed as outstanding in their last Ofsted report. [44841]

Jacqui Smith: This is a matter for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, Maurice Smith, has written to my hon. Friend and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Maurice Smith, dated 26 January 2006:

Your recent parliamentary question has been passed to me, as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, for reply.

You asked how many schools in Leicestershire were classed as outstanding in their last Ofsted report.

Inspectors have made judgements about schools' overall effectiveness since January 2000. Until July 2005 this judgement was made using a seven point scale, with the highest being

excellent. Since September 2005 the judgement has been made using a four point scale. This response relates to schools judged to be either excellent or outstanding in their most recent inspection. Not quite all schools in Leicester City and Leicestershire, 92% and 97%, respectively, were inspected between January 2000 and December 2005.

Three schools in Leicester City and two in Leicestershire were judged to be excellent, using the pre-September 2005 framework. One* school in Leicester City and three* schools in Leicestershire were judged to be outstanding, using the framework now in use.

*Please note that these figures include 3 schools that had pilot inspections during 2004-05.

A copy of this reply has been sent to Jacqui Smith and will be placed in the library of both Houses.

Trust Schools

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether representatives of companies from the *(a)* banking, *(b)* supermarket, *(c)* tobacco, *(d)* oil and energy, *(e)* fast food, *(f)* construction and *(g)* IT industries have (i) expressed an interest in, (ii) requested information about and (iii) corresponded with her Department about trust schools. [44543]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* We welcome the involvement of partners from all sectors of the community and across the economy in forming charitable trusts to support schools.

We are engaged in ongoing discussions with a range of organisations, including representatives of companies from banking, construction and IT industries. The recent Trust School Prospectus (www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/schoolswhitepaper) included some of these companies: Microsoft is interested in developing existing links with Monkseaton Language college into a trust, and Solihull local authority is working with a private sector business consortium on a regeneration project—as part of this a shared trust for several primary schools could help to ensure a close link between the schools, the local community and the regeneration project.

We have had no contact with supermarkets, fast food companies or companies in the tobacco or oil and energy industries.

It will be for individual school governing bodies to decide whether they want to acquire a trust, and to choose who they want to work with. Local authorities will be able to refer a school's decision to acquire a particular trust to the schools adjudicator if it is clear that the school has not taken proper account of the views of the majority of parents, or if there are serious concerns about the impact of the acquisition of the trust on school standards.

William Gibson

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the *(a)* head teacher and *(b)* governing body of Porchester School in Bournemouth knew that before his appointment William Gibson had a conviction for indecently assaulting a girl of 15 years of age and a conviction for fraud, forgery and theft. [43400]

Ruth Kelly: My Department does not hold this information.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2838W, on Afghanistan, how much of the Afghan Counter Narcotics Trust Fund will be ring-fenced; for what purposes; how much cash will be required for the wages and salaries of counter-narcotics staff; what mechanisms are in place to safeguard these funds; and how much of the pledged US funding has been transferred into the fund. [46270]

Dr. Howells: The Counter Narcotics Trust Fund (CNTF) has been created to give the Afghans greater ownership of the counter-narcotics agenda and ensure assistance is targeted effectively. The Government of Afghanistan are encouraging international donors to make un-earmarked contributions to the fund to give the Government maximum flexibility to allocate funding in accordance with the four priorities highlighted in its National Drugs Control Strategy: disrupting the drugs trade by targeting traffickers and their backers; strengthening and diversifying legal rural livelihoods; reducing the demand for illicit drugs and treatment of problem drug users; and developing state institutions at the central and provincial level. However, in recognition of the budgetary and policy constraints under which different donors operate, it will be possible to earmark funds for one or more of the following eight pillars of activity (building institutions, information campaign, alternative livelihoods, criminal justice, law enforcement, eradication, demand reduction, regional co-operation). It is not envisaged that the wages of permanent counter-narcotics staff working for the Ministry of Counter Narcotics will be funded through the CNTF—rather the fund will be used to cover projectised activity. The United Nations Development Programme will administer the fund which will ensure transparency and accountability.

The UK commitment of £30 million includes an initial £10 million from our Afghan Drugs Inter-Departmental Unit and £20 million from the Department for International Development (DFID). DFID's commitment will be available for alternative livelihoods, institution building, and drug demand reduction and treatment of addicts—pillars consistent with UK poverty reduction objectives.

The US has not yet officially announced its pledge to the fund. We expect that they will do so during the London conference taking place on 31 January-1 February.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of how much heroin was produced in Afghanistan in each of the last two years; how much of that was exported to the UK in each year; what estimates he has made of the levels so far in 2006; and if he will make a statement. [46378]

Dr. Howells: In November 2005, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) confirmed the opium poppy cultivation and opium production figures for the 2004-05 season from their annual survey. They

estimated that opium production was around 4,100 metric tonnes, a decrease of only 100 tonnes (2.4 per cent.) compared to 2004, despite a significant reduction in cultivation (a 21 per cent. reduction in poppy cultivation from 131,000 hectares in 2004 to 104,000 ha in 2005). Good weather and an absence of crop disease were responsible for the increase in yield in 2005.

The UNODC publishes figures for global illicit cultivation of opium poppy and production of opium and heroin in its annual World Drugs Report. Full details can be found on their website http://www.unodc.org. According to the 2005 report, the potential heroin production for 2004 was estimated as 500 tonnes, if all the opium produced was converted to heroin. Figures for heroin production in 2005 in Afghanistan will not be available until the publication of the Report in June this year.

We estimate that around 95 per cent. of heroin in the UK originates in Afghanistan.

While the figures for heroin and opium production for this season (2005 06) in Afghanistan are unavailable until later this year, the UNODC will provide an early indication of 2005 06 cultivation trends in their Rapid Assessment Survey, which is due to be published next month.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what evidence he has received of Iranian assistance to terrorists and insurgent forces in Afghanistan. [46978]

Dr. Howells: Iran has links to a variety of groups in Afghanistan but the Government have no evidence of Iranian assistance to terrorist and insurgent forces in Afghanistan. Iran has stated that it supports the long-term reconstruction of Afghanistan and the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan and the international community to build stability and security. We welcome this commitment.

Belarus

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government have made to the Government in Belarus regarding the treatment of Pastor Ernst Sabilo and the Belarusian Evangelical Church in Minsk in relation to restrictions placed on them by the Belarusian authorities. [46698]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government continue to raise human rights issues with the Belarusian authorities, both bilaterally and with EU partners. Throughout 2005 we raised the issue of restrictions on freedom of worship, most notably in a resolution critical of Belarus' human rights record sponsored by the EU at the UN Commission on Human Rights. The Government have not made any separate representations to the Government of Belarus specifically concerning Pastor Sabilo or the Belarusian Evangelical Church. In the course of 2005, our ambassador in Minsk also met with leaders of Churches under pressure from the authorities to hear their concerns.

Bolivia

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with President Evo Morales of Bolivia on the security of British business interests in that country from nationalisation. [46275]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not yet met President Evo Morales. But we have made clear to the new Government the importance we attach to building a stable and prosperous society, founded on a sound economy. We have also set out our view that a number of British companies present in Bolivia are well placed to make an important contribution to the country's future prosperity.

We shall continue to take every appropriate opportunity to reiterate this message with President Morales and relevant Members of his Administration.

Burma

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of how much *(a)* heroin and *(b)* methamphetamine was produced in Burma in each of the last two years; how much of that was exported to the UK in each year; what estimates he has made of the levels so far in 2006; and if he will make a statement. [46377]

Dr. Howells: The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates that opiate cultivation in Myanmar has declined from 44,200 hectares in 2004 to 32,800 hectares in 2005. This represents a 26 per cent. fall in cultivation. In 2004, Myanmar produced 370 metric tons of opium. In 2005, the total estimated production of opium was around 312 metric tons, a 16 per cent. decrease compared with the previous year and a 76 per cent. decrease from 1998. Estimates for 2006 are not yet available.

The UNODC estimates that about half the global production of amphetamines (mainly methamphetamine) take place in East and South East Asia, out of a total world production of 332 metric tons in 2003. Figures for 2004 and 2005 and estimates for 2006 are not yet available. The 2005 the Office of National Drug Control Policy National Drug Threat Assessment reports that Burmese criminal groups are the principal producers of methamphetamine tablets in South East Asia, with several hundred million tablets annually distributed to drugs markets in Thailand, China and India.

There is no evidence that drugs produced in or smuggled via Burma reach the UK in significant quantities.

China

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the transfer of Chinese missile technology to Iran; and if the Government support lifting the EU arms embargo on China. [47425]

Dr. Howells: Countering the threat of missile proliferation remains one of the Government's strategic priorities, particularly where such proliferation might contribute to the delivery of weapons of mass

destruction. We seek to monitor missile-related transfers to Iran in this context. Assessments of proliferation activity often draw on highly classified information; it is impossible, therefore, to comment on specific aspects.

The Government support the decision of the European Council in December 2003 to review the EU arms embargo on China. This review is on-going—it was last discussed by EU Foreign Ministers at December's General Affairs and External Relations Council. The Government do not wish to exclude any options for the review, or to pre-empt the conclusion of the review. There is no consensus at present in the EU for lift. Further consultations in the EU and with other international partners are necessary before any decision is taken. In the context of these discussions the EU recalls the European Council Conclusions in December 2004 that any decision on the arms embargo would not result in an increase of arms exports to China in either quantitative or qualitative terms.

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many of his Department's employees have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46867]

Mr. Straw: The number of Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) employees who took early retirement due to ill health in each of the past three calendar years was:

	Number
2003	9
2004	7
2005	2

Prior to the introduction of electronic records in September 2002, the FCO did not maintain records in a form that distinguished separately those retiring for medical reasons. To collate the information requested would incur disproportionate costs.

EU Arms Exports

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if he will make a statement on EU arms exports to Ethiopia as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports; [46838]

(2) if he will make a statement on EU arms exports to Eritrea as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports; [46839]

(3) if he will make a statement on EU arms exports to Iran as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports; [46840]

(4) if he will make a statement on EU arms exports to Liberia as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports; [46841]

(5) if he will make a statement on EU arms exports to Libya as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports; [46842]

(6) if he will make a statement on EU arms exports to Namibia as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports; [46843]

(7) if he will make a statement on EU arms exports to Sudan as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports; [46844]

(8) if he will make a statement on EU arms exports to Syria as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports; [46845]

(9) if he will make a statement on EU arms exports to Tajikistan as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports; [46846]

(10) if he will make a statement on EU arms exports to Kyrgyzstan as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports [46847]

(11) if he will make a statement on EU arms exports to Zambia as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports; [46848]

(12) if he will make a statement on EU arms exports to Zimbabwe as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports; [46849]

(13) if he will make a statement on UK arms exports to the Democratic Republic of the Congo licensed by the Government as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports. [46850]

Dr. Howells: The EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports was adopted on 8 June 1998. It represents a politically binding commitment by EU member states to apply common criteria when assessing export licence applications for the export of items on the common EU military list. Decisions made under the code are a matter for each individual member state.

Licence applications in the UK for the export of military and other controlled goods are rigorously assessed on a case by case basis against the Consolidated EU and national export licensing criteria, taking account of the circumstances prevailing at the time and other relevant announced Government policies. The Government will not issue licences where to do so would be inconsistent with the criteria or other relevant commitments. Further detail on UK export licence decisions for 2004 is contained in the United Kingdom Annual Report on Strategic Export Controls 2004, which was presented to Parliament on 21 July 2005.

Family Member Permits (EEA)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many European economic area family member permits were issued by British missions overseas in each of the last three years. [47320]

Dr. Howells: The information on EEA family member permits issued by British missions overseas in the last three years is as follows:

EEA family permits issued

	Number
2002-03	20,016
2003-04	21,441
2004-05	24,930

UKvisas compiles statistics by financial year. Further entry clearance statistics in addition to those provided can be found on the UKvisas website at: www.ukvisas.gov.uk 'Entry Clearance: Facts and Figures'.

Migrant Smuggling

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the death toll of migrants being smuggled to countries around the horn of Africa; what representations he has made to *(a)* the countries involved and *(b)* the UN; and if he will make a statement. [47491]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We are aware that migrants transit the horn of Africa through a number of routes and that there have been tragic incidents involving loss of life, but there are no reliable statistics. My hon. Friend the Minister for the Middle East, (Dr. Howells), raised this issue most recently with the Yemeni authorities on 24 January. We are helping the Yemeni Government to establish an effective coast guard. The Department for International Development have granted £500,000 to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to help the protection of internally displaced communities in the horn of Africa. I also refer my hon. Friend to the answer my hon. Friend, the Minister of State at the Home Office, gave the hon. Member for Ashford (Damian Green) on 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1114W.

Nepal

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Nepal about the detention under house arrest of the leaders of Nepal's five principal political parties. [46222]

Dr. Howells: The UK is deeply troubled by recent political developments in Nepal. Following the arrest and detention of the leaders of the five main political parties on 19 January, I issued a statement in which I said, "The UK is extremely concerned by the King's actions, and we can see no grounds for these anti-democratic measures. I call on the King urgently to release those arrested, and to find ways to resume dialogue with the political parties." The statement is available at: http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029391638&a=KArticle&aid=1136906017567%20&year=2006&month=2006-01-02&date=2006-01-19

The following day I summoned the Nepalese ambassador to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to explain his Government's actions to senior officials and urged the Government of Nepal to release all of the political prisoners detained in the most recent round-up of activists and party leaders.

The UK also joined EU partners in issuing a statement by EU Heads of Mission in Nepal deploring all of the recent arrests including of party leaders, political activists, members of civil society and human rights defenders. This is available at: http://www.ambkathmandu.um.dk/en/menu/TheEmbassy/News/StatementOfTheEUHeadsOfMissionInNepal.htm

We view the recent arrests and the suspension of the right to free association as a severe setback to democracy and we continue to urge the King to urgently find ways to resume dialogue with the political parties. We are encouraged to note that many of the party leaders who were detained have now been released. But 200 political party activists are still in detention including one of the top party leaders who is still being held under house arrest.

Russia

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government plans to take during Russia's presidency of the G8 to encourage *(a)* democracy and *(b)* a free media in that country; and if he will make a statement. [46294]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: In the run up to the Russian presidency of the G8, the UK has encouraged the Russian authorities to maintain the high standards on the promotion of democratic and civil freedoms upheld by successive G8 presidencies. The UK, along with other G8 members, reiterated this message at the first preparatory meeting for the St Petersburg Summit, held in Moscow last week. These efforts are in keeping with our ongoing EU and bilateral dialogues with Russia, where we continue to emphasise that respect for democracy, the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, a free and independent media, and the effective application of common values by independent judicial systems are key elements of our relations with Russia.

Statutory Instruments

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the statutory instruments introduced by his Department since 6 May 2005. [46201]

Dr. Howells: Statutory Instruments prepared by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and coming into force after 6 May 2005 are:

Statutory Instruments

2005/1260	The Child Abduction and Custody (Parties to Conventions) (Amendment) Order 2005
2005/1258	The Sudan (United Nations Measures) (Overseas Territories) Order 2005
2005/1461	The Democratic Republic of the Congo (United Nations Sanctions) (Overseas Territories) Order 2005
2005/1456	The G8 Gleneagles (Immunities and Privileges) Order 2005
2005/1465	The Consular Fees Order 2005

	Statutory Instruments
2005/1870	The International Organisations Act 2005 (Commencement) Order 2005
2005/1988	The Democratic Republic of the Congo (Restrictive Measures) (Overseas Territories) (Amendment) Order 2005
2005/2047	The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (Immunities and Privileges) Order 2005
2005/2112	The Consular Fees Act 1980 (Fees) Order 2005
2005/2762	The Consular Fees (Civil Partnership) Order 2005
2005/2763	The Air Navigation (Overseas Territories) (Amendment) Order 2005
2005/2761	The Civil Partnership (Registration Abroad and Certificates) Order 2005
2005/3182	The Consular Fees (Amendment) Order 2005
2005/3198	The Consular Fees Act 1980 (Fees) (No.2) Order 2005
2005/3183	The Overseas Territories (Zimbabwe) (Restrictive Measures) (Amendment) Order 2005
2005/3426	The European Forest Institute (Legal Capacities) Order 2005
2005/3425	The European Court of Human Rights (Immunities and Privileges) (Amendment) Order 2005
2005/3542	The Civil Partnership Act 2004 (International Immunities and Privileges, Companies and Adoption) Order 2005

UK Arms Exports

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on UK arms exports to China licensed by the Government as referred to in the Seventh Annual Report on the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports. [46837]

Dr. Howells: Licence applications for the export of military and other controlled goods are rigorously assessed on a case by case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Export Licensing Criteria, taking account of the circumstances prevailing at the time and other relevant announced Government policies. The Government will not issue licences where to do so would be inconsistent with the criteria or other relevant commitments. The Government continues to implement the EU Arms Embargo on China as set out by the then Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the late Derek Fatchett, in his reply to the hon. Member for Gedling (Mr. Coaker) on 3 June 1998, *Official Report*, columns 240–241.

Visitor Visas

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the merits of introducing charges for visitor visas. [46877]

Dr. Howells: People who apply for entry clearance to visit the United Kingdom are charged:

£50—for single, double and multiple visits, when the visa is valid for up to six months;

£85—for multiple visits, when the visa is valid for one, two, five or 10 years.

Entry clearance application fees are set to reflect the actual cost of processing each application. UKvisas does not receive any subsidy from the taxpayer and is mandated by Treasury guidelines to recover the cost of the UK's global entry clearance operation through its fees. The Government believes that those who benefit from the service should pay for it.

Whaling (Norway)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 195W, on Norway whaling, what the estimated cost is of cleaning up old whaling stations on South Georgia; and what steps the Government is taking to encourage a greater contribution from the Norwegian Government. [46047]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The cost of cleaning up the former whaling station at Grytviken was approximately £6.7 million. This cost has been borne exclusively by the Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. It is difficult to estimate the cost of carrying out a similar operation at Leith Harbour, Stromness and Husvik whaling stations, but it is unlikely to be less than £20 to £25 million.

Although Norwegian commercial interests and personnel were heavily involved in the whaling industry in South Georgia, the Norwegian Government has never had any direct responsibility for the whaling stations on South Georgia. It has indicated that it is not in a position to make a financial contribution towards the environmental clean-up.

Younas Case (Pakistan)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made in the Younas case currently before the High Court in Pakistan; and if he will take steps to reiterate the Government's case against the use of the death penalty and for the need for a fair trial conducted without fear of intimidation. [47517]

Dr. Howells: We have not made any further representations on this case since the answer that my right hon. Friend, the Minister for Europe, (Mr. Alexander), gave my hon. Friend on 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 300W. We were concerned to learn about the apparent misuse of the Blasphemy Law in Pakistan and are monitoring this case closely. Mr. Masih's application for bail was heard on 31 January. The court has not yet announced its decision on this application. We continue to lobby, both bilaterally and as part of the EU, on minority issues in Pakistan, in particular the misuses of the Blasphemy Law. In December 2005, as presidency the UK delivered an EU démarche on human rights to the Government of Pakistan, which encouraged the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws and the death penalty.

SCOTLAND

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what proportion of the premises occupied by his Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42873]

David Cairns: 100 per cent.

Christmas Cards

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will estimate the cost to his Department of sending Christmas cards in 2005. [45923]

David Cairns: The total cost of official Christmas cards issued by the Scotland Office and by the Office of the Advocate-General for Scotland in 2005 was £1,034. This cost comprised that of purchasing the cards (£808) and the cost of postage (£226).

Departmental Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machine his Department owned in (i) Scotland and (ii) each English region in (A) 2003–04 and (B) 2004–05. [40113]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office does not maintain a central record of all electrical devices owned. The information requested could therefore be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Estate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of his Department which has been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price for each (i) was at the time of sale and (ii) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (A) retained by his Department and (B) claimed by the Treasury. [40130]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999; since that date, no property or land has been sold.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixture and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of his Department in (i) Scotland and (ii) each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40114]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office and Office of the Advocate General have premises in London and Scotland but do not record expenditure in a way which would allow the accurate allocation of expenditure between the buildings. The total costs were:

£000

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Furniture and Fittings	26	4	25
General Office Expenses	1,759	1,788	1,621
Office Equipment	58	6	22

The Offices spent £16,945 on furniture and fittings, £846,008 on general office expenses, and £36,295 on office equipment between 1 April and 31 December 2005.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of his Department in (i) Scotland and (ii) each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40115]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office spent the following on repairs and maintenance:

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Scotland	38,712	67,289	41,643
London	60,598	112,564	332,485

The Office has spent £11,314 in Scotland and £97,045 in London on repairs and maintenance of buildings between 1 April and 31 December 2005. The Office has not purchased any buildings or staff insurance.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the annual expenditure on training and development by his Department was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40128]

David Cairns: The total direct expenditure by the Scotland Office on training was:

	£
2002–03	25,202
2003–04	23,483
2004–05	11,123

The Office spent £8,460 on training between 1 April and 31 December 2005.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much his Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40327]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office spent £2,418 on bottled water in 2004–05.

Departmental Functions

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39825]

David Cairns: The most readily available information about the functions and costs of the Scotland Office are set out in the Annual Report 2005 (Cm 6544), copies of which are available in the Library.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what functions in his Department are carried out in Scotland; and what the administration costs of these functions were in the last year for which figures are available. [40016]

David Cairns: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave today to PQ 39825 from the hon. Member for Moray.

Departmental Jobs

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many and what percentage of jobs in his Department are located in *(a)* Scotland and *(b)* Greater London. [39862]

David Cairns: Figures for the Scotland Office, including the Office of the Advocate-General for Scotland, are published in table D of the Civil Service Statistics 2004 which is available on the Cabinet Office Statistics website: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/civil_service_statistics/index.asp.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many civil servants in his Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40285]

David Cairns: All the staff in the Scotland Office are on loan from the Scottish Executive or the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA).

Although no staff in the Scotland Office have formally worked from home in the last year, both the Scottish Executive and the DCA are committed to achieving a work life balance for all staff. Both Departments fully recognise the broad context of diversity and promotion of homeworking as one of several ways in which staff can work flexibly.

Domestic Valuation

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether the valuation of domestic property in Scotland for taxation purposes is an *(a)* devolved and *(b)* reserved matter. [39502]

David Cairns: This matter is devolved.

Older People (Care)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has held with the Scottish Executive on policy on care for older people. [40610]

David Cairns: My right hon. Friend and I meet regularly with Scottish Executive Ministers to discuss a range of issues but care for older people is largely a devolved matter.

Pension Contributions

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the cost of pension contributions incurred by his Department was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40129]

David Cairns: The pension contributions incurred by the Scotland Office were:

	£
2002–03	273,694
2003–04	271,431
2004–05	233,906

For 2005–06, employers' contributions are payable to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) at one of four rates in the ranges 16.2 to 24.6 per cent. of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The Scheme Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation; last carried out as at 31 March 2003. The contribution rates reflect the cost of benefits as they accrue (net of employee contributions), not the costs as they are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme. The planned costs for 2005–06 are not available.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Alcohol-free Zones

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many alcohol-free zones there are in each local authority area. [45653]

Paul Goggins: The Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 enables local authorities to restrict antisocial public drinking by introducing a Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) in areas where there is a problem with alcohol misuse behaviour. These are sometimes mistakenly referred to as alcohol-free zones. Once in place a DPPO provides the police with the power to enforce the restriction, where necessary because of antisocial alcohol misuse, by confiscating both opened and sealed containers. There are currently 331 DPPOs and some areas have introduced more than one. A full list of the DPPOs currently in place can be found on the following website: www.crimereduction.gov.uk/alcoholorders09.htm

Asylum Seekers

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many asylum decisions have been taken in each month of the last two years; and how many have been judged as late and opportunistic; [42060]

(2) what the average time is which has elapsed before asylum applicants judged late and opportunistic are deported; and what measures are in place to ensure that such applicants are deported quickly; [42053]

(3) what the average cost has been of dealing with each asylum applicant judged late and opportunistic; [42054]

(4) how many asylum applicants judged late and opportunistic have been considered unsuitable for detention in each month of the past two years; and where they have been located; [42055]

(5) what the nine asylum routes are under the New Asylum Model; [42056]

(6) what arrangements are in place to detain those asylum applicants that are judged late and opportunistic; and how many such applicants have been detained; [42058]

(7) if he will make a statement on the New Asylum Model; [42057]

(8) how many asylum applicants judged late and opportunistic have been deported in each month of the last two years. [42059]

Mr. McNulty: Information on asylum initial decisions by month is published quarterly. Copies are available from the Library and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html "Late and opportunistic" is not, however, a category of asylum decision, but a part of a casework-handling process which has not, prior to the advent of the New Asylum Model (NAM) in 2005, been dealt with as a discrete category. We have not as yet decided the appropriate format in which to publish NAM data.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers accommodated in *(a)* England, *(b)* Cambridgeshire, *(c)* Peterborough City Council Unitary Authority and *(d)* Peterborough constituency, were granted (i) asylum, (ii) indefinite leave to remain and (iii) refugee status in each of the last 10 years; and how many illegal immigrants who had been accommodated in each area have been deported in each of the last 10 years. [46064]

Mr. McNulty: Statistics on the location of persons who were granted indefinite leave to remain and those who were granted refugee status in each of the last 10 years is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by the examination of individual case records.

Data on asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) broken down by parliamentary constituency are also available from the Library.

Information on the number of people who were deported from the UK is published on an annual basis in the Home Office Command Paper, "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom". It is not possible to break this information down by the region that they were residing in.

Community Safety Officers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many additional police community safety officers were allocated to each English police force in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06; how many he estimates will be allocated in each year to 2008–09; and if he will make a statement. [45590]

Hazel Blears: Community Support Officers (CSOs) are police staff who are employed by police authorities. In March 2005 there were 6,300 CSOs in England and Wales. Under the Neighbourhood Policing Fund (NPF) we are investing £88 million in 2006–07 and £340 million in 2007–08 to help the police service to recruit 24,000 CSOs by 2008. We are currently considering proposals from forces for recruitment of CSOs over the next two years. An announcement on NPF allocations will be made shortly.

Computer Misuse Act

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will bring forward proposals to update the Computer Misuse Act 1990 to ensure reasonable penalties for misuse. [44740]

Paul Goggins: The Police and Justice Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on 25 January 2006. Clauses 33 to 36 relate to computer misuse and in particular the Computer Misuse Act 1990. Specifically, we are seeking to amend:

Section 1(3) of the Act to increase the term of imprisonment for an offence of unauthorised access to a computer system from six months to two years;

Section 3(7) of the Act to increase the term of imprisonment for an offence of unauthorised modification of computer material from five to 10 years; and

Section 3 of the Act to clarify that all means of interference with a computer system are criminalised; in particular, ensuring that adequate provision is made to criminalise all forms of Denial of Service attacks.

Correspondence

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to send a substantive reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Clwyd, West of 11 October 2005, reference M24593/5. [46149]

Mr. McNulty: I replied to the hon. Member for Clwyd, West on 27 January 2006.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and Nationality Department will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood of 6 December 2005 on behalf of Harmesh Kumar Sharmar (Home Office reference S1172939, acknowledgement reference B29103/5). [46416]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate replied to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood on 27 January 2006.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many civil servants in his Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40288]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office offers a range of flexible working options to help staff balance their work and home lives. This includes the option of working from home.

The Department does not record ad hoc occasions or informal home working arrangements and as a result is only able to provide the number of staff by area who have a formally agreed home working pattern.

	Number
Home Office (Including the Immigration and Nationality Directorate)[1]	17
National Probation Directorate[2]	30
United Kingdom Passport Service	67
HM Prison Service[3]	—

[1] These data cover the year to August 2004 as this is the last period for which data are available. Data on home working rates for 2005 are not centrally available owing to the move to a new personnel system.

[2] This does not include staff who are directly employed by the 42 Probation Boards.

[3] Data are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43492]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Figures for disciplinary action and sanctions for the Home Office and its Agencies are shown in the table. Disciplinary action against staff may only be taken following an investigation. The figures for 'cases' therefore refers to the number of investigations undertaken in any given year and the result of some investigations—where no evidence of misconduct is found—will not lead to any sanction. Sanctions may range from a verbal or written warning; a bar on applying for promotion; withholding of pay increases and/or bonus payments; suspension from duty with loss of pay; downgrading; and dismissal (this list is not exhaustive).

Core Home Office and Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND)

Decisions in respect of the disciplinary process were delegated to the line management chain with effect from January 2005. It is not possible to link investigations to specific sanctions applied in relation to each investigation except at disproportionate cost.

HM Prison Service (HMPS)

Decisions in respect of the disciplinary process are devolved to a local level in the Prison Service. The information required is not collated centrally in the requested format and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

United Kingdom Passport Services (UKPS)

The disciplinary process was devolved from HQ to Regional Offices on October 2002. Cases that are 'not found' are not recorded, as is true for any case dealt with informally by managers.

	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	Cases	*Sanctions*	*Cases*	*Sanctions*	*Cases*	*Sanctions*	*Cases*	*Sanctions*	*Cases*	*Sanctions*
Core HO	16	11	15	11	22	12	22	5	11	7
IND[1]	43	32	153	103	102	65	108	56	172	141
HMPS[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
UKPS[3]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	62	n/a	35

[1] Figures for IND 2001 are only partial due to change in recording method.
[2] Figures are not collated centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.
[3] Figures for investigations 'not found' are not recorded. Data are not available pre-2004.

Departmental Website

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of maintaining his main departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46306]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The following document gives the user statistics for www.homeoffice.gov.uk. We measure site use by counting page impressions—requests for a complete page of information—rather than hits, which are generally understood to be requests for each of the files making up a page. A page can consist of any number of files, so that page impressions are more meaningful than hits as a measure of use.

The running costs of the main departmental website—www.homeoffice.gov.uk—are met from the existing budget for running all of the core Home Office sites, which was £500,000 for the 2005–06 financial year. Separate totals are not kept for the maintenance costs of individual sites, including the main departmental website.

2005	*Page impressions*
January	2,275,687
February	2,091,180
March	2,332,527
April	2,253,402
May	2,024,887
June	1,879,621
July	1,908,006
August	1,914,551
September	2,109,385
October	3,175,862
November	3,134,966
December	1,938,310
Total	27,029,384

DNA Database

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1523W from the Leader of the House, that the Home Secretary is reviewing the cases of 24,000 children on the DNA National Police Database who have not been charged or cautioned for any offence, when he plans to make a statement about the review. [46913]

Andy Burnham: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary is not reviewing the cases of individuals, children or adults, whose DNA samples have been retained even though they have not been charged or cautioned.

From an operational perspective, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) has for some time been developing guidelines to allow, in exceptional circumstances only, the removal of individual profiles from the database. These will be issued shortly.

DNA Profiles

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1111–12W,

on DNA profiles, whether all the 24,000 individuals were still under 18 years on 1 December 2005 when the information was collated. [45933]

Andy Burnham: Yes. On one December 2005, there were 24,168 persons under the age of 18 on the National DNA Database who had been arrested and had a DNA sample taken but who had subsequently not been charged or cautioned for any offence.

Drug Seizures (Livingston)

Mr. Devine: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much property was seized by the Drug Enforcement Agency in Livingston in 2005. [44023]

Paul Goggins: This is a matter for the Scottish Executive and my hon. Friend may wish to write to them about this issue.

Exclusions

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals have been excluded from the UK as Muslim extremists in the last five years; and how many individuals from around the world are on his Department's database as having demonstrated unacceptable behaviour. [41337]

Mr. Charles Clarke: 22 individuals have been excluded on grounds of unacceptable behaviour since the list of such behaviours was published on 24 August 2005. The 22 individuals include anti-abortionists, animal rights activists and extremists from different religious backgrounds.

Identity Cards

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many written representations in support of the Government's introduction of national identity cards he has received since 1 October 2005; and if he will list the individuals and organisations which made those representations. [43586]

Andy Burnham: Since October 2005, the Identity Cards Programme Team has received 31 written representations from individuals in support of the Identity Cards Scheme. It would not be appropriate to list the names of the individuals who wrote these representations, as they have not given their permission for their names to be disclosed.

Since October 2005, the Identity Cards Programme has received no written representations from organisations either in support or otherwise of the Identity Cards Scheme. However a number of organisations responded to the consultation on the Identity Cards Bill in July 2004.

The consultation documents and a list of who responded can be found on the website at www.identitycards.gov.uk.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the technical specifications for the identity card database will allow two-way data sharing with the CORE database. [44103]

Andy Burnham: The Identity Cards Programme is currently specifying technical requirements for the National Identity Register (NIR) in advance of a procurement process. There is no specific requirement that the National Identity Register must be able to conduct two-way data sharing with the CORE database. The Government set out the role of the National Identity Register and the Identity Cards Scheme in relation to electoral registration and voting in its evidence to the House of Commons Constitutional Affairs and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Committees published by the Committees on 16 March 2005.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations his Department has received from representatives of *(a)* Christian, *(b)* Hindu, *(c)* Muslim and *(d)* Sikh communities relating to the photographic element of the proposed identity card scheme in the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [45541]

Andy Burnham: In the last 12 months, the Identity Cards Programme has received four representations from individuals concerning the photographic element of identity cards. None of the correspondents disclosed their religion, and the focus of their representations was a concern that individuals required by their religion to cover their face should not be exempted from the requirement to have their photograph taken.

In December 2004, the Identity Cards Programme conducted a special issues research which included individuals from various faith groups. The full results can be found on the website at www.identitycards.gov.uk. However, Muslim and Sikh women expressed concerns about removing their religious garments at an enrolment centre.

A head and shoulders photograph showing features of the face will be included on the card. Regulations about types of photographs will be in line with those currently in place for passports and driving licence photographs. The UK Passport Service exercises its discretion as far as possible. However, the over-riding rule (set by international standards) is that the applicant's photo should show a full face and that all features should be clearly distinguishable.

At some DVLA offices, Muslim women are offered a facility to go to a private office and reveal their face to a female member of staff so that their face can be matched against the photograph. The operation of ID cards will include guidance along these lines to ensure discretion and sensitivity.

Identity Fraud

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the levels of identity fraud in other countries *(a)* with and *(b)* without identity cards. [45369]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* The most recent study of identity fraud in other countries is contained in the 2002 Cabinet Office publication "Identity Fraud: A Study". This study is available from the publications archive page on the identity cards website—www.identitycards.gov.uk. Chapter 6 summarises the results of research on the extent and nature of identity fraud overseas and action taken to counter identity fraud. The countries examined

which had an identity card scheme were, the Netherlands, Belgium, Finland, France, Spain and Germany. The other countries involved were, the USA, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand, all of which do not have identity cards.

One of the main conclusions of the research was that all countries experience difficulty in establishing levels of identity fraud. The research also suggests that countries which use existing identifiers as pseudo "identity numbers", such as the social security number in the USA, encounter many problems with identity fraud and with establishing the validity of the number, not least because it was not intended to be used for the wide variety of purposes that have become commonplace in the absence of a securely issued identity number.

IMPACT

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment has been made of the additional *(a)* manpower and *(b)* resources required by police forces in England and Wales to implement and use the IMPACT Nominal Index; what the total cost is of implementing and using the IMPACT Nominal Index in each force; and if he will make a statement; [45280]

(2) what the total cost is of implementing and using the IMPACT Nominal Index in each child abuse investigation unit; and if he will make a statement. [45281]

Hazel Blears: The IMPACT Nominal Index (INI) was delivered to a child abuse investigation unit (CAIU) in each police force in England and Wales on 23 December in accordance with recommendation two of Sir Michael Bichard's report following the murder of the Soham schoolgirls. It is already proving its value to the police service in enabling officers to establish whether other forces hold relevant information on people of interest to them.

There is currently no available information on the overall cost to forces of using and implementing the system, though an evaluation of the way in which it is used and the resource consequences is in hand. However, preliminary modelling carried out by the IMPACT Programme last year indicated that using the system and responding to requests for information generated by users in other forces could theoretically require up to 600 staff costing around £11 million per annum across the 43 forces if the INI was deployed to, and used to its full extent by, all CAIUs. For this reason, the INI is being gradually deployed to forces over an extended period to allow for the evaluation of the consequential demands.

Most of the other costs associated with developing and deploying the INI have been borne centrally.

IRA Deaths (Gibraltar)

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the SAS soldiers responsible for the deaths of three IRA terrorists in Gibraltar in 1998 could face charges as a result of *(a)* the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights on 4 May 2001 and *(b)* the historic investigations by the Royal Military Police and Police Service of Northern Ireland. [32651]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 28 November 2005]:* I have been asked to reply.

The ruling of the European Court of Human Rights on 4 May 2001 relating to deaths in Northern Ireland involving the security forces found that the United Kingdom failed in those cases to meet its obligations to secure the right to life in Article 2 of the European Convention of Human Rights. Objections similar to those raised in the ruling of 4 May 2001 were made to the investigation and inquest into the deaths of the three IRA terrorists in Gibraltar, but the inquest jury decided by a majority that the deaths were lawful. I understand that the Gibraltar case does not come within the remit of the historic inquiry team of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, which is to review unresolved deaths that took place in Northern Ireland only. Furthermore, the Royal Military Police is not investigating these deaths.

IT Systems

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the performance of the Libra IT system; and if he will make a statement. [42637]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

There are two distinct parts to the Libra IT system. Libra Office Automation has provided infrastructure and modern office automation services, including e-mail, word and internet access, to more than 12,000 users in magistrates courts since 2003. The system consistently exceeds performance levels for availability.

The Libra case management application has been subject to a rigorous process of system testing and user acceptance testing, which commenced in April 2005. The application is currently in live operation at Kingston magistrates court and in trial operation at a further three pilot sites to ensure that a robust solution is delivered prior to commitment to national rollout.

Khat

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will add khat to the list of substances controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. [43565]

Paul Goggins: No. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary announced in Parliament on 19 January that he had accepted the advice of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs that khat should not be controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

Life Sentences

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average length of time served in prison by offenders given a life sentence was between 1976 and 1995. [43131]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the length of time served for those released in 1994 to 2004 can be found in table 10.5 of Home Office Statistical Bulletin 17/05: Offender Management Caseload Statistics, England and Wales, 2004, published on 16 December 2005, and also available on the Home Office website.

For the equivalent information for the years 1983 to 1993, see table 8.5 in Prison Statistics, England and Wales, 1993, Cm. 2893; for the years 1978 to 1988 see table 8.5 in Prison Statistics, England and Wales, 1988, Cm. 825. Copies of all these reports can be found in the Library.

Ministerial Visits

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* flights and *(b)* helicopter flights have been taken by Ministers within his Department for (i) UK and (ii) overseas visits in each year since 1996; on how many occasions (A) charter flights were used and (B) first and club class tickets were obtained; and who accompanied the Ministers on each trip. [27812]

Mr. Charles Clarke: All travel is undertaken fully in accordance with rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are in the Library.

In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The list indicates when non-scheduled flights were used, and shows how many officials accompanied Ministers in those circumstances. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Library. These report information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for 2005–06 will be published after the end of the financial year.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the occasions on which he and the Ministers in his Department have undertaken overseas visits in the course of their ministerial duties since 1 January 2005; and what the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* duration was of each visit. [44967]

Mr. Charles Clarke: In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. Copies of the lists are available in the Library. These report information reaching back to 1995–96. Information for 2005–06 will be published after the end of the financial year.

All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Library.

National Policing Agency

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received from police forces and police authorities requesting the establishment of a national policing agency dedicated to countering terrorism and domestic extremism. [40557]

Hazel Blears: No official representations have been made by either police forces or police authorities requesting the establishment of a national policing agency dedicated to countering terrorism and domestic extremism.

There are appropriate regional and national CT structures in place to combat the terrorist threat. The Association of Chief Police Officers' Committee on Terrorism and Allied Matters sets policy and strategic direction for counter terrorism policing at a national level. Police counter-terrorist efforts are co-ordinated regionally and nationally through the Regional Intelligence Cells, the work of the National Coordinator of Special Branch and the National Coordinator of Terrorist Investigations while ensuring that force special branches maintain the essential link to local policing and local communities. The Metropolitan Police Service also has national counter terrorism responsibilities including a number of specialist units which provide support to forces. As with other aspects of policing, these structures are kept under constant review.

National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the future of the National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit after the establishment of the Serious Organised Crime Agency. [45846]

Paul Goggins: As wildlife crime does not fit within the remit of the Serious Organised Crime Agency, discussions are currently taking place in order to find a long-term location for the National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit, so that it can continue its valuable work in the future.

Police

Albert Owen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many business plans for police forces in Wales were received by 21 December 2005. [41835]

Hazel Blears: A joint submission from all four Welsh forces was received on 23 December 2005.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the allocation was of *(a)* police officers and *(b)* civilian police staff in each of the three basic command units in the Cambridgeshire constabulary area in (i) 2002–03, (ii) 2003–04 and (iii) 2004–05. [45464]

Hazel Blears: The available information relating to the numbers of police officers in each basic command unit (BCD) within Cambridgeshire police force area, is provided in the following table.

Information on the allocation of police staff in each BCD within Cambridgeshire has not been published as this figure cannot be disaggregated from other police support staff groups. As at 31 March 2003 Cambridgeshire had 786 police staff, as at 31 March 2004 this was 838 and as at 31 March 2005 this was 832.

Police strength (full-time equivalents)[1] in Cambridgeshire, by basic command unit (BCU) and year

BCU	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Cambridgeshire Central	339	360	312
Cambridgeshire Northern	360	356	308
Cambridgeshire Southern	397	394	365
Central Services	295	304	433
Total	1,391	1,412	1,418

[1] Contains full-time equivalen[illegible] have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Beca[illegible]ng, there may be an apparent discrepancy between to[illegible] the sums of the constituent items.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library copies of the business plans and implementation plans he has received relating to police force restructuring. [44279]

Hazel Blears: No. As part of the process for determining viable options, police forces and authorities have submitted detailed and sensitive data on protective services. I will not be placing this information in the Library although some of this may be available directly from forces and authorities.

Policy Reviews

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the policy reviews his Department has conducted in each year since 1997. [44329]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department maintains all of its key policies under review. In 2004 the Department used this ongoing review work to inform Confident Communities in a Secure Britain, which sets out the Department's policy priorities until 2008. The Department has subsequently published 'Controlling our Borders: Making Migration Work for Britain' and, in conjunction with the Department of Constitutional Affairs and Office of the Attorney-General, Cutting Crime, Delivering Justice, setting out our respective five-year strategic visions on asylum and immigration and criminal justice. Copies of these documents are available on the Home Office websites (www.homeoffice.gov.uk; www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk).

In addition, the Department monitors the functioning of its policies. Key policies and reviews which are publicly disclosable are placed on the Department website to enable full public access.

Prisons

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he plans to publish all the data from the Prisons Resettlement Survey 2003. [21787]

Fiona Mactaggart: The key findings from the 2003 resettlement survey were published in February 2005 in "Home Office Research Findings 248". This was published as an online publication and can be found at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/rfpubs1.html

The findings from this survey (and equivalent surveys for 2001 and 2004) form the basis of a reconviction study which is currently being undertaken. This will include an analysis of any association between a range of factors (such as having employment and/or accommodation arranged and having received a visit during custody from a family member or partner) and subsequent proven reoffending. Initial results will be available in early summer, with publication later in the year.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which prisons have a service level agreement; and if he will make a statement. [34320]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Office for Contracted Prisons has performance management responsibilities for the three service level agreement (SLA) prisons (Her Majesty's Prison Blakenhurst, Her Majesty's Prison Buckley Hall and Her Majesty's Prison Manchester) who operate contracts won by the public sector following a commercial tendering process.

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* prisoners (i) entering adult prisons and (ii) leaving prison on release from their first sentence and *(b)* under 21-year-olds entering young offender institutions on their first custodial sentence could not read or write to a sufficiently high standard to apply for a job via a job centre in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [41547]

Phil Hope: I have been asked to reply.

We do not collate the information requested centrally, however Home Office statistics show that 37 per cent. of prisoners have reading skills below level 1. (Prison Statistics for England and Wales 2002).

As a result of learning and skills provision in prisons, the number of basic skills awards achieved by offenders in custody exceeded 63,000 in 2004–05 and the national probation directorate exceeded its annual target for basic skills awards with nearly 9,500 awards achieved by offenders in the community.

The Green Paper, "Reducing Re-offending through Skills and Employment" (Cm 6702) launched by Ruth Kelly on 15 December, set out the Government's strategy to improve the skills and job prospects of all offenders, so that more offenders secure employment in order to reduce reoffending.

Prostitution

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* cases have been reported and *(b)* persons have been prosecuted for employing a prostitute (i) under the age of consent and (ii) who has no right to work in the United Kingdom in each of the last five years for which information is available. [45711]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 26 January 2006]*: Prior to the Sexual Offences Act 2003 coming into force the relevant offences were related to brothel keeping and living on the earnings of a prostitute. The 2003 Act introduced a new offence relating to the abuse of children through prostitution and pornography. The available statistics are set out in the table, but it is not possible to break them down in terms of the age or immigration status of the victim.

Recorded offences

	Exploitation of prostitution[1]	*Abuse of children through prostitution or pornography*[2]
2000–01	129	n/a
2001–02	129	n/a
2002–03	127	n/a
2003–04	183	n/a
2004–05	117	98

[1] Keeping a brothel is a summary offence and not included in the recorded crime series. The exploitation of prostitution group includes living on immoral earnings.

[2] The Sexual Offences Act 2003 came into force in 2004.

Prosecutions

	Brothel keeping offences	*Living on immoral earnings*
2000	27	35
2001	14	34
2002	18	47
2003	11	41
2004	27	42

Racial and Religious Hatred Bill

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received on the role of the Attorney-General in relation to prosecutions under the Racial and Religious Hatred Bill. [46020]

Paul Goggins: The requirement for the Attorney-General to give his consent to any prosecution brought under the provisions of the Racial and Religious Hatred Bill is something that has been raised on a number of occasions during the passage of the Bill through Parliament. The Home Office has also received a considerable number of letters about this provision from MPs and members of the public.

The Government believe the need for the consent of the Attorney-General for prosecutions to proceed is an important safeguard that will help to prevent spurious and vexatious cases coming to court. This provision already applies to the existing offence of incitement to racial hatred.

Railway Enthusiasts (Anti-terrorism Legislation)

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Secretary of State for Transport and *(b)* the British Transport Police on the application of anti-terrorism legislation to the activities of railway enthusiasts who choose to photograph trains and stations. [43446]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The application of anti-terrorism legislation in relation to rail enthusiasts is not an issue that has been raised in discussions between myself, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport or the British Transport Police.

Rail enthusiasts can be a valuable asset in the fight against terrorism. They have experience and knowledge of the railway system that can enable them to identify anything suspicious or out of the ordinary. All members of the public are encouraged to be vigilant and report any such concerns to the police.

The use of anti-terrorist powers should always be an appropriate and proportionate response to the threat. That threat remains real and serious, and in the light of the terrorist attacks on seven and 21 July last year, it is quite right that the police should take every measure to safeguard security around our transport infrastructure. While the police do not target the use of anti-terrorist powers against rail enthusiasts, photographing trains and railway stations can be an indicator of possible hostile terrorist reconnaissance and officers who encounter such activity may deem it appropriate to use stop and search powers under the Terrorism Act 2000, when appropriate.

Rape

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the level of specialist services available to rape victims. [45745]

Paul Goggins: The Government are currently conducting a mapping exercise of specialist support services for victims of sexual violence in England and Wales. Over the last two years £4 million from the Home Office Victims Fund has been used to support the development of sexual assault referral centres and strengthen specialist voluntary sector services for victims of sexual violence. A further £1.25 million will be made available for voluntary sector sexual violence services in 2006–07.

Rates

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid by the National Offender Management Service in rates to each relevant local authority in the UK in 2004–05; and how much was paid *(a)* in each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(b)* in London. [39116]

Fiona Mactaggart: The rates paid by the Prison Service in England and Wales in 2004–05 was £25,504,569.79 and is shown as follows by:

Country

English regions

Billing authority

London figures are included under English regions. Wales is not divided into regions.

The total rates paid by the Probation Services in England and Wales in 2004–05 were £8,209,424.33.

Probation rates are shown as follows by:

three probation divisions (represent separate contractual regions for estate management and facilities management services)

10 NOMS regions

Probation Board (42 boards across England and Wales)

London figures are included under board and region (identical breakdown).

Rental Costs

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid in rent for properties by the National Offender Management Service in 2004–05 *(a)* in total, *(b)* in each (i) region and (ii) nation of the UK and *(c)* in London. [39175]

Fiona Mactaggart: The total rent paid by the Prison Service in England and Wales in 2004–05 was £3,957,000. This is broken down by region. The Prison Service does not pay any rent in respect of its London headquarters buildings as these are part of the former Common User Estate owned by the Home Office. Rents paid to other Government Departments have been excluded.

The SW region includes the rent paid for the Weare mooring.

The total rent paid by the Probation Services in England and Wales in 2004–05 was £14,958,782.38.

Probation rents by:

three Probation Divisions (represent separate contractual regions for Estate Management and Facilities Management services);

10 NOMS Regions;

Probation Board (42 boards across England and Wales).

London figures are included under board and region (identical breakdown).

Prison and probation rents—2004–05 figures

Regions	£ *Probation rents*
East	1,586,651
East Midlands	1,036,719
London	4,380,219
North East	545,701
North West	1,340,846
South East	2,252,546
South West	553,578
Wales	751,869
West Midlands	1,533,688
Yorkshire and Humber	976,965
Total	14,958,782

Regions	£ *Prison rents*
East Anglia	168,000
London	651,000
Northern	78,000
North West	563,000
South East	38,000
South West	1,408,000
West Midlands	68,000
Yorkshire and Humber	368,000
Total	3,957,000

Reoffending Rates

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reoffending rate was for individuals serving *(a)* custodial sentences and *(b)* community service orders in (i) England, (ii) the West Midlands and (iii) Tamworth constituency in 2004–05. [37830]

Fiona Mactaggart: Reoffending rates are not currently available on a regional basis.

National reoffending rates are published in 'Adult reoffending: results from the 2002 cohort'. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 25/05'. This is available on the Home Office's website, http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html.

Security Clearance

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when Ms L.W., of Chillington in Totnes constituency, will receive the confirmation of security clearance to commence duties as an higher executive officer with the Home Office; and for what reasons there has been the delay since *(a)* she was offered the position on 23 August and *(b)* human resources department confirmed her clearance to the hon. Member for Totnes in October. [32149]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 28 November 2005]:* The delay between 22 August and 24 October was largely because Ms L.W.'s application was temporarily misplaced within the Human Resources Directorate of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND). The team dealing with the application were, at the time, processing an exceptionally large number of applications. Ms L.W. was granted provisional clearance on 24 October to enable her to take up her post in IND on a conditional basis. Ms L.W. was placed on the next available training course which began on Monday 28 November. Ms L.W.'s necessary pre-employment checks have now been completed and she has been informed of this.

Substance Abuse Offences

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 26 October 2005 to the hon. Member for Sutton and Cheam, *Official Report*, column 406W, on substance abuse offences, how many people in the South West region were convicted for *(a)* drunkenness, *(b)* driving after consuming alcohol or taking drugs and *(c)* causing death by dangerous driving when under the influence of drink or drugs in (i) 2003, (ii) 2004 and (iii) 2005. [45250]

Paul Goggins: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of persons convicted for drunkenness, driving after consuming alcohol or taking drugs and causing death by dangerous driving when under the influence of drink or drugs in the South West region, 2003–04 is given in the following table. Court statistics for 2005 will be available in the autumn.

Number of offenders found guilty at all courts for various offences in the South West region, 2003 and 2004[1]

	Drunkenness (simple)[2]	*Drunkenness (with aggravation*[3]*)*	*Driving after consuming alcohol or drugs*[4]	*Causing death by dangerous driving or careless driving while under the influence of drink or drugs*[5]
2003	350	1,998	406	27
2004	290	1,286	389	24

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis

[2] Includes offences under S.12 Licensing Act 1872, Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol etc) Act 1985 SS.1(4), 1 A(4), 2.(2) and S.12 Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001

[3] Includes offences under S.91 Criminal Justice Act 1967,S.12 Licensing Act 1872, S.174 Licensing Act 1964, S.9(4) Late Night Refreshment Houses Act 1969, S.28 London Hackney Carriage Act 1843, SS.101(1)*(a)*/*(b)*, (4) and (5) Merchant Shipping Act 1995, S.2 Licensing Act 1902 and S.61 Town Police Clauses Act 1847

[4] Includes offences under sections 4(1),4(2), 5(1)*(a)*, 5(1)*(b)*, 6(4) and 7(6) Road traffic Act 1988

[5] Includes offences under Road Traffic Act 1988 S.1 as added by Road Traffic Act 1991 S.1 and Road Traffic Act 1988 S.3A as added by Road Traffic Act 1991 S.3 and amended by Criminal Justice Act 1993 S.6

Tasers

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances tasers have been fired in each police constabulary in England. [44421]

Hazel Blears: I have indicated to the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) that I am content for taser to be made available to Authorised Firearms Officers as a less lethal option for use in situations where a firearms authority has been granted alongside conventional firearms.

Authorised Firearms Officers (AFOs) are, in accordance with the ACPO Manual of Guidance on Police Use of Firearms, issued with firearms where the authorising officer has reason to suppose that they, in the course of their duty, may have to protect themselves or others from a person who is:

in possession of a firearm, or

has immediate access to a firearm, or

is otherwise so dangerous that the officer's use of a firearm may be necessary.

Telephone Tapping

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* discussions his Department has had and *(b)* research he has commissioned on changing the policy on tapping right hon. and hon. Members' telephone lines; and if he will make a statement. [45847]

Mr. Charles Clarke: As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister informed Parliament on 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 173WS, the Government are considering advice from the Interception of Communications Commissioner on this matter. I and my officials have been consulted as part as this process. I have not commissioned any research.

Under-age Drinking

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* businesses and *(b)* individuals were prosecuted for supplying alcohol to youths under the age of 18 years in (i) England, (ii) Lancashire and (iii) West Lancashire constituency in each of the past five years. [45150]

Paul Goggins: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform for the number of *(a)* businesses and *(b)* individuals prosecuted for supplying alcohol to youths under the age of 18 years in (i) England, (ii) Lancashire in each of the past five years is shown in the table.

The offence of selling alcohol to persons aged under 18 years of age was introduced to the penalty notice for disorder scheme from 1 November 2004 aimed at staff working in licensed premises found to commit this offence. Data from 2004 and provisional data from January to September 2005 showing the number of Penalty Notices for Disorder (PND) issued for the sale of alcohol to persons under the age of 18 are provided in the following table.

It is not possible to identify those prosecuted or issued with PNDs in the West Lancashire constituency because centrally available data is not broken down to that level of detail.

The Licensing Act 2003 came into force on 24 November 2005. Data for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006.

Defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts for offences relating to the sale of alcohol to underage persons in (i) England, and (ii) Lancashire, 2000 to 2004 1

Offence description	Statute	Year	England		Lancashire	
			Businesses	Persons	Businesses	Persons
Selling etc. intoxicating liquor to persons under 18 for consumption on the premises	Licensing Act, 1964, Section 169(1); Licensing (Occasional Permissions) Act 1983, Schedule (Sec. 3) para. 4(1)	2000	1	112	0	1
		2001	–	143	0	13
		2002	2	147	0	14
		2003	28	533	0	23
		2004	20	733	0	21
Wholesaler selling intoxicating liquor to a person under 18	Licensing Act 1964, Sec 181A(1) as added by Licensing Act 1988, Sec. 17	2000	0	2	0	0
		2001	0	3	0	0
		2002	0	2	0	0
		2003	0	12	0	0
		2004	0	5	0	0

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Solicitor-General (1) on how many occasions the Law Officer's Department have consulted citizens' juries on departmental polices in the last five years; [46194]

(2) on how many occasions the Law Officer's policy has been changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens' jury in the last five years; [46195]

(3) on how many occasions when a citizens' jury has been consulted by the Law Officers' Department the recommendations of the jury have differed from existing departmental policy. [46196]

The Solicitor-General: None of my Departments have consulted citizens' juries over the last five years and no changes have been made to departmental policies to reflect recommendations from citizens' juries

Law Officers (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Solicitor-General how many staff employed by the Law Officers live in Castle Point. [42822]

The Solicitor-General: The Serious Fraud Office, the Treasury Solicitor's Department and HMCPS Inspectorate have no records of any staff living in Castle Point.

The number of staff employed by the Crown Prosecution Service and the Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office who live in Castle Point is withheld under section 12a. of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Bob Spink: To ask the Solicitor-General what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by the Law Officers in Castle Point. [42899]

The Solicitor-General: None of the Law Officers' Departments owns any land or property in the Castle Point.

CABINET OFFICE

Minister Without Portfolio

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster for what reason a Government car has been made available to the Minister without Portfolio. [46953]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Minister without Portfolio has the use of an official car to assist him in executing his Government duties. He uses the car in accordance with the requirements of Travel by Ministers.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Judiciary

Mr. Amess: To ask the Leader of the House how many motions calling for the removal of a member of the judiciary were tabled in each session of Parliament since 1976. [47486]

Mr. Hoon: Readily available information indicates six occasions on which a motion for a Humble Address for the removal of a High Court Judge has been tabled since 1976. (No such motion for an Address to remove a judge has been passed in either House since 1830.)

Equivalent information is not available for motions relating to other members of the judiciary. Such motions would not take the form of an Address. Further information can be obtained from the Journal Office.

WALES

Departmental Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machine his Department owned in (i) Wales and (ii) each English region in (A) 2003–04 and (B) 2004–05. [40098]

Mr. Hain: In June 2003 the Wales Office became a separate entity within the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA). All computer equipment needs are provided to the Wales Office under DCA's contract with Liberata UK, in line with the Government private finance initiative.

Industrial Heritage Museums

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Culture and *(b)* Cadw in respect of opportunities to promote tourism and employment through the establishment of industrial heritage museums. [46564]

Nick Ainger: I have regular discussions with the Assembly Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport about matters affecting his portfolio, which includes responsibility for Cadw.

I share the Assembly Government's recognition of our industrial heritage as a valuable resource for the development of tourism. The "Herian" initiative in South Wales, for example, aims to develop a sustainable approach to interpreting and promoting the area's unique and fascinating industrial heritage for the benefit of visitors and local communities.

RAF St Athan

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what elements made up the £15.9 million spent on land acquisition and development costs at RAF St. Athan since its acquisition by the Welsh Development Agency in 2003. [44849]

Mr. Hain: Wales is home to some major aerospace companies and is therefore well placed to capitalise on the growth in this sector. To that end, the WDA completed the acquisition of a 125-year lease of RAF St. Athan on 14 August 2003 with the objective of redeveloping the site to create a world-class aviation business park.

The acquisition costs include the following elements:

	Acquisition costs (£000)
Purchase of RAF St. Athan site	8,000
Purchase of additional land	3,397
Feasibility studies, fees, works	2,314
Airfield costs	1,551
Remediation and demolitions	675
Total	15,937

Royal Shrewsbury Hospital

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what steps he is taking to secure access to the services of the Royal Shrewsbury hospital for Welsh patients. [39892]

Nick Ainger: Responsibility for the provision of health care in Wales rests with the Welsh Assembly Government. I have regular discussions with the Assembly Minister for Health and Social Services, Dr. Brian Gibbons.

From these discussions, I understand that an agreement for treating Welsh patients during 2005–06 is in place between the Royal Shrewsbury and Telford NHS Trust and Powys local health board. Both bodies will ensure that Welsh patients will receive health services when needed.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Antrim Area Hospital (Pain Clinic)

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what additional financial resources have been put in place to provide for referrals to the Pain Clinic, Antrim area hospital in each of the past four years. [46342]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Health and Social Services Board has advised that the following investments have been made on a year on year basis in the pain management service in the United Hospitals Health and Social Services Trust:

	Amount (£)
2002-03	176,000
2003-04	156,000
2004-05	142,000
2005-06	158,000

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* priority and *(b)* routine referrals have been made for appointments at the Pain Clinic, Antrim area hospital in each of the past four years. [46343]

Mr. Woodward: The total number of referrals (priority and routine) received at Antrim area hospital in each of the last four years is shown in the following table. The outpatient referral system does not provide a breakdown between priority and routine cases at referral stage.

	Total referrals to pain clinic at Antrim area hospital
2002	178
2003	226
2004	253
2005	202

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he plans to introduce to reduce out-patient waiting times for *(a)* priority and *(b)* routine appointments at the Pain Clinic, Antrim area hospital; and if he will make a statement. [46344]

Mr. Woodward: I recently announced a total redesign of the way in which out-patient services are delivered to ensure that, by March 2008, no patient will be waiting more than 13 weeks for their out-patient appointment following referral by their GP.

Central to this will be the development of a new range of clinical assessment and diagnostic services—Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services (ICATS), provided in a variety of primary and secondary care settings. This will ensure that all patients are seen quickly by the most appropriate healthcare professional and will include a range of assessment, treatment, diagnostic and advisory services. Waiting times for pain management services will be addressed with the development of ICATS.

Children and Young People's Funding Package

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) when he will publish for consultation proposals for activities and programmes to be funded under the Children and Young People's funding package announced in Budget and Priorities 2006 to 2008; [45779]

(2) what plans he has to consult directly with *(a)* children, *(b)* young people, *(c)* their families and *(d)* the wider children's sector on the proposals for the Children and Young People's funding package; [45780]

(3) what equality impact assessment has been made of the Children and Young People's funding proposals; [45781]

(4) what dedicated funding will be made available from the Children and Young People's funding package for *(a)* children with disabilities, *(b)* black and minority ethnic children and *(c)* children with mental health needs; [45782]

(5) how the Children and Young People's funding package interacts with the overarching Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister's Children and Young People's Strategy; [45783]

(6) how he plans to deliver the Children and Young People's funding package; and what steps he will take to ensure that the voluntary and community sector are involved in the delivery process; [45784]

(7) what planning meetings have taken place in respect of Children and Young People's funding in the last 12 months; and which *(a)* statutory and *(b)* non-statutory bodies were involved in each meeting. [45785]

Angela E. Smith: The Children's and Young People's Funding Package will be published in the next few weeks. The detailed content of the package will be available then. The package will contain a range of provision to reduce underachievement and improve the life chances of children and young people by enhancing their educational development and fostering their health, well-being and social inclusion through the integrated delivery of the support and services necessary to ensure that every child has the best start in life.

The various elements will be costed and the funding included in the baselines of the Departments which will deliver the elements concerned.

Each element will be subject to appropriate consultation and to equality impact assessments. For the purposes of the package, high-level equality impact assessments (screening) have been conducted.

The Children and Young People's Unit of the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister has been involved throughout to ensure that the package is consistent with the aims of the 10-year Children's Strategy.

Delivery mechanisms for each element of the package will be taken forward separately by the Departments concerned, and each will take appropriate steps to ensure that the voluntary and community sectors are appropriately engaged in the development and delivery of that element.

The Department of Education leads on the Children's and Young People's Funding Package. Planning meetings have been held since 12 October 2005, as follows:

12 October: DE meeting with SoS Special Adviser.

11 November: Department of Education, the Education and Training Inspectorate, the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, the Department of Social Development, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Department of Finance and Personnel.

24 November: Department of Education, the Education and Training Inspectorate, the Department of Social Development, the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, the Department of Social Development, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Department of Finance and Personnel.

6 December: Department of Education, SoS Special Adviser, Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Department of Finance and Personnel.

8 December: Department of Education with NI Children's Commissioner.

12 December: Department of Education, SoS Special Adviser, Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, Department of Finance and Personnel.

Crime

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the recorded crime figures for *(a)* murder, *(b)* manslaughter, *(c)* grievous bodily harm, *(d)* assault, *(e)* burglary, *(f)* armed robbery, *(g)* riotous behaviour and *(h)* theft in Northern Ireland were in each of the last six years. [44892]

Mr. Woodward: I refer the hon. Member to the Chief Constable's Annual Reports which contain the information requested. These are available on the Police Service of Northern Ireland website at www.psni.police.uk.

Dentistry

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many anaesthetists were available to undertake treatments at the School of Dentistry, Royal Victoria hospital Belfast on the last date for which figures are available. [46520]

Mr. Woodward: There is currently one anaesthetist available for treatment at the School of Dentistry, Royal Victoria hospital, Belfast.

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many dentists are undergoing special needs training in the School of Dentistry, Royal Victoria hospital, Belfast. [46545]

Mr. Woodward: The responsibility for and expertise in treating patients with special needs rests primarily with the Community Dental Services. Special needs dentistry is soon to become a recognised specialty, but as yet no Royal College Higher Training programme has been developed. In the interim, the eastern health and social services board, in collaboration with the School of Dentistry, has put in place plans to train eight further community dentists in oral surgery skills for special needs patients.

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many special needs patients are on the waiting list for dental treatment at the School of Dentistry, Royal Victoria hospital, Belfast *(a)* from each health board area and *(b)* in total. [46547]

Mr. Woodward: The *(a)* total and *(b)* numbers broken down by health board, of special needs patients on the waiting list for dental treatment at the school of Dentistry, Royal Victoria hospital, as at 27 January 2006 are shown in the following table:

(b) Health board of residence	*Number waiting at 27 January 2006*
Eastern	209
Northern	74
Southern	16
Western	4
(a) NI total	303

Source:
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many specialist dentists are available to undertake special care treatment at the School of Dentistry, Royal Victoria hospital, Belfast. [46548]

Mr. Woodward: There is currently one specialist dentist who works two sessions per week for special needs treatment at the School of Dentistry, Royal Victoria hospital, Belfast.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people work in each of the directorates within the Northern Ireland Office, broken down by *(a)* sex and *(b)* community background. [44513]

Mr. Woodward: The following table shows the composition of the Northern Ireland Office (excluding Agencies) as at 19 January 2006. Gender figures relate to the total Core Department, including NIO staff in London, while community background figures relate only to staff working in Northern Ireland.

	Number
Protestant	453
Roman Catholic	155
Not Determined	49
Total	657
Male	335
Female	405
Total	740

The purpose for collecting this personal data is to enable the Northern Ireland Office and the Northern Ireland Civil Service to monitor the effectiveness of their policies on equality of opportunity. Such monitoring is not undertaken or appropriate at the level of directorates, branches or offices.

Devolution

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on devolution in Northern Ireland. [43748]

Mr. Hain: On 11 January, in a statement to the House, I made clear that "this Government believes that 2006 can be the year for restoration of the Assembly and will work to that end as a matter of the utmost priority".

Elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly are due in May 2007. In order that those elections are meaningful, we require an Assembly exercising its full responsibilities. The need for progress toward genuine political engagement is urgent.

2006 can and must be a year of historic progress in Northern Ireland. It must be a year in which we see a fully inclusive, power-sharing Executive restored so that locally elected politicians can take the decisions that affect the everyday lives of the people of Northern Ireland.

Digital Hearing Aids

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients were awaiting the supply of new digital hearing aids in each of the health and social services board areas on the last date for which figures are available. [46337]

Mr. Woodward: Information is currently available in respect of the northern and southern health and social services boards only. At 30 September 2005, there were 272 people in the northern health and social services board area, and 1,437 people in the southern health and social services board area, who were waiting for a digital hearing aid to be fitted.

Information is not currently available in respect of the eastern and western health and social services boards. I will write to the hon. Member with the relevant information as soon as it is available and place a copy in the Library.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent steps have been taken to improve the provision of digital hearing aids in each of the health and social services board areas. [46338]

Mr. Woodward: Direct referral by a GP to an audiology clinic is being piloted in a number of health and social services trusts in order to reduce waiting times for those awaiting an assessment for a digital hearing aid.

The Department is also considering the feasibility of implementing direct referrals to all health and social services trusts. However, any new proposals will be determined on the basis of what best meets the clinical requirements of individual patients.

A departmental led group focussing on the modernisation of audiology services will be established in the near future, as part of a review of physical and sensory disability policy. This group will be tasked with making recommendations in respect of further improving current service provision and reducing waiting times.

Long-term Unemployment

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to encourage small businesses to recruit long-term unemployed people from disadvantaged communities; and if he will make a statement. [46341]

Angela E. Smith: Following the Taskforce Report on Employability and Long Term Unemployment, the Department for Employment and Learning created a number of targeted initiatives in the most disadvantaged areas (characterised by low employment and high social deprivation) of West Belfast, Greater Shankill, Londonderry (both Foyle and Waterside) and Strabane.

The component parts of targeted initiatives are a stakeholders forum, employers forum, a transitional employment programme and job assist centres. As part of the Targeted Initiatives programme, employment liaison officers in the Department of Employment and Learning engage with employers to assist with employment issues and match long term unemployed clients with job opportunities.

Invest NI may also include a condition, when offering assistance to larger client companies, setting a target to recruit a percentage of workers from programmes such as new deal and bridge to employment.

Meals on Wheels

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the level of meals on wheels service provision is in each of the Health and Social Services Board areas; and what the cost of such provision was in each of the board areas, in each of the past three years. [46339]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the cost of meals and numbers of meals provided[1] is shown in the table, for the position during the financial year 2003–04, the latest year for which such information is available. Information for previous years is not available on a comparable basis. The information is shown according to Health and Social Services Trust, as the analysis is not available by Board area.[2] The latest available information on number of recipients, shown in the table, is for the position at 31 March 2005.

Health and Social Services Trust	*Cost (£) (2003–04)*	*Meals provided (2003–04)*	*Recipients (31 March 2005)*
Craigavon and Banbridge	426,339	107,580	671
Causeway	37,643	20,358	122
Down Lisburn	133,941	61,920	415
Foyle	51,494	23,720	530
Homefirst	465,337	186,441	1,332
Newry and Mourne	269,006	98,617	292
North and West Belfast	549,607	202,936	731
South and East Belfast	856,843	254,251	978
Sperrin Lakeland	265,138	97,737	651
Ulster	359,149	144,082	562
Northern Ireland Total	3,414,497	1,197,642	6,284

[1] Information relates to all meals provided, including frozen meals (cook/chill meals service), and not only to meals on wheels. Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust does not provide a meals service of this kind.

[2] Information is not available by Board area, as the information is collected according to Trust. Some Trusts may provide a meals service to recipients outside their area.

Mobile Phone Tracking

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether technology is available to the

Police Service of Northern Ireland to allow it to use mobile phone tracking to pursue investigations into *(a)* missing persons and *(b)* missing persons believed to be underwater. [46817]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland utilises the same technology as is available in the rest of the United Kingdom. Its use is governed by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).

Section 4.1 of the RIPA Codes of Practice for Communications outlines special rules for matters of public interest in relations to deaths, serious injuries and vulnerable persons allowing police to obtain billing, incoming call data and cell site analysis. In 'life at risk' cases, this can be done immediately. Results will depend on the network coverage in the area, whether the phone is switched off or on and the technology available to each individual service provider.

With regard to a missing person underwater, the same technology can be applied as outlined above. Its effectiveness would depend on whether the mobile phone had been rendered inoperable by immersion in water.

Physiotherapy

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were on waiting lists for physiotherapy treatment in each of the health board areas on the last date for which figures are available. [46518]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of people on waiting lists for physiotherapy treatment is not collected centrally. However, information is collected centrally on completed waiting times for a first out-patient appointment of an episode of care with a community physiotherapist. The total number of persons attending their first out-patient appointment, and their waiting times are shown in the following table. The table contains information for the quarter ending 30 September 2005 (the latest date for which such information is available). Of the 18,373 persons who attended their first out-patient appointment, 3,143 (17 per cent.) had waited for between three and six months and a further 1,157 (6 per cent.) had waited for six months or more.

		Time waiting		
Board area	*Patients attending first appointment*	*Less than 3 months*	*3–6 months*	*6 months or over*
Eastern	6,857	5,711	905	241
Southern	4,680	3,487	759	434
Western	3,243	2,096	1,015	132
Northern	3,593	2,779	464	350
Total	18,373	14,073	3,143	1,157

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the possible impact of the cancellation of the physiotherapy degree course for 2005–06 at the University of Ulster on physiotherapy waiting lists in Northern Ireland. [46690]

Mr. Woodward: Entry to the Physiotherapy degree course at the University of Ulster is being deferred for the academic year 2006–07. This decision is part of a phased move to change the duration of the course from four years to three years, which is in line with courses in England, Wales and Scotland. Plans have been put in place to ensure that there will be no year without a supply of graduates available for employment in the Health and Personal Social Services.

Police Officers (Criminal Convictions)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many police officers serving in the Police Service of Northern Ireland have criminal convictions broken down by rank; and if he will make a statement. [44564]

Mr. Woodward: At present 200 officers remain in the PSNI with convictions. The breakdown by rank is as follows:

	Number
Sergeant	19
Constable	148
Reserve officer full-time	28
Reserve officer part-time	5

The majority of the offences concerned are traffic offences. People with serious criminal or terrorist backgrounds are not considered suitable to serve in the police service.

Prisoners (Nationality)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many and what percentage of *(a)* female and *(b)* male prisoners in Northern Ireland are citizens of the Irish Republic; [46543]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1588W, on Male Prisoners (Nationality), whether the statistics provided omit prisoners of Irish nationality; and if he will make a statement. [46660]

Mr. Woodward: Upon committal each prisoner is required to record whether they are from Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland or Other (another country).

However, as the Belfast Agreement recognises the birthright of all the people of Northern Ireland to identify themselves as Irish or British, or both, as they may so choose, it is not possible to state definitively how many prisoners have "Irish nationality".

Nationality details provided in my answer of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1588W, refer only to those who stated their nationality was "other".

Sexual Health

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many girls in Northern Ireland aged *(a)* 16, *(b)* 15, *(c)* 14 and *(d)* 13 years have been given (i) oral contraception and (ii) contraceptive implants on the NHS in each of the last five years. [46457]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not available.

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how funding has been allocated through the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy 2002 07; and how the allocated money has been spent by (*a*) the Department and (*b*) boards in preparation for the final publicatron of the Sexual Health Promotion Strategy and Action Plan. [46460]

Mr. Woodward: In 2002 03 the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety allocated £300,000 to voluntary and community organisations for projects dealing with issues around teenage pregnancy. In addition, the Department allocated funding to health and social services boards, on a capitation basis, to take forward work on the Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Strategy and Action Plan as follows:

	£
2003 04	400,000
2004 05	300,000
2005 06	400,000

Boards spent the allocated funding on a range of programmes and initiatives which can broadly be grouped under the headings of public information awareness, education, training, services and support. Examples include leaflets and tool kits, parenting and craft classes, promotional materials, young mums' clinics, family planning and women's aid.

The Sexual Health Promotion Strategy and Action Plan is the subject of separate funding arrangements. In 2005 06, a total of £325,000 was allocated to boards for work on sexual health promotion.

Single Equality Bill

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on (*a*) the status of and (*b*) results of consultation upon the Single Equality Bill. [47479]

Angela E. Smith: A summary of the responses to the consultation on the Single Equality Bill, which ended in November 2004, was published in March 2005.

Having met with political parties over the summer, work is on-going and is being fully informed by all the responses received.

Speech Therapy

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were on waiting lists for speech therapy in each of the (*a*) health boards and (*b*) education and library boards on the last date for which figures are available. [46517]

Mr. Woodward: Children with speech and language therapy requirements, as part of their Statements of Special Educational Needs, are referred to the Health and Social Services Trusts for therapeutic provision. Education and Library Boards do not separately keep waiting lists for this provision.

Information on the number of people awaiting speech therapy assessment in Health and Social Services Boards is not collected centrally. However, information is collected centrally on completed waiting times for a first out-patient appointment of an episode of care with a community speech and language therapist. The following table contains information for the quarter ending 30 September 2005 (the latest date for which such information is available) and shows that, of the 2,939 persons who attended their first out-patient appointment, 638 (22 per cent.) had waited for between three and six months, and a further 119 (4 per cent.) had waited for six months or more.

		Time waiting		
Board area	*Patients attending first appointment*	*Less than three months*	*Three to six months*	*Six months or over*
Eastern	1,040	799	204	37
Southern	656	371	255	30
Western	502	413	79	10
Northern	741	599	100	42
Total	2,939	2,182	638	119

Statutory Instruments

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the statutory instruments introduced by his Department since 6 May 2005. [46203]

Mr. Hain: The information requested is as follows:

Statutory Instruments

The Northern Ireland Office

Reference	*Title*
2005 No 109	The Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 (Commencement No. 8) Order 2005 (No. 109)
May 2005 No 203	The Criminal Justice Act 2003 (Retrial for Serious Offences) (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (No. 203)
2005 No 242	The Criminal Justice (Evidence) (Northern Ireland) Order 2004 (Commencement No 2) Order 2005
2005 No 243	The Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2004 (Commencement No. 2) Order 2005 (No. 243)
May 2005 No 281	The Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 (Commencement No 9 and Transitional provisions) Order 2005
2005 No 282	The Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2004 (Commencement No. 3) Order 2005
2005 No 382	The Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (Commencement No. 1) Order 2005
2005 No 432	The Probation Board for Northern Ireland Victim Information Scheme 2005

Statutory Instruments

The Northern Ireland Office

Reference	*Title*
July 2005 No 1966 (NI 16)	The Firearms (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 2005
July 2005 No 1969	The Local Elections (Northern Ireland) (Amendment) Order 2005
August 2005 No 239	The Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 (Commencement No. 10) Order 2005 (No. 239)
August 2005 No 341	Police Service of Northern Ireland (Complaints etc) (Amendment) Regulations 2005
September 2005 No 2558	Northern Ireland (Sentences) Act 1998 (Specified Organisations) Order 2005
December 2005 No 504	The Prisoner Victim Information (Northern Ireland) (Amendment) Scheme 2005
January 2006 No 547	Police Service of Northern Ireland Regulations

The Northern Ireland Departments (Northern Ireland Administration)

Date	*Title*
7 June 2005	Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 2005
7 June 2005	Drainage (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 2005
7 June 2005	Company Directors Disqualification (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 2005
7 June 2005	Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 2005
19 July 2005	Unauthorised Encampments (Northern Ireland) Order 2005
19 July 2005	Budget (No. 2) (Northern Ireland) Order 2005
19 July 2005	Colleges of Education (Northern Ireland) Order 2005
19 July 2005	Traffic Management (Northern Ireland) Order 2005
19 July 2005	Companies (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise) (Northern Ireland) Order 2005
19 July 2005	Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 2005
14 December 2005	Legal Aid (Northern Ireland) Order 2005
14 December 2005	Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 2005

Draft Orders in Council laid (or about to be laid) but not yet made

Date	*Title*
21 November 2005	Safety at Sports Grounds (Northern Ireland) Order
14 November 2005	Industrial and Provident Societies (Northern Ireland) Order
7 December 2005	Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order
23 January 2006	Stormont Estate (Northern Ireland) Order
About to be laid	Rates (Capital Values etc) (Northern Ireland) Order
About to be laid	Budget (Northern Ireland) Order

Suspicious Deaths

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many suspicious deaths have occurred in Northern Ireland over each of the last seven years; and in how many such cases nobody has been found guilty. [43753]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland have advised that their interpretation of 'suspicious death' is murder and manslaughter. I would refer the hon. Member to the Chief Constable's Annual Reports, which contain statistics for these offences along with details of clearance rates. These reports are available on the PSNI website www.psni.police.uk

Waiting Times

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what initiatives have been introduced to reduce waiting times for out-patient appointments across health and personal social services. [46345]

Mr. Woodward: I recently announced a total redesign of the way in which out-patient services are delivered to ensure that, by March 2008, no patient will be waiting more than 13 weeks for their out-patient appointment following referral by their GP.

Central to this will be the development of a new range of clinical assessment and diagnostic services—Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services (ICATS), provided in a variety of primary and secondary care settings. This will ensure that all patients are seen quickly by the most appropriate healthcare professional and will include a range of assessment, treatment, diagnostic and advisory services. A new Electronic Referrals Management System is being established to support ICATS and to ensure that patients have a central point of contact and will be informed of the next step in their treatment within five days of being referred by a GP.

The way in which out-patient waiting lists are managed and monitored is also being improved. Partial booking systems are already being implemented in all

out-patient specialties and Out-patient Improvement Managers are being put in place in all trusts to ensure that services are more responsive to patients' needs.

Water Supply

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many households in Northern Ireland are not connected to the mains water supply, broken down by constituency. [45482]

Mr. Woodward: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan, dated 30 January 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about how many households in Northern Ireland are not connected to the mains water supply, broken down by constituency (45482). I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Water Service.

It is estimated that less than 1 per cent. of households in Northern Ireland are not connected to the public water supply. Water Service does not, at present, have a database of all household customers connected to mains water and cannot therefore supply the information on a constituency basis. However, a comprehensive customer database is currently being developed in preparation for the proposed introduction of domestic charging from April 2007 and this will identify any households not connected to the public water supply.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the cost of completing the connection of all households in Northern Ireland to the mains water supply. [45483]

Mr. Woodward: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan, dated 30 January 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question if he will estimate the cost of completing the connection of all households in Northern Ireland to the mains water supply (45483). I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Water Service.

It is estimated that less than 1 per cent. of households in Northern Ireland are currently not served by the public water supply and connecting all these, wholly at the public expense, could cost up to £20 million.

While Water Service currently has a duty to provide water services, it is not required to do anything which is not practicable at a reasonable cost. For this reason, Water Service has always operated a policy of reasonable cost allowances for the purpose of determining whether applications for first time services can be fully met at public expense. The allowances for watermain schemes are £5,000 for properties, which were occupied and on which rates were being paid on or before 31 May 2000, and £2,900 for other properties. The higher reasonable cost allowance for existing properties not connected to the public watermain reflects the importance attached to reducing the number of such properties. The policy provides Water Service with an objective mechanism to consider applications for new water services in a consistent and equitable manner. The policy seeks to strike a balance between the interests of householders and taxpayers, within the context of resources made available for water services.

Where the cost of providing a first-time service exceeds the total reasonable cost allowance, Water Service will proceed with the scheme if he householders who will benefit from the scheme agree to meet the balance.

TREASURY

Basic Bank Accounts

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have taken up basic bank accounts in the UK since they were introduced; and what percentage of all UK personal bank accounts are basic bank accounts. [45900]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government does not collect data on the numbers of basic bank accounts. The latest data from the British Bankers Association show that between April 2003 and September 2005, a net total of 1.52 million basic bank accounts were opened (1.96 million opened and 0.44 million closed). Over the same period, a net total of 6 million accounts that offer withdrawals on demand were opened so 25 per cent. of all accounts offering withdrawal on demand opened between April 2003 and September 2005 were basic bank accounts.

Bio-fuel Discounts

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the legal basis is for HM Revenue and Customs' policy of restricting bio-fuel discounts to producers who use transesterification processes for production. [45805]

John Healey: Fuel produced from vegetable oil is eligible for the rate of duty for biodiesel (currently 27.10 pence per litre) if it meets the legal definition of biodiesel for tax purposes set out in section 2AA of the Hydrocarbon Oil Duties Act 1979. In other cases, it is liable to duty at the main road fuel rate, currently at 47.10 pence per litre, as has been the case since Royal Assent to the Finance Act 2002.

Capital Gains Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether a domestic property that pays business rates, in addition to council tax, due to a householder working at home, may be liable for capital gains tax on sale of the property. [46962]

Dawn Primarolo: Business rates, council tax and capital gains tax liabilities are assessed on different criteria. Gains made on the disposal of a main home are generally exempt from capital gains tax. Full relief may also be available where partial business use has been made of a property, depending on the facts of the individual case.

Christmas Cards

Mr. Hands: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the cost to his Department of sending Christmas cards in 2005. [45927]

John Healey: The cost to the Treasury of purchasing official Christmas cards for Christmas 2005 was £7,532 plus VAT, including envelopes. The Treasury purchases its Christmas cards from the charity Card Aid, who will make a donation of £2,126 from the cost of 2005 cards to the Disasters Emergency Committee on behalf of the Treasury. Information on the cost of posting Christmas cards is not available. All expenditure incurred on official Christmas cards is made in accordance with the principle of propriety set out in Government Accounting.

Cole Layer Trumble

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what meetings *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials of his Department have had with the company, Cole Layer Trumble, or their representatives, in the last five years. [47026]

Dawn Primarolo: So far as I am aware, no meetings involving Treasury Ministers or officials have been held with Cole Layer Trumble or their representatives. Staff of the Valuation Office Agency, an Executive Agency of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, have had regular liaison with representatives of Cole Layer Trumble during development of the Agency's Automated Valuation Model (AVM).

Data Protection Act

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the types of data *(a)* HM Revenue and Customs and *(b)* the Valuation Office Agency is permitted to hold under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. [47027]

Dawn Primarolo: The types of data that HMRC and the Valuation Office Agency hold and process under the provisions of the Data Protection Act are detailed in their notification to the Information Commissioner. This is on the Information Commissioner's public register held on his website under registration number Z9034158.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from Treasury buildings in the past 12 months. [43441]

John Healey: Three laptop computers were reported as stolen during 2005.

EU Budget

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the estimated *(a)* net and *(b)* gross contribution to the EU to be paid by the UK will be in (i) 2007, (ii) 2008, (iii) 2009 and (iv) 2010 following decisions at the recent summit. [40045]

Michael Gove: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the value of *(a)* the UK's gross contribution to the EU including overseas aid spending, *(b)* the UK abatement, *(c)* UK receipts of EU spending and *(d)* the UK net contribution to the EU budget will be in constant pound terms in each year from 2007 to 2013 under the recently agreed budget. [40951]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 9 January 2006]*: Based on the European Commission's forecasts and assumptions, and using the Financial Perspective table

agreed on 17 December 2005, Treasury estimates for the UK's gross contribution to the EC budget, the abatement, UK receipts and the UK net contribution to the EC budget are:

£ billion 2004 prices (payments)

	Gross contribution before abatement	Abatement	Receipts	Net contribution
2007	-14.2	3.9	5.6	-4.7
2008	-14.6	4.6 / 4.7	5.2	-4.6 / -4.7
2009	-13.7	4.8 / 4.9	4.2	-4.6 / -4.7
2010	-14.4	3.8 / 3.9	4.6	-6.0 / -6.1
2011-13	-14.1 / -14.5	3.5 / 4.1	4.2	-6.0 / -6.8

As the Prime Minister said in his statement to the House on 19 December, while the UK's net contribution will rise over the next financing period compared to 2000-06, France and Italy's contribution will rise twice as fast. The abatement will also rise, not fall.

The UK's actual financing share, receipts and abatement are all dependent on a number of variables, including the actual rate of spending in each policy area in each member state, and the pound-euro exchange rate.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what his estimate is of the *(a)* net and *(b)* gross contributions France will make to the European Union during the next budget cycle; [40546]

(2) what his estimate is of the *(a)* gross and *(b)* net contributions per head of population for each household in the United Kingdom to the European Union during the next budget cycle. [40547]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Based on the European Commission's forecasts and assumptions, and using the Financial Perspective table agreed on 17 December 2005, Treasury estimates for France and the UK's net and gross contributions to the EC budget are:

2004 prices (payments)

2007-13	Total (€ billion) Gross contribution after abatement	Total (€ billion) Net contribution	Per capita (€) Gross contribution after abatement	Per capita (€) Net contribution
France	-135.2 / -134.9	-48.7 / -48.3	-2,242 / -2,236	-808 / -801
UK	-102.6 / -104.0	-56.1 / -57.5	-1,702 / -1,725	-930 / -954

The UK's actual financing share, receipts and abatement are all dependent on a number of variables, including the actual rate of spending in each policy area in each member state, and the pound-euro exchange rate.

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to enable the House to vote on a motion to approve the recently agreed changes in the UK rebate from the EU budget. [46226]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The changes to the financing of the EC budget agreed at the December European Council, including the change to the application of the UK abatement in respect of expenditure in the new member states of the European Union, will be incorporated in a new EU 'own resources decision'. This decision will in due course require ratification by each member state. In the UK this will be by means of a European Communities (Finance) Bill, which will be primary legislation subject to the usual procedures and will be brought forward as parliamentary time allows.

European Commissioner for Trade

Mrs. May: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) on what dates he has held meetings with the European Commissioner for Trade since October 2004; [47429]

(2) what telephone conversations he has held with the European Commissioner for Trade since October 2004. [47430]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Treasury Ministers and officials have conversations and discussions with a wide range of organisations and individuals as part of the process of policy development, analysis and delivery. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of every such discussion.

European Court of Justice

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the Court of Justice's preliminary rulings on the acts referred to in Article 35 of the Treaty on European Union, as referred to in *Official Journal L327* of 14 December 2005. [46485]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I have been asked to reply.

Article 35 of the Treaty on European Union (within Title VI of that Treaty, on Police and Judicial Co-operation in Criminal Matters) provides that the European Court of Justice may have jurisdiction to give preliminary rulings on certain questions referred to it by domestic courts in the member states. Member states can choose whether or not to accept such jurisdiction by declaration.

The notice in the *Official Journal* to which the hon. Member refers lists those member states which have made such a declaration. The United Kingdom has not made such a declaration.

Financial Services Authority

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff have been employed by the Financial Services Authority in each year since its creation. [45568]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is an operational matter for the FSA. I understand that the Chairman of the FSA will write to the hon. Member directly.

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the service offered by the Financial Services Authority (FSA) to professionals seeking guidance and interpretation of FSA rules and guidelines; and if he will make a statement. [45573]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The matters raised in this question are the responsibility of the Financial Services Authority (FSA), whose day-to-day operations are independent from Government control and influence.

However, as part of the Treasury's Two-Year Review of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA), the FSA has improved its provision of advice and guidance. The FSA Contact Centre remit has been extended to cover large firms in addition to consumers and small firms. All calls and correspondence received through the Contact Centres are subject to revised service standards with tracking and delivery mechanisms to ensure that these standards are delivered consistently. Finally, public reporting against all service standards is moving to a bi-annual basis.

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the authorisation procedure operated by the Financial Services Authority for the authorisation of *(a)* individuals and *(b)* institutions to offer financial advice; and if he will make a statement. [45656]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have made no such assessment. This is an operational matter for the FSA, and its authorisation procedure is published on its website at www.fsa.gov.uk/Pages/doing/how/index.shtml.

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many applications from *(a)* individuals and *(b)* institutions for authorisation to issue financial advice have been received by the Financial Services Authority in each year since its creation; and how many in each category were successful. [45662]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is an operational matter for the FSA. The Chairman of the FSA will write to the hon. Member directly.

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what changes the Financial Services Authority plans to make to the fees it levies; and if he will make a statement. [45824]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is an operational matter for the FSA. I understand that the chairman of the FSA will write to the hon. Member directly.

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the Financial Services Authority budget was spent on *(a)* financial capability and *(b)* staff entertainment in (i) 2001, (ii) 2002, (iii) 2003 and (iv) 2004. [46216]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is an operational matter for the FSA. I understand that the Chairman of the FSA will shortly write to the hon. Member directly about this matter.

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Financial Services Authority has raised through fines of financial services companies in each year since its inception. [46217]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is an operational matter for the FSA. I understand that the Chairman of the FSA will shortly write to the hon. Member directly about this matter.

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Financial Services Authority spent on engagement with *(a)* local councils and *(b)* devolved administrations in each of the last three years. [46219]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is an operational matter for the FSA. I understand that the Chairman of the FSA will shortly write to the hon. Member directly about this matter.

HM Revenue and Customs

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his estimate is of the number of staff required to provide a walk-in service for HM Revenue and Customs on the Isle of Wight following the proposed closure of the Newport office. [46177]

Dawn Primarolo: The lease at 33 St. James Street, Newport, Isle of Wight will expire on 24 March 2006, although HMRC occupation of the building has been extended until 31 May 2006.

HMRC will continue to provide a face-to-face service for its customers on the Isle of Wight and new premises are being sought for the Enquiry Centre. The Isle of Wight Enquiry Centre is currently staffed by the equivalent of 6.68 full-time staff; there are no plans to change the level of staffing.

Identity Theft

Lynne Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps his Department is taking to change HM Revenue and Customs computer systems to prevent identity theft; and what discussions he has had with other Departments about any implications of the threat of identity theft for *(a)* existing computerised systems and *(b)* systems being developed. [45366]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC are planning to place stronger and more consistent controls on how a claimant can change their identity details on departmental systems. This includes better methods of authentication when customers contact HMRC.

HMRC are working with DWP to seek common standards of identity authentication.

As set out in my statement of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 41WS, I met with the Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, my hon. Friend the Member for Leigh (Andy Burnham) and the banking industry on 23 January to discuss the application of the Government's identity fraud strategy.

Inheritance Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the role of the Valuation Office Agency is in the assessment of inheritance tax. [47025]

Dawn Primarolo: The Valuation Office Agency provides valuation advice to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs through its District Valuer Services business stream. This covers the provision of valuations of land, buildings, lordships of the manor, growing crops, live and dead farming stock, plant, machinery and fixtures, which are required for the assessment of inheritance tax. At the request of HMRC the VOA also

undertakes negotiations with taxpayers or their agents to resolve any differences of opinion on valuation matters.

Insolvency

Peter Luff: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list individuals and corporate entities who *(a)* have been and *(b)* will be granted exemption prior to the issuance of any Lloyds market reorganisation order under the provisions of Statutory Instrument 2005, No. 1998, on insolvency. [45811]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: A court can make a Lloyd's Market Reorganisation Order upon application by the Society of Lloyd's or the FSA or both. The reorganisation order will specify the persons to which it will apply. It will be a matter for the courts to decide who should be excluded from the order. The court can consider applications for exclusion of particular assets or particular persons at the time of the original application or at any time subsequently.

Master Netting Agreement

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the administration of the master netting agreement of the European Central Bank, with particular reference to potential obligations on the UK Government's maintenance of current practice with regard to European Central Bank's Guideline ECB/2005/15 as expressed in OJ L345 vol. 48 of 8 December 2005. [46486]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: ECB Guideline ECB/2000/1, which has now been amended by Guideline ECB/2005/15, is addressed to the national central banks of the member states that have adopted the euro in accordance with the treaty. The application of the guidelines and of the master netting agreements is a matter for them and their counterparties.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many visits abroad the Paymaster General has made in relation to the Treasury interest in child care policy since 2001. [45179]

Dawn Primarolo: None personally, but Treasury officials maintain strong links with officials from overseas who work on child care policy issues.

National Insurance

Paul Flynn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the revenue from national insurance contributions was in each year from 2003–04; what the estimate is for 2006–07; and what assessment he has made of the impact on revenue of the National Insurance Contributions Act 2002 in respect of NHS employers' contributions being calculated as a percentage of all earnings. [46798]

Dawn Primarolo: National insurance contribution receipts are published in Table PSF6 of Public Sector Finances. A link to the most recent publication is given as follows.

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/psf0106.pdf

Estimates of receipts in 2005–06 and 2006–07 were published in Table B14 of the December 2005 pre-Budget report. A link is given as follows.

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/FA6/58/pbr05_annexB_246.pdf

Estimates of national health service secondary (employers') national insurance contributions for Great Britain in 2002–03 and 2003–04 are given in Appendix 6 of the Government Actuary's Report on the Up-rating and Re-rating orders, 2003. http://www.gad.gov.uk/Publications/docs/2003uprating.pdf.

National Lottery

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to allow 100 per cent. of proceeds from the national lottery to go directly to good causes. [46024]

John Healey: The taxation of the lottery is a principle that has been accepted by Parliament since the lottery was established in 1994. The lottery is a mainstream gambling activity and should, like other gambling activities, make a contribution to revenues for the funding of essential public services.

Payment Protection Insurance

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what date his officials last met the *(a)* Financial Services Authority and *(b)* Office of Fair Trading to discuss their payment protection insurance inquiries. [46215]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: HM Treasury officials meet a wide range of organisations, including the Financial Services Authority (FSA) and the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), as part of the process of policy development and analysis. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

Under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA), the FSA is an independent body that regulates financial services in the UK. The Enterprise Act 2002 established the OFT as an independent authority, and as such it is for the OFT to enforce competition law and to investigate markets that may not be working well for consumers.

QinetiQ

Mike Penning: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the loss to the Treasury of the Carlyle share of QinetiQ; and if he will make a statement. [46784]

Mr. Des Browne: The Government believe that it has achieved value from its sale of a minority stake in QinetiQ to its strategic partner, the Carlyle Group.

Self-invested Personal Pension

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether a regulatory impact assessment has been prepared on his decision to withdraw the right to hold residential property in a self-invested personal pension. [47028]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: A Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) covering all additional legislative changes on Pension Simplification announced since April 2004 will be published alongside the Finance Bill 2006.

Stakeholder Pensions

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average tax relief will be for stakeholder pensions following implementation of the Finance Act 2004; and what the rate was in each of the last three years. [47165]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We do not hold information on the average rate of tax relief for stakeholder pensions. But contributions to stakeholder pensions are tax relieved at the contributor's marginal rate of income tax and this will continue to be the position after the implementation of the Finance Act 2004.

Statutory Instruments

John Bercow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the statutory instruments introduced by his Department since 6 May 2005. [46206]

John Healey: The information requested in respect of the Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs is as follows:

		Statutory instruments
HM Treasury		
2005	1433	Prospectus Regulations
2005	1479	Recovery of Taxes etc. Due in Other Member States (Amendment of Section 134 of the Finance Act 2002) Regulations
2005	1480	Tonnage Tax (Exception of Financial Year 2005) Order
2005	1518	Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Regulated Activities) (Amendment) (No.2) Order
2005	1525	Terrorism (United Nations Measures) Order 2001 (Amendment) Regulations
2005	1526	Burma (Financial Sanctions) Regulations
2005	1527	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (Financial Sanctions Against Indictees) Regulations
2005	1529	Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Financial Promotion) Order
2005	1532	Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Promotion of Collective Investment Schemes) (Exemptions) (Amendment) Order
2005	1538	Lloyd's Sourcebook (Amendment of the Finance Act 1993 and the Finance Act 1994) Order
2005	1539	Reporting of Savings Income Information (Amendment) Regulations
2005	1634	Stamp Duty (Consequential Amendment of Enactments) (Northern Ireland) Regulations
2005	1644	Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Administration Orders Relating to Insurers) (Northern Ireland) Order
2005	1709	Recovery of Duties and Taxes Etc. Due in Other Member States (Corresponding UK Claims, Procedure and Supplementary) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	1713	Finance Act 2003, sections 189 and 190, (Appointed Day) Order
2005	1714	Climate Change Levy (Combined Heat and Power Stations) Regulations
2005	1715	Climate Change Levy (Fuel Use and Recycling Processes) Regulations
2005	1724	Value Added Tax (Disclosure of Avoidance Schemes) (Designations) (Amendment) Order
2005	1978	Excise Duties (Surcharges or Rebates) (Hydrocarbon Oils etc.) Order
2005	1980	Stamp Duty and Stamp Duty Reserve Tax (Extension of Exceptions relating to Recognised Exchanges) Regulations
2005	1993	Value Added Tax (Refund of Tax to Museums and Galleries) (Amendment) Order
2005	1996	Registration of Civil Partnerships (Fees) Order
2005	1997	Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Fees) (Amendment) Order
2005	1998	Insurers (Reorganisation and Winding Up) (Lloyd's) Regulations
2005	2000	Civil Partnership (Amendments to Registration Provisions) Order
2005	2005	Friendly Societies (Modification of the Corporation Tax Acts) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	2007	Finance Act 2002, Section 117 (Day Appointed for Cessation of Effect) Order
2005	2010	Finance (No.2) Act 2005, section 6 (Appointed Day and Savings Provisions)
2005	2012	Loan Relationships and Derivative Contracts (Disregard and Bringing into Account of Profits and Losses) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	2013	Exchange Gains and Losses (Bringing into Account Gains or Losses) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	2014	Friendly Societies (Modification of the Corporation Tax Acts) Regulations
2005	2082	Finance Act 2002, Schedule 26, Parts 2 and 9 (Amendment No.2) Order
2005	2209	Income Tax (Car Benefits) (Reduction of Value of Appropriate Percentage) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	2210	Friendly Societies (Accounts and Related Provisions) (Amendment)
2005	2211	Friendly Societies Act 1992 (International Accounting Standards and Other Accounting Amendments) Order
2005	2422	Social Security (Contributions) (Amendment No.5) Regulations
2005	2423	Capital Allowances (Environmentally Beneficial Plant and Machinery) (Amendment) Order
2005	2424	Capital Allowances (Energy-saving Plant and Machinery) (Amendment) Order
2005	2561	Individual Savings Account (Amendment No.2) Regulations
2005	2562	Personal Equity Plan (Amendment) Regulations
2005	2899	Exemption From Income Tax For Certain Interest and Royalty Payments (Amendment to Section 97(1) of the Finance Act 2004 and Section 757(2) of the Income Tax (Trading and Other Income) Act 2005) Order
2005	2919	Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Tax Credits, etc.) (Consequential Amendments)
2005	2967	Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Consequential Amendments) Order
2005	3071	Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Disclosure of Confidential Information) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	3130	Social Security (Contributions) (Amendment No.6) Regulations
2005	3131	Social Security Contributions (Intermediaries) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	3132	Social Security Contributions (Intermediaries) (Northern Ireland) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	3133	Social Security (Categorisation of Earners) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	3134	Social Security (Categorisation of Earners) (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Regulations

Statutory instruments

2005	3167	Registration of Civil Partnerships (Fees) (No 2) Order
2005	3163	Marriages and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations
2005	3174	Reporting of Suspicious Civil Partnerships Regulations
2005	3176	Civil Partnership (Registration Provisions) Regulations
2005	3177	Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Amendment) Regulations
2005	3203	Cash Ratio Deposits (Eligible Liabilities) (Amendment) Order
2005	3229	Tax and Civil Partnership Regulations
2005	3230	Tax and Civil Partnership (No 2) Regulations
2005	3289	General Insurance Reserves (Tax) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	3291	Value Added Tax (Input Tax) (Person Supplied) Order
2005	3311	Revenue and Customs (Complaints and Misconduct) Regulations
2005	3327	Income Tax (Indexation) (No 2) Order
2005	3328	Value Added Tax (Betting, Gaming and Lotteries) Order
2005	3329	Value Added Tax (Reduced Rate) (No 2) Order
2005	3330	Excise Duties (Surcharges or Rebates) (Hydrocarbon Oils etc.) (Amendment)
2005	3337	Finance (No 2) Act 2005, Section 45, (Appointed Day) Order
2005	3348	Personal Equity Plan (Amendment No 2) Regulations
2005	3349	Child Trust Funds (Amendment No 3) Regulations
2005	3350	Individual Savings Account (Amendment No 3) Regulations
2005	3374	Loan Relationships and Derivative Contracts (Disregard and Bringing into Account of Profits and Losses) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations
2005	3375	Overseas Life Insurance Companies (Amendment) Regulations
2005	3376	Research and Development Tax Relief (Definition of "Small or Medium-Sized Enterprise") Order
2005	3383	Loan Relationships and Derivative Contracts (Change of Accounting Practice) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	3392	Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Financial Promotion) (Amendment)
2005	3422	Loan Relationship and Derivative Contracts (Exchange Gains and Losses using Fair Value Accounting) Regulations
2005	3440	Finance Act 2002, Schedule 26 (Parts 2 and 9) (Amendment No 3) Order
2005	3465	Insurance Companies (Corporation Tax Acts) (Amendment) Order
2006	5	The Public Contracts Regulations
2006	6	The Utilities Regulations
2006	50	The Financial Markets (Settlement Finality) (Amendment) Regulations
2006	58	The FSMA 2000 (Designated Professional Bodies) (Amendment) Order
2006	59	The Climate Change Agreements (Energy-intensive) Installations 2006
2006	127	The Social Security (Contributions) (Amendment) Regulations
2006	139	The Stamp Duty and Stamp Duty Reserve Tax (Extensions of Exceptions to Recognised
2006	144	The Duty Stamps (Amendment of Paragraph 1 (3) of Schedule 2 A to the Alcoholic Duties Act 1979 Order 2006
2006	184	The Taxation of Chargeable Gains (Gilt-Edged Securities) Order

Statutory instruments

HM Revenue and Customs		
2005	1449	Tonnage Tax (Further Opportunity for Election) Order
2005	1523	Finance Act 1995 (Denatured Alcohol) (Appointed Day and Savings) Order
2005	1524	Denatured Alcohol Regulations
2005	1716	Climate Change Levy (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations
2005	1727	Gaming Duty (Amendment) Regulations
2005	1868	Stamp Duty Land Tax Avoidance Schemes (Prescribed Descriptions of Arrangements) Regulations
2005	1869	Tax Avoidance Schemes (Information) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	1907	Pension Protection Fund (Tax) (2005-06) Regulations
2005	1979	Excise Duties (Road Fuel Gas) (Reliefs) Regulations
2005	2009	Value Added Tax (Disclosure of Avoidance Schemes) (Amendment)
2005	2017	Partnerships (Restrictions on Contributions to a Trade) Regulations
2005	2045	Income Tax (Construction Industry Scheme) Regulations
2005	2200	Tax Credit (Payment by Employers, etc.) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	2231	Value Added Tax (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations
2005	2462	Taxes (Interest Rate) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	2691	Income Tax (Pay as You Earn) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	2790	Donations to charity by individuals (Appropriate Declarations) (Amendment)Regulations
2005	3290	Value Added Tax (Input Tax) (Reimbursement by Employers of Employees' Business Use of Road Fuel) Regulations
2005	3320	Hydrocarbon Oil Duties (Reliefs for Electricity Generation) Regulations
2005	3338	Lloyd's Underwriters (Tax) Regulations
2005	3371	Statistics of Trade (Customs and Excise) (Amendment) Regulations
2005	3441	Inheritance Tax (Double Charges Relief) Regulations
2005	3448	Registered Pension Schemes (Relief at Source) Regulations
2005	3449	Registered Pension Schemes (Prescribed Interest Rates for Authorised Employer Loans) Regulations
2005	3450	Registered Pension Schemes (Minimum Contributions) Regulations
2005	3451	Registered Pension Schemes (Prescribed Schemes and Occupations)
2005	3452	Registered Pension Schemes (Discharge of Liabilities under Sections 267 and 268 of the Finance Act 2004) Regulations
2005	3453	Employer-Financed Retirement Benefits Schemes (Provision of Information) Regulations
2005	3454	Registered Pension Schemes (Accounting and Assessment) Regulations
2005	3455	Registered Pension Schemes and Employer-Financed Retirement Benefits Schemes (Information) (Prescribed Descriptions of Persons) Regulations
2005	3456	Registered Pension Schemes (Audited Accounts) (Specified Persons)
2005	3457	Taxes Management Act 1970 (Modifications to Schedule 3 for Pension Scheme Appeals) Order

		Statutory instruments
2005	3458	Registered Pension Schemes (Restriction of Employers' Relief) Regulations
2005	3472	Hydrocarbon Oil (Registered Remote Markers) Regulations
2005	3474	Income Tax (Building Societies) (Dividends and Interest) (Amendment)
2006	111	Lloyd's Underwriters (Conversion to Limited Liability Underwriting) (Tax)
2006	112	Lloyd's Underwriters (Scottish Limited Partnerships) (Tax) (Amendment)
2006	129	Registered Pension Schemes (Relevant Annuities)
2006	130	Registered Pension Schemes (Uprating Percentages for Defined Benefit Arrangements and Enhanced Protection Limits)
2006	131	Registered Pension Schemes (Enhanced Lifetime Allowances)
2006	132	Armed Forces and Reserve Forces (Compensation Scheme) (Excluded Benefits for Tax Purposes)
2006	133	Registered Pension Schemes (Co-ownership of Living Accommodation)
2006	134	Registered Pension Schemes (Authorised Payments) (Transfers to the Pension Protection Fund)
2006	135	Registered Pension Schemes (Meaning of Pension Commencement Lump Sum)
2006	136	Pension Benefits (Insurance Company Liable as Scheme Administrator)
2006	137	Registered Pension Schemes (Authorised Member Payments)
2006	138	Pension Schemes (Reduction in Pension Rates)

Tax Arrears

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1735W, on tax arrears, in how many cases over the last two years where a review has been notified to a taxpayer and it subsequently resulted in a bill to the taxpayer, interest has not been levied; what proportion of such cases that represented; and for what reasons the interest was not levied. [46060]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not held centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However, normally where an adjustment has been made to an assessment of tax, the interest follows automatically, and is calculated and charged by the computer systems of HM Revenue and Customs.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1735W, on tax arrears, if he will make it his policy to notify the taxpayer *(a)* that interest will be charged, *(b)* of the date it is to be levied from and *(c)* the interest rate, at the time the review is notified; and if he will make a statement. [46084]

Dawn Primarolo: Whenever an enquiry is opened into a tax return, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) sends the taxpayer a code of practice with the opening letter. The code of practice says that

"interest will be charged from the original due date on any tax paid after that date. This includes additional amounts as a result of our enquiry."

Rates of interest are available from the HMRC internet website: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/rates/interest.htm or from any HMRC local office.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1735W, on tax arrears, what *(a)* the longest and *(b)* the average period was between the date interest was charged from and the date the review was made known to the taxpayer in relation to (i) businesses and (ii) individual taxpayers in the last period for which figures are available; and what the amount of interest charged for the period was in each case. [46120]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not held centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1735W, on tax arrears, whether the rate of interest charged is the same in every case; how it is determined; and what the rate is. [46121]

Dawn Primarolo: The rates of interest are laid down by statutory formulae. The rates are available on the internet website of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC): http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/rates/interest.htm or from any HMRC local office.

Tax Credits

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland were in receipt of (i) less than £1,000, (ii) between £1,000 and £2,500, (iii) between £2,500 and £5,000, (iv) between £5,000 and £10,000, (v) between £10,000 and £20,000 and (vi) above £20,000 in working tax credits and child tax credits in each of the last three years. [45106]

Dawn Primarolo: The average number of in-work families in England in 2003-04 by level of annualised finalised tax credit entitlement is shown in the following table:

Thousand

2003-04 entitlement[1]	*Number of awards*
Under £1,000[2]	1,737
Between £1,000 and £2,500	477
Between £2,500 and £5,000	547
Between £5,000 and £10,000	756
Between £10,000 and £20,000	49
£20,000 and over[3]	
All	3,566

[1] Annualised 2003-04 entitlement based on circumstances throughout the year and finalised 2003-04 incomes. (For further details see introduction of 'Child and Working Tax Credit Statistics Finalised Annual Awards 2003-04').

[2] Excluding families with awards tapered to zero.

[3] Sample size too small to provide a reliable estimate.

The average number of in-work families in Tees Valley[1] in 2003-04 by level of annualised finalised tax credit entitlement is shown in the following table:

[1] Tees Valley is defined as the sum of the unitary authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees.

Thousand

2003–04 entitlement[1]	*Number of awards*
Under £1,000[2]	25.2
Between £1,000 and £2,500	7.2
Between £2,500 and £5,000	9.0
Between £5,000 and £10,000	14.6
Between £10,000 and £20,000	1
£20,000 and over[3]	—
All	56.7

[1] Annualised 2003–04 entitlement based on circumstances throughout the year and finalised 2003–04 incomes. (For further details see introduction of 'Child and Working Tax Credit Statistics Finalised Annual Awards 2003–04').
[2] Excluding families with awards tapered to zero.
[3] Sample size too small to provide a reliable estimate.

The average number of in-work families in Middlesborough South and East Cleveland in 2003–04 by level of annualised finalised tax credit entitlement is shown in the following table:

Thousand

2003–04 entitlement[1]	*Number of awards*
Under £1,000[2]	3.8
Between £1,000 and £2,500	1.0
Between £2,500 and £5,000	1.2
Between £5,000 and £10,000	1.7
Between £10,000 and £20,000[3]	—
£20,000 and over[3]	—
All	7.7

[1] Annualised 2003–04 entitlement based on circumstances throughout the year and finalised 2003–04 incomes. (For further details see introduction of 'Child and Working Tax Credit Statistics Finalised Annual Awards 2003–04').
[2] Excluding families with awards tapered to zero.
[3] Sample size too small to provide a reliable estimate.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the online system for claiming tax credits will become fully operative. [45222]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC take fraud very seriously and as part of their ongoing compliance work have identified and stopped attempts to defraud the tax credit system by making claims through the tax credits e-portal. In the light of this, HMRC has closed the tax credits e-portal while it makes enhancements to ensure that the system remains secure.

The current plan is a series of strengthening measures to be implemented through planned IT releases and HMRC will reopen the portal once this work provides the necessary assurance.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will commission research into the impact of recovery in year of overpaid tax credits. [19720]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 518W.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many software errors generating incorrect payments have been discovered in computer systems used to administer tax credits in each year for which figures are available. [43662]

Dawn Primarolo: It is not possible to provide the information in the format requested.

Details of errors were included in the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General for 2003–04, which can be found with the Board's Annual Report and Accounts for 2003–04 at www.hmrc.gov.uk/pdfs/report2004.pdf.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) when his Department first became aware that personal data held by HM Revenue and Customs was being used in relation to tax credit fraud; [44973]

(2) what his latest estimate is of the cost of organised fraud of the tax credit system in each quarter since April 2003; and if he will make a statement; [45678]

(3) when HM Revenue and Customs first detected organised fraudulent use of the tax credit system; and if he will make a statement; [45691]

(4) what recommendations officials in HM Revenue and Customs made to the Paymaster General in June 2005 about organised attempts to defraud the tax credits system; and what steps were taken as a result; [45692]

(5) when HM Revenue and Customs first considered closing the e-portal to reduce the risks of organised fraud of the tax credit system. [45693]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answers I gave him on 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1357–58W) and 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2048–49W.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what sanctions are faced by individuals from other EU member states who are found to be fraudulently claiming *(a)* working tax credit and *(b)* child tax credit; [45330]

(2) if he will investigate the extent to which workers from the new EU accession countries are fraudulently claiming tax credits. [45332]

Danny Alexander: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what investigation he has undertaken into possible fraud against the tax credit system by migrant workers from other EU member states; and if he will make a statement. [45306]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* HMRC use a number of sophisticated tools to help them detect wrong and fraudulent claims. Cases requiring compliance intervention are selected using a risk-based approach, which examines the overall features of a claim, not the individual's nationality.

In addition, HMRC also consider all allegations of fraud seriously and will investigate any matter where there is sufficient risk. Where it is established that a claimant has provided incorrect or fraudulent information, HMRC have a number of measures available to them including the use of financial penalties. In the most serious cases HMRC will investigate with a view to securing a criminal prosecution under the new criminal offence of tax credit fraud.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* tax credit awards, *(b)* tax credit awards where the claimant was in receipt of the maximum tax credits to which they were entitled and *(c)* tax credit awards where the claimant received only the family element of the

child tax credit there were in 2003–04; and what the (i) total value and (ii) average award was of tax credits in each category in that period. [45836]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 26 January 2006]:* For parts *(a)* and *(c)* I refer the hon. Member to the publication "Child and Working Tax Credits Finalised Annual Awards 2003–04" (http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-annual-0304.pdf).

(b) The following shows additional analyses based on the same data, and cover only the in-work period of families with awards where the claimant was in receipt of the maximum tax credits to which they were entitled in 2003–04:

	2003–04
Average number during 2003–04 (thousand)	484
Total entitlement during 2003–04 (£ million)	3,179
Average annualised entitlement (£)	6,568

Anne Milton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 773W, on tax credits, how many tax credit applications are being processed; and how many of these applications were received *(a)* up to six months ago and *(b)* more than six months ago. [46046]

Dawn Primarolo: At 31 December 2005, around 155,000 claims for tax credits were being processed. At 23 January 2006, around 117,000 claims for tax credits were being processed. Information about the length of time that these claims have been outstanding is not available. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has Service Delivery Agreement targets for deciding tax credit claims within 5 working days and 30 working days. The Department's Annual Report reported its progress against those targets. It reported that, for 2004–05, 95.9 per cent. of all new claims, renewals and changes of circumstances were decided within 30 working days of receipt.

With the small percentage of claims that have not been decided within 30 working days, HMRC are verifying information and will be in touch with claimants to obtain further information.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many home visits were arranged by HM Revenue and Customs claimant compliance officers to investigate tax credit claims in each month of 2005; [46475]

(2) what criteria are used to select individuals for a home visit by claimant compliance officers investigating tax credit claims; [46476]

(3) what his most recent estimate is of the cost of a home visit carried out by HM Customs and Revenue claimant compliance officers investigating tax credit claims. [46477]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on the number of visits HMRC claimant compliance officers have made to claimants as part of their investigations into fraud and error is not available.

HMRC uses its discretion in each case to determine the best way to obtain the information they need during their investigations. In the majority of instances, this can be done without the need to arrange a meeting with the customer. Where it is determined that a face to face meeting would be appropriate, HMRC give the claimant the option to meet on HMRC premises or at the claimant's home address.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many claims for tax credits were made by severely disabled adult workers without children in each month from April 2003 to January 2006; and if he will make a statement; [45679]

(2) how many claims for child tax credit for disabled children were made in each month since April 2003. [45681]

Dawn Primarolo: The characteristics of adults and children as initially captured in all tax credits claims, including rejected claims, are not available, and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The numbers of tax credits awards to in-work families with particular characteristics at selected dates from July 2003 to December 2005 are available in publications on the HMRC website:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-quarterly-stats.htm.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Valuation Office Agency operates an incentive scheme for staff for *(a)* council tax valuations and *(b)* business rate valuations. [47223]

Dawn Primarolo: The Valuation Office Agency does not operate an incentive scheme for valuations.

VAT (Charities)

John Bercow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will *(a)* remove and *(b)* reduce the VAT burden on charities. [45808]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Many of the supplies made by charities are not subject to VAT. Charities also benefit from VAT reliefs on their purchases worth more than £200 million per year. This forms part of the total tax reliefs for charities worth £2.4 billion per year.

Under agreements governing the application of VAT reliefs throughout the EU, successive Governments have agreed with European partners not to extend any existing VAT zero rates or introduce any new ones. The scope of the exemptions from VAT is similarly limited by European agreements. It is therefore not possible for the Government to introduce any new VAT zero rates or exemptions for supplies or purchases made by charities.

Charities VAT costs have been considered by the Government in two major reviews since 1997. In the course of these reviews it was not possible to find a solution that was practical, efficient, affordable, well-targeted and based on principle. Available resources are better and more effectively deployed through targeted initiatives and support, such as the Futurebuilders investment fund, rather than through a general VAT refund scheme for all charities.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Bob Spink: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many appeals against antisocial behaviour orders were funded by legal aid in the last 12 months; and what the *(a)* average and *(b)* total cost to public funds of this legal aid was. [45719]

Bridget Prentice: The Legal Service Commission has only recorded data relating to antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) since March 2005.

During March to December 2005, there were 25 appeals made to the Crown court against an ASBO. The average cost of these appeals was £1,135.64 and the total cost for this period was £28,391.

Appeals against ASBOs may also form part of a wider appeal in civil and criminal proceedings. The ASBO element of these cases could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Commission for Racial Equality

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent discussions her Department has had with the Commission for Racial Equality. [46165]

Ms Harman: The Secretary of State has met the chair and representatives of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) on several occasions.

HM Inspectorate of Court Administration has on-going contact with the Commission for Racial Equality in relation to their role in monitoring HM Court Services' compliance with the duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, their own internal responsibilities and linkage with the Department for Constitutional Affairs' Race Equality Scheme.

DCA corporate staff network for black and minority ethnic staff (PROUD), approached the Commission for Racial Equality to participate in PROUD's black history month in October 2005. Trevor Phillips attended giving a presentation on Race Equality in the Public Service.

Court Service (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the recent performance of the Court Service in Coventry. [46164]

Ms Harman: All data cover April to December 2005 unless stated otherwise (targets, where applicable, in brackets)

Provision of Timely Information to Other Agencies

Mags: 100 per cent. of all court registers produced within 3 days (100 per cent.)

Mags: 100 per cent. of all representation order application decisions despatched within two days (100 per cent.)

Mags: 100 per cent. of all committals to the Crown court despatched within four days (100 per cent.)

Ineffective Trials (PSA 1)

Crown: 14.8 per cent. of all trials (17 per cent.)

Mags: 20.6 per cent. of all trials (22.5 per cent.)

Criminal Case Timeliness (PSA 1)

Crown: 83 per cent. of cases listed in target (78 per cent.)

Mags: 86 per cent. of cases completed within target periods (80 per cent.)

Persistent Young Offenders (PSA 1)

Crown: Average of 183 days to completion (180 days)

Mags: Average of 47 days to completion (60 days)

Payment Rate (PSA 2)

Mags: 70 per cent. (75 per cent.)

Enforcement of Court Order Breaches (PSA2)

Mags: Average of 27 days from unacceptable failure to comply with order to resolution (35 days)

Mags: 74 per cent. of breaches resolved within 25 days (50 per cent.)

Small Claims (PSA 4)

County: 58 per cent. of claims heard within 15 weeks (80.5 per cent.)

Fast-Track Claims (PSA 4)

County: 82 per cent. of claims heard within 30 weeks (78 per cent.)

Multi-Track Claims (PSA 4)

County: 59 per cent. of claims heard within 50 weeks (78 per cent.)

Family Public Law (PSA 4)

County: 28 per cent. of cases completed within 40 weeks (35 per cent.)

Mags: 14.3 per cent. of cases completed within 40 weeks (43.9 per cent.)

Family Private Law

County: 67 per cent. of cases completed within 40 weeks (70 per cent.)

Adoptions

County: 81 per cent. of cases completed within 20 weeks (70 per cent.)

Courtroom Utilisation

Crown and County: 96 per cent. of available courtroom capacity utilised (no target)

Mags: 86 per cent. of available courtroom capacity utilised (80 per cent.)

Departmental Properties

Mr. Weir: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was paid by her Department in 2004–05 in rent for properties in *(a)* total, *(b)* each (i) region and (ii) nation of the UK and *(c)* London. [35950]

Ms Harman: The answer provided relates solely to property on the HQ estate of the Department for Constitutional Affairs. It does not cover HM Court Service, associated offices or NDPB's as this information is neither collated nor managed by DCA and to obtain it would incur a disproportionate cost. Wales Office and Scotland Office are excluded on the grounds that they fund their own rent and should receive this question directly.

(a) My Department paid a total of £14,297,265.00 in property rental in the financial year 2004–05.

(b) (i) By region, the breakdown is:

Region	*Property rental (£)*
East Midlands	Nil
East of England	Nil
North East	93,856
North West	134,056
South East	Nil
South West	36,252
West Midlands	Nil
Yorks and Humber	Nil
Scotland	30,870
Wales	Nil
London	14,002,231

(b) (ii) by Nation the breakdown is:

Nation	*Property rental (£)*
England	14,266,395
N. Ireland	Nil
Scotland	30,870
Wales	Nil

(c) The total rental paid in London was £14,002,231.

The individual breakdown by building was as follows:

Building	*Rental paid (£)*
Selborne House, London	2,175,000
Southside, London	[1]4,216,711
30,Millbank, London	229,313
Millbank Tower, London	1,464,050
Chancery Lane, London	2,332,918
Conquest House, London	481,600
Greycoat Place, London	[1]312,456
Archway Tower, London	884,000
Steel House, London	1,629,183
Sunlight House, Manchester	134,056
Gateshead	11,875
Burghill, Bristol	9,356
Tower House, Bristol	26,896
Hayes	[2]277,000
City House, Leeds	37,830
MWB, Leeds	[1]44,151
Edinburgh	30,870

[1] Now disposed of.
[2] Now with MOD.

Judicial Correspondence Unit

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many members of the Judicial Correspondence Unit took *(a)* voluntary early severance and *(b)* early retirement in each year since 1997. [47505]

Ms Harman: The Department's records do not show that any members of the Judicial Correspondence Unit have taken voluntary early severance or early retirement since 1997.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many disciplinary actions against officials employed by the Judicial Correspondence Unit *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years for which information is available. [47506]

Ms Harman: Data for the number of employees (in any part of the Department for Constitutional Affairs) against whom disciplinary action has been commenced, or in respect of whom disciplinary sanctions, short of dismissal, have been applied are only recorded on individual files. These are retained for the appropriate period before removal and destruction in compliance with the Department's obligations under the Data Protection Act. It is not therefore possible to obtain this information without incurring disproportionate costs.

Legal Aid

John Bercow: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was spent on legal aid in each year since 1998. [46152]

Bridget Prentice: Legal Aid cash expenditure in each year since 1998 was as follows:

	£ million
1997–98	1,525
1998–99	1,623
1999–2000	1,551
2000–01	1,664
2001–02	1,716
2002–03	1,908
2003–04	2,077
2004–05	2,037

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what estimate she has made of the savings that would have been made had means testing for legal aid in *(a)* magistrates courts and *(b)* Crown courts not been abolished in 2001; and if she will make a statement. [47334]

Bridget Prentice: I shall reply to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the cost of legal aid in Northern Ireland has been since 2002–03. [46521]

Bridget Prentice: The cost of legal aid in Northern Ireland each year since 2002–03 is as follows:

	£ million
	Amount
2002–03	45.0
2003–04	49.8
2004–05	58.6

New Magistrates Court (High Peak)

Tom Levitt: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when she expects to announce a timetable for the development of the new magistrates court at New Mills, High Peak. [46179]

Ms Harman: My Department is unable to say when it will be able to proceed with the construction of a new courthouse in New Mills until the outstanding

application under Section 13 of the Commons Registration Act 1965 is determined by the Derbyshire county council.

Queens' Counsel

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many and what percentage of the English Bar are Queen's Counsel. [46533]

Ms Harman: There are currently 14,623 members of the England and Wales Bar, of whom 11,796 are independent barristers in private practice and 2,827 are employed. 1,134 are Queen's Counsel, which is 7.8 per cent. of the total and 9.6 per cent. of the independent Bar.

Small Claims Court (Gloucester)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the waiting time from allocation to hearing for small claims at Gloucester County Court was in the last period for which figures are available. [46371]

Ms Harman: The average waiting time from allocation to hearing for small claims at Gloucester County Court for the period April to December 2005 was 10.3 weeks.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Bedroom Standard

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many children in the south east region were living in accommodation one or more bedrooms below the bedroom standard in the most recent year for which figures are available. [47508]

Yvette Cooper: Using data from the Survey of English Housing it is estimated that over the three-year period 2002–03, 2003–04 and 2004–05, the number of children in the south east region living in households that are one or more bedrooms below the bedroom standard was 100,000.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress has been made since 1997 in reducing the number of children living in overcrowded conditions in the south east; and if he will make a statement. [47494]

Yvette Cooper: Using data from the Survey of English Housing it is estimated that over the three-year period 1996–97, 1997–98 and 1998–99, the number of children in the south east region living in overcrowded households, based on the bedroom standard, was 100,000. This is the same as the estimate for the latest available period: 2002–03, 2003–04 and 2004–05.

The Government have doubled its investment in social housing from 1997 levels, and the Housing Corporation has now taken steps to encourage investment in larger homes through its National Affordable Housing Programme, so that more large homes can be built.

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on how many occasions his Office consulted citizens juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens jury. [46232]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not specifically consulted citizens juries on departmental policies within the last five years. However it does use a wide range of consultation methods, including fora and focus groups, in order to ensure public participation in the policy process.

Concessionary Travel

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list local authorities that have made representations to him objecting to the distribution of grant for the proposed extension of the concessionary travel scheme for older and disabled people. [46182]

Mr. Woolas: Out of the 336 representations received during the consultation period for the local government finance settlement, 61 mentioned the funding for concessionary fares. The points raised are summarised in the following tables:

Table 1: Summary table

Issue	*Number of representations*
Not enough money for concessionary fares	34
Support the concessionary fare funding scheme	18
Judgement for setting coefficients not transparent	2
Need more transparency in the amount of funding for concessionary fares	5
Miscellaneous	2

Table 2: Authority/Association and the main issue raised

	Authority/Association	*Issue raised*
1	Association of London Government (ALG)	Not enough money for concessionary fares
2	County Councils Network (CCN)	Judgement for setting coefficients not transparent
3	Local Government Association (LGA)	Not enough money for concessionary fares
4	Mersey Travel	Not enough money for concessionary fares
5	Society of District County Treasurers (SDCT)	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
6	South East England Regional Authority	Not enough money for concessionary fares
7	Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities (SIGOMA)	Need more transparency in the amount of funding for concessionary fares
8	Sparsity Partnership for Authorities delivering Rural Services (SPARSE)	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
9	Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Authority	Not enough money for concessionary fares
10	Lincolnshire County, district and police authorities	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme

Table 2: Authority/Association and the main issue raised

	Authority/Association	*Issue raised*
11	Rob Wilson MP—Wokingham District Council	Not enough money for concessionary fares
12	Anne Milton MP—Guildford	Not enough money for concessionary fares
13	Bexley	Not enough money for concessionary fares
14	Camden	Not enough money for concessionary fares
15	Croydon Council	Not enough money for concessionary fares
16	Hammersmith and Fulham	Not enough money for concessionary fares
17	Harrow Council	Not enough money for concessionary fares
18	Lambeth	Not enough money for concessionary fares
19	London Borough of Havering	Not enough money for concessionary fares
20	Sutton	Need more transparency in the amount of funding for concessionary fares
21	Birmingham	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
22	Doncaster	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
23	Gateshead Council	Not enough money for concessionary fares
24	Greater Merseyside	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
25	Kirklees	Need more transparency in the amount of funding for concessionary fares
26	Leeds City Council	Not enough money for concessionary fares
27	North Tyneside	Not enough money for concessionary fares
28	Rochdale MBC	Not enough money for concessionary fares
29	Sefton	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
30	South Tyneside Council	Not enough money for concessionary fares
31	Stockport	Not enough money for concessionary fares
32	Sunderland City Council	Not enough money for concessionary fares
33	Trafford BC	Not enough money for concessionary fares
34	Carlisle	Using RSG to distribute Concessionary Fares is unfair
35	Dacorum	Judgement for setting coefficients not transparent
36	East Lindsey	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
37	East Staffordshire	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
38	Epping Forest District Council	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
39	Epsom and Ewell BC	Not enough money for concessionary fares
40	Fareham Borough Council	Not enough money for concessionary fares
41	Guildford	Not enough money for concessionary fares
42	North Hertfordshire	Not enough money for concessionary fares
43	North Kesteven	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
44	North Norfolk	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
45	Nuneaton and Bedworth	Not enough money for concessionary fares
46	Preston City Council	Not enough money for concessionary fares
47	Restormel	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
48	Rushcliffe	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
49	South Hams	Not enough money for concessionary fares
50	South Norfolk	Not enough money for concessionary fares
51	Spelthorne Council	Not enough money for concessionary fares
52	Thanet	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
53	West Devon	Need more transparency in the amount of funding for concessionary fares
54	West Lancashire District Council	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
55	Brighton and Hove	Not enough money for concessionary fares
56	Derby City	Not enough money for concessionary fares
57	Gloucester City Council	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
58	Medway	Support the concessionary fare funding scheme
59	Stockton Borough Council	Need more transparency in the amount of funding for concessionary fares
60	Torbay	Not enough money for concessionary fares
61	East Sussex	Concessionary fares should be funded by a specific grant

Consolidated Fund

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for what reasons there was a failure to pay national non-domestic rates collected from local authorities into the Consolidated Fund in 2004–05; how much was involved; and if he will make a statement. [47511]

Mr. Woolas: The usual procedure is that receipts received in one month are paid into the Consolidated Fund on the eighth banking day of the following month. However, to avoid problems with year end accruals, the usual practice is to pay over the March receipts before our accounting system closes in March. Although the intention was to do this in March 2005, it was inadvertently overlooked and the payment was made on 12 April.

This transaction concerns the transfer of money between two central Government accounts at the Bank of England and therefore did not involve any loss of interest, or any risk to taxpayers' money. As at 31 March 2005 the national non-domestic rates (NNDR) requiring payment to the Consolidated Fund was £824 million. As it was year end, the amount received was lower than the usual monthly amount, which is typically about £1.6 billion.

Procedures have been put in place to ensure that this oversight will not happen again and that future relevant payment will be made in March.

Correspondence

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will reply to the letter of 13 December 2005 from the hon. Member for Castle Point on the Thames Gateway Port and compensation for Thames estuary fishermen. [45718]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no record of receiving the hon. Member's letter of 13 December 2005 although officials in the ODPM have now obtained a copy of it from the hon. Member. However, the subject matter of the correspondence is the responsibility of the Department for Transport who will therefore reply directly to the hon. Member.

Council Tax

Anne Milton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the district precept of Band D council tax *(a)* excluding and *(b)* including average parish precepts was in (i) Guildford borough and (ii) Waverley borough, in each year since 1997–98. [46030]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is tabled as follows.

£

	Average Band D council tax for the authority			
	Guildford		*Waverley*	
	Excluding parish precepts	*Including parish precepts*	*Excluding parish precepts*	*Including parish precepts*
1997–98	89	103	91	107
1998–99	95	109	97	117
1999–2000	91	106	100	122
2000–01	96	112	104	129
2001–02	103	119	108	135
2002–03	112	129	114	144
2003–04	121	139	125	157
2004–05	125	144	132	165
2005–06	128	148	139	173

Source:
BR1 returns

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the annual change was in the average council tax for a band D property in each year since 1997–98. [46911]

Mr. Woolas: Details of the annual change in the average council tax for a band D property in each year since 1997–98 are published in Table 2.2e of Local Government Financial Statistics England 2005, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House and on the web at: http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/stats/lgfs/2005/lgfsl6/h/lgfsl6/xlsfiles/lgsf16-2-2k.xls

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance his Department has provided to local authorities on tackling council tax *(a)* fraud, *(b)* evasion and *(c)* underpayments. [46979]

Mr. Woolas: Billing authorities are under statutory duty to take reasonable steps to ascertain whether dwellings should qualify for a council tax exemption or whether a discount should apply. Billing authorities have the power to fine individuals who fail to notify them that an exemption or discount should no longer apply. Where a person claims a discount or exemption, to which they know that they are not entitled, then they may be subject to prosecution under the Theft Act 1968 for obtaining a pecuniary advantage by deception.

None of these duties could be undertaken without a property valuation.

Dr. Francis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will take steps to entitle *(a)* husbands and wives and *(b)* other partners who care for one another due to (i) illness and (ii) disability, whether they work or not, to council tax rebate. [46327]

Mr. Woolas: Carers are already disregarded for the purposes of calculating entitlement to a council tax discount in some circumstances. The rules are designed to ensure that the person being cared for does not face a higher council tax bill as a result of their care needs, not to provide a general reduction in council tax for those receiving or providing care. Council tax benefit is available to husbands, wives and other partners who care for one another, whether they are in work or not, if they are on a low income.

The Government has no plans to introduce new council tax exemptions and discounts. Sir Michael Lyons' Inquiry into local government funding, including the reform of council tax, is due to report at the end of this year.

Departmental Accounts (Irregularities)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what financial irregularity occurred in 2004–05, as referred to in the Department's Resource Accounts for 2004–05; how much was involved; which departmental division was involved; which Minister had oversight of the areas; whether the police authorities have been informed; and if he will make a statement. [47510]

Jim Fitzpatrick: As criminal charges have been brought and the matter is now before the courts, it would be inappropriate for me to comment at this time.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department's Accounting Officer has made of the financial irregularities referred to in the Department's Resource Accounts for 2004–05; and if he will make a statement. [47513]

Jim Fitzpatrick: As criminal charges have been brought and the matter is now before the courts, it would be inappropriate for me to comment at this time.

Departmental Losses

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been lost by his Department due to *(a)* fraud, *(b)* theft and *(c)* loss of property in each year since its creation; and what estimate he has made of such losses in 2005–06 to date. [47515]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information is as follows.

(a) Losses due to fraud in each year since the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) was created are as follows:

Financial year	ODPM (C) (£)
2002–03	8,592
2003–04	3,622
2004–05	867,200
2005–06	0

(b) Losses due to theft in each financial year since the ODPM was created are as follows:

Financial year	ODPM (C) (£)
2002–03	1,901
2003–04	6,350
2004–05	1,000
2005–06	2,000

(c) Loss of property in each year since the ODPM was created is as follows:

Financial year	ODPM (C) (£)
2002–03	75
2003–04	3,678
2004–05	0
2005–06	0

No estimate of losses has been made for 2005–06. The figures shown for that year are for losses made to date.

Departmental Website

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost of maintaining his main departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46302]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Member for Brent, East (Sarah Teather) on 3 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1264–65W, for the cost of the main Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website: odpm.gov.uk.

I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Member for Brent, East (Sarah Teather) on 17 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 805–06W, for monthly visitors to the site from September 2003 to August 2005. Figures for September and October 2005 are table as follows:

Month	Unique visitors
September 2005	177,413
October 2005	187,381

East of England Plan

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he plans to meet representatives of the East of England Regional Assembly to discuss the results of the examination in public of the draft East of England Plan when it is concluded on 16 March. [46063]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The normal practice is that any dialogue required between the Regional Assembly and my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister in the period following the Examination in Public and prior to issue of the Secretary of State my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's proposed changes would be by written communication. The guidance provides for two types of occasions after the publication of the Panel Report where the Secretary of State my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister may need to meet with representatives of the Regional Assembly:

> 'where more evidence is required on matters left unresolved in the Panel Report or further information is required on whether the Secretary of State's proposed changes could be effectively applied'.

Such a meeting would need to be the subject of a publicly available minute. As yet, no such meeting is envisaged.

Flag Masts (Planning Permission)

Mr. Burns: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether planning permission is required for domestic households to erect flag masts on their properties; and if he will make a statement. [43482]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* Planning permission is required for domestic households to erect flag poles on their properties. The exceptions: are vertical flag poles flying a national flag; flag poles flying flags as advertisements under Class 7 of Schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992; flag poles flying all other flags that have the express consent of the local planning authority to be flown.

Formula Spending Share (Peterborough)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what account has been taken of demographic changes since May 2004 in respect of the allocation of the formula spending share to Peterborough city council for 2005–06, with particular reference to migrants from EU accession countries. [46006]

Mr. Woolas: The 2005–06 formula spending shares announced in a written ministerial statement on 27 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 24–25WS, used the mid-2003 population estimates. Therefore population changes since May 2004 would not have been taken into account in the calculation of the formula spending shares for 2005–06.

From 2006–07, projections of population published by the Office for National Statistics will be used in the Local Government Finance Settlement as the key driver of population.

Funding (Lancashire)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* revenue and *(b)* capital funding his Department has allocated to *(a)* West Lancashire district council and *(b)* Lancashire county council in each of the last 10 years. [45128]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) was established following the Machinery of Government changes on 29 May 2002.

The following tables set out payments made to *(a)* West Lancashire district council and *(b)* Lancashire county council since 2002–03

(a) Funding to West Lancashire district council

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	£ million Total
Revenue	8.302	8.836	8.668	25.806
Capital	0.483	0.542	1.450	2.475

(b) Funding to Lancashire county council

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	£ million Total
Revenue	652.099	714.415	735.571	2102.085
Capital	0.561	2.143	1.494	4.198

Government Office for London

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the programmes managed by the Government office for London in 2005–06; and what the total funding for each was. [47514]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Government office for London (GOL) delivers policies and programmes in London on behalf of 10 central Government Departments. Its programme budget in 2005–06 totals £3.3 billion, of which £2.6 billion is grants to the Greater London Authority and its functional bodies. GOL leads on negotiating local area agreements on behalf of Departments, it handles planning casework, it leads on multi-agency work to improve arrangements for the resettlement of London's ex-offenders and preparing and testing plans for emergencies (the work of the London resilience team based in GOL).

Sponsor Department	*2005–06 programme*	*Allocation for 2005–06 (£)*
The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)	Single Community Programme (aka Community Empowerment Networks CEN)	8,180,694
ODPM	Disabled Facilities Grant	15,952,000
ODPM	Greater London Authority General Grant	37,493,000
ODPM	GLA Preparation Costs	4,000
ODPM	Lee Valley Regional Park SCA	458,000
ODPM	Housing Action Trusts	7,850,000
ODPM	Single Regional Housing Pot (HIP element)	215,210,000
ODPM	Private Sector Renewal Discretionary Pot (Housing)	11,100,000
ODPM	LA Regeneration Pot (Housing)	58,571,000
ODPM	Neighbourhood Renewal Fund	128,489,841
ODPM	Neighbourhood Renewal—Skills and Knowledge	391,327
ODPM	New Deal for Communities	72,000,000
ODPM	Neighbourhood Management	2,090,000
ODPM	Street Crime Wardens	3,736,475
ODPM	Liveability Fund	3,338,333
ODPM	Local Area Growth Initiative (LEGI)	2,355,000
ODPM	European Regional Development Fund (Objective 2)	31,480,916
ODPM	ERDF URBAN	1,275,877
Department for Transport (DfT)	Greater London Authority Transport Grant	2 161,015,000
Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	Sustainable Development Regional Publicity Budget	46,000
DEFRA	Sustainable Farming and Food Fund	50,000
DEFRA	Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative	20,000
DEFRA	Regional Waste Fund	50,000
Department for Education and Skills (DFES)	Community Champions	556,968
DFES	Connexions Partnership Grant Funding	74,437,563
DFES	Positive Activities For Young People Total (including main project, Uproject, key workers, key workers training and devt, secondees)	14,920,362
DFES	Transforming Youth Work Performance Improvement Fund	1,585,660
DFES	TYWPIF Secondees	47,000
DFES	Millennium Volunteers	1,852,984
DFES	Vocational and Work Related Learning	300,000
DFES	Testbed Learning Communities	67,000
DFES	Regional Networking and Development Budget	10,000
Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)	London Development Agency Grants	374,053,000
DTI	Regional Energy Strategy Delivery Budget	195,355
Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)	European Structural Fund (ESF) Objective 2	3,104,118
DWP	European Structural Fund (ESF) Objective 3	75,141,688
Home Office	Basic Command Unit Fund	9,952,587
Home Office	Building Safer Communities Fund	11,880,386
Home Office	Anti-Social Behaviour Grant	825,000
Home Office	Gun Crime (Recovered Criminal Assets Fund)	260,000
Home Office	Recovered Assets Fund (RAF)	100,000
Home Office	Home Office Directors' Allocation Fund	1,243,300
Home Office	Business Crime Advisers	52,000
Home Office	Drug Strategy Partnership Support Grant	2,280,581
Home Office	Additional Capital Funding	200,000
Home Office	Partnership Business Model	106,176
Home Office	Domestic Violence Grant	300,000

Sponsor Department	2005–06 programme	Allocation for 2005–06 (£)
Home Office	Tackling Violent Crime	300,000
Home Office	ChangeUp Programme	5,680,693
Home Office	Voluntary Sector Regional Networks	116,000
Home Office	Connecting Communities	1,283,398
Total		3,342,009,282

Hereditaments

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the Department's definition of a corporeal hereditament is for council tax valuation purposes. [47140]

Mr. Woolas: The term 'corporeal hereditament' is not one defined for council tax valuation purposes.

Housing

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance he has given to the South West Regional Assembly on the numbers of new houses to be built in *(a)* the South West, *(b)* Gloucestershire and *(c)* the Cotswolds. [45901]

Yvette Cooper: Current Government guidance on the number of new additional housing required in the South West for the period 1996 to 2016 is contained in Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10) published in 2001. RPG10 includes a figure for Gloucestershire County but no figures for any district council such as Cotswolds. The South West figure in RPG 10 is 20,200 net additional houses per annum and 2,400pa for Gloucestershire.

The South West Regional Assembly (SWRA), as the Regional Planning Body, is now preparing a draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) as required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The RSS will replace RPG10; cover the period to 2026; and set out District housing requirements. It is understood that a draft RSS will be submitted by the SWRA for public consultation later this year. No guidance has been given by Government to the SWRA as to what specific housing numbers should be proposed in the draft RSS. Government guidance on the content of the RSS is contained in PPS11 "Regional Spatial Strategies" and in PPG3 "Housing" on planning for housing.

Mr. Purchase: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will publish the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy Determination 2006–07 Consultation Paper. [47033]

Yvette Cooper: The draft Housing Revenue Account Subsidy Determination 2006–07 was issued for consultation on 7 November 2005.

Following the conclusion of the consultation, and taking account of representations from stakeholders, including Wolverhampton, the final Determination was published on 20 December 2005.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effect of his decision to replace local authority council house valuations by valuations by registered social landlords. [40398]

Yvette Cooper: It is Government policy that social rents should be restructured and that over time tenants in social housing should pay similar rents for similar properties regardless of landlord.

The three-year review of rent restructuring policy, which reported in 2004, made a number of recommendations. One was to use the same formula for restructuring local authority rents as that which is currently used for restructuring Registered Social Landlords (RSL) rents, and adopt the Retail Price Index (RPI) as the inflation measure used in calculating local authority rent increases. Individual property valuations are unchanged, but the formula used to calculate rents now uses the average 1999 value for RSL properties.

We announced on 7 November that we would introduce in full the recommendations made in the review in 2006–07, reinforcing the steps already taken to create a fair and transparent rent setting system in the social rented sector. We have provided additional protection for council tenants by capping at 5 per cent. the average cash increase in rents in any local authority for each of the next two years. This is in addition to the caps and limits that have been in place since the policy was first introduced.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) when he expects to announce the Housing Corporation's National Affordable Housing Programme in the south east region for *(a)* 2006–07 and *(b)* 2007–08; [47493]

(2) what action his Department has taken to increase the proportion of family-sized social rented homes to be built in the Housing Corporation's National Affordable Housing Programme in the south east region in *(a)* 2006–07 and *(b)* 2007–08. [47492]

Yvette Cooper: The Housing Corporation is currently assessing bids for affordable housing schemes planned to start in 2006–08 and discussing with regional housing boards how these will achieve the priorities set out in the regional housing strategies.

A decision on the overall programme, and its regional components is expected to be announced in March 2006 and announcements on individual allocations will be made subsequent to that.

Mobile Telephone Masts (Hammersmith and Fulham)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many new mobile telephone masts have been erected under permitted development rights in the Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in each year since 1997. [46600]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to my hon. Friend, the Member for Coventry, South on 2 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1066W.

New University (Peterborough)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions have taken place between his Department and the Department for Education and Skills on the provision of a university for Peterborough. [46258]

Jim Fitzpatrick: There have been no discussions between the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Department for Education and Skills on the provision of a University for Peterborough.

Planning Controls

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to implement planning controls on mezzanine and other internal floor space additions. [40381]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects a further batch of development control measures contained in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to be implemented in the next few months.

Regional Fire Control Centres

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on what date London's existing regional fire control centre became operational. [46982]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The London-wide control centre started taking calls on 20 April 2004.

Standards Board for England

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what was the cost to the public purse of the five cases investigated by the Standards Board for England in the Peterborough city council area since September 2004; and what the outcome was of each investigation. [45462]

Mr. Woolas: Officers of the Standards Board for England (SBE) have investigated seven cases involving members of Peterborough city council in the period since September 2004. These are listed, along with the outcome of each case:

SBE case reference: 3770.03 and 3814.03

Allegations referred to Adjudication Panel for England (APE)

Outcome: Member disqualified for 2 years. Following High Court appeal, decision upheld, but sanction reduced to 1 year suspension.

SBE case reference: 3957.03

Allegations referred to APE

Outcome: Member disqualified for 18 months. Following High Court Appeal, this sanction was quashed.

SBE case reference: 7067.04

Outcome: There was a breach of the code of conduct but no further action is necessary.

SBE case reference: 7718.04

Outcome: No breach of the code of conduct

SBE case reference: 8322.04

Outcome: Case referred to local authority's standards committee for determination.

Hearing currently adjourned.

SBE case reference: 9292.04

Outcome: No breach of the code of conduct.

SBE case reference: 9293.04

Outcome: No breach of the code of conduct.

Taking into account the average cost of an investigation (£7,000) and the cost of various APE hearings and High Court appeals, the total cost incurred by the Board in respect of these cases is about £143,200.

Town/Parish Councils

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what level of public support is required for eligibility for a new *(a)* town and *(b)* parish council; and how that support is required to be demonstrated. [45768]

Mr. Woolas: Under the Local Government and Rating Act 1997, there are two ways in which a new town or parish council can be established both requiring different ways of demonstrating public support.

Section 11 of the Act provides for a petition to be raised for the creation of a new parish in a previously unparished area. For a petition to be considered valid it must be signed by not less than 250 or 10 per cent. of local government electors in the area of the proposed parish, whichever is the greater.

Section 9 of the Act provides that a district council may conduct a review of parish arrangements in their area and make recommendations to the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister for the establishment of a new parish. Under section 10 of the Act district councils must take steps they consider sufficient to inform persons who may be interested in reviews and proposals and take into consideration any representations made to them.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria on *(a)* the minimum size of a community and *(b)* other matters are used to determine suitability for creation of a new town council. [45769]

Mr. Woolas: In determining suitability for the creation of a new town council, the statutory criteria are the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities, and to secure effective and convenient local government. Section 16(2) of the Local Government and Rating Act 1997 requires that a parish with 200 or more electors must have a parish council.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his policy is on the creation of new town councils. [45770]

Mr. Woolas: Where there is a desire by local people for the creation of new town and parish councils and provided that the proposals received meet the provisions set out in section 22 of the Local Government and Rating Act 1997, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will create such councils.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many applications for new *(a)* town and *(b)* parish councils have been (i) submitted and (ii) successful in each of the last five years. [45771]

Mr. Woolas: The following table shows for each year since 1 April 2001 the number of parishes created from which town and parish councils are set up. Records of applications received are not comprehensive over this period.

	Parishes created
2001–02	12
2002–03	25
2003–04	23
2004–05	6
2005–06	[1]4

[1] Provisional

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his target time is for dealing with each part of the process relating to applications to create a new town council; and if he will make a statement. [45772]

Mr. Woolas: Following receipt, proposals to create a new town or parish council need to be examined to ensure that they comply with the legislation and that they meet the statutory criteria. In addition, maps need to be commissioned showing the proposed parish, and there is a period of consultation of up to six weeks on the content of the draft Order that will implement new parish arrangements. It presently takes between six to nine months for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to complete these stages.

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what submissions his Department has received from Castle Point borough council on the establishment of a Canvey town council. [45773]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister received a petition via Castle Point borough council for the establishment of a Canvey Island town council on 17 January 2006.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the level of detected benefit fraud in each of the last six years was; and if he will estimate what the level of undetected fraud was in each year. [42550]

Mr. Plaskitt: The available information is in the following table.

	Cases of detected fraud	Prosecutions	Convictions
1999–2000	198,467	9,272	9,129
2000–01	182,569	11,584	11,403
2001–02	160,974	11,355	11,183
2002–03	145,232	9,396	9,267
2003–04	135,710	9,204	9,091
2004–05	150,651	8,670	8,573

Notes:
1. The above figures for cases of detected fraud are based on the number of effective benefit cases, which is defined as an investigation that results in an adjustment of the current rate of benefit, an overpayment or an underpayment or the person ceasing their claim to benefit. Effective cases are the total of benefit cases plus IOP cases.
2. Figures exclude GMS.
Source:
FiBS

We do not collect information on the level of detected benefit fraud from local authorities. The level of housing benefit overpaid due to fraud has been estimated from 2002–03 onwards and reported as National Statistics. The latest published estimates for the percentage of housing expenditure overpaid due to fraud (within the scope of the sample) is 1.5 per cent. in 2002–03 and 2003–04. The estimate is based on a sample of cases and is therefore subject to sampling error. Estimates for 2004–05 are due to be published on 19 January 2006.

We have no estimate of undetected fraud.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many cases of benefit fraud were detected in each of the last six years; and how many of these have resulted in *(a)* prosecutions and *(b)* convictions. [42764]

Mr. Plaskitt: The available information is in the table.

Number of cases of detected fraud, prosecutions and convictions (excluding housing benefit and council tax benefit)

	Cases of detected fraud	Prosecutions	Convictions
1999–2000	198,467	9,272	9,129
2000–01	182,569	11,584	11,403
2001–02	160,974	11,355	11,183
2002–03	145,232	9,396	9,267
2003–04	135,710	9,204	9,091
2004–05	150,651	8,670	8,573

Notes:
1. The above figures for cases of detected fraud are based on the number of effective benefit cases, which is defined as an investigation that results in an adjustment of the current rate of benefit, an overpayment or an underpayment or the person ceasing their claim to benefit. Effective cases are the total of benefit cases plus Instrument of Payment cases.
2. Figures exclude General Matching Service (GMS).
Source:
Fraud Information by Sector (FiBS)

We do not collect information on the number of benefit fraud cases detected by local authorities. The number of attempted prosecutions and convictions undertaken by local authorities is given in the table:

Number of prosecutions and convictions (housing benefit and council tax benefit only)

	Number of court summons issued ("prosecutions")	Number of successful prosecutions ("convictions")
1999–2000	—	861
2000–01	—	1112
2001–02	2,101	1,732
2002–03	3,187	2,503
2003–04	4,601	3,747
2004–05	5,544	4,688
2005–06 (Q1 and Q2 only)	3,336	2,892

Notes:
Figures for local authority prosecutions which did not lead to conviction are not available prior to 2001–02.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many fraud inspectors there have been in his Department to investigate *(a)* incapacity benefit fraud and *(b)* other benefit fraud in each year since 1997. [44429]

Mr. Plaskitt: Benefit fraud investigators in the Department for Work and Pensions deal with allegations of benefit fraud relating to all benefits administered by this department. we do not employ a specific number of staff to investigate incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance fraud.

The table shows available information on the number of investigators employed by the Department.

DWP fraud investigators

	Full-time equivalents
June 2004	1,900.1
June 2005	1,870.1

Note:
Information is not available in the above format before 2004.
Source:
Fraud Business Report (latest figure available from quarter ending June2005).

In addition, from April 2006 we are introducing new Customer Compliance Officers to tackle low-level abuse that cannot be taken through the criminal courts.

Benefits

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what action he is taking to improve the interface with local authorities in relation to the payment of means tested benefits. [45198]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department is modernising welfare delivery to improve accessibility, accuracy and value for money of services to customers. The Customer Management System (CMS) is an integrated, information-gathering system for working age customers that is being rolled out across the Jobcentre Plus network. Most local authorities are now receiving at least some of their housing benefit and council tax benefit claims via CMS. In October 2005, changes were made to the system that brought a number of improvements for local authorities, the most significant being a reduction in clerical documentation with three forms being reduced to a single local authority Input Document. We are continuing to monitor and evaluate the impact of CMS on local authorities.

We are currently piloting a new electronic link between the Department and local authorities. The link will use modern technology to pass information about DWP benefits to local authority housing benefit and council tax benefit staff. We expect the new IT to be more efficient than current links, to provide local authority staff with access to a wider range of information about DWP benefits and enable them to process the benefits that they administer more quickly. Subject to an evaluation, the new link will be rolled out nationally by the end of 2006.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress has been made on the harmonisation of pay days for different benefits, with particular reference to claimants moving from one benefit to another. [45236]

Margaret Hodge: The Green Paper "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work", published on 24 January 2006, makes clear our commitment to simplify the benefits system. A key aim of simplification is to ease transitions in and out of work. Problems caused by differences in paydays will be considered as part of this.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been paid to workers from the accession countries in *(a)* jobseeker's allowance, *(b)* housing benefit and *(c)* other benefits since May 2004. [45322]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the total number of non-resident parents who *(a)* make maintenance payments under the Child Support Agency (CSA) rules, *(b)* cannot be traced to pay under the CSA, *(c)* are assessed to have a zero liability due to low income, *(d)* are assessed to make payments but do not do so regularly, *(e)* have made alternative maintenance arrangements outside the CSA and *(f)* make no payments and are not referred to the CSA; and if he will make a statement. [21590]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty dated 31 January 2006:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions;

what his estimate is of the total number of non-resident parents who *(a)* make maintenance payments under the Child Support Agency (CSA) rules *(b)* cannot be traced to pay under the CSA *(c)* are assessed to have a zero liability due to low income *(d)* are assessed to make payments but do not do so regularly *(e)* have made alternative maintenance arrangements outside the CSA and *(f)* make no payments and are not referred to the CSA; and if he will make a statement.

Such information as is available is presented below:

(a) In September 2005, 297,000 cases were in receipt of maintenance via the Agency's collection service. In addition, a further 100,000 had a maintenance direct arrangement in place which, when the arrangement was originally set up, would have been underpinned by a CSA calculation or assessment.

(b) At the end of September 2005, there were 35,000 cases on the old scheme old computer system that were suspended because the NRP could not be traced. In addition, there were 14,000 old scheme cases that required trace action by CSA staff. Equivalent information is not currently available for new and old scheme cases on the new computer system.

(c) In September 2005, 461,000 cases had a zero liability

(d) In September 2005, 127,000 cases were scheduled to make payments via the Agency's collection service, but did not comply with this request. An additional 128,000 had a maintenance liability, but no active charging schedule currently in place.

(e) In respect of the number of NRPs who have made alternative maintenance arrangements outside of the Agency:

i) In 2003–04 the Family Resources Survey (FRS) reported that there were 550,000 Parents with care (PWCs) who were receiving maintenance direct from the NRP. It is likely that this figure will also include those cases in which the Agency has carried out a calculation or assessment and the NRP is then paying the PWC direct (i.e. "maintenance direct" cases, of which there were 84,000 in April 2004). However, it is not possible to quantify the extent to which such maintenance direct cases are, or are not, included in the FRS estimate.

ii) Analysis of the 2004 Family and Children's Survey suggests that 131,000 households have a court order in force with an absent parent, and that 580,000 households have a voluntary agreement in place. As with the FRS, it is possible that there might be an unquantifiable overlap with Agency's "maintenance direct" cases.

(f) Information is not available for the number of NRPs who make no payments and are not referred to the Agency.

I hope you find this helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1152W, on the Child Support Agency, what the single largest compensation payment made since 1 January 1997 was. [30971]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 31 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions; pursuant to the Answer of 15th November Official Report column 1152W on the Child Support Agency what the single largest compensation payment made since 1st January 1997 was.

As I explained in our previous response, compensatory payments in excess of £10,000 represent only a small fraction (just over 0.1%) of the total number of compensation payments made by the Agency:

	Number
Total number of payments made since 1 December 2001	35,558
Under £1,000	33,227
Between £1,000 and £9,999	2,289
Between £10,000 and £49,999	42
Over £50,000	0

The largest compensation payment of £41,000 was paid in September 2002.

I hope you find this helpful.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1545W, to the hon. Member for Kettering (Mr. Hollobone) on the Child Support Agency (CSA), why it is not possible to break down the number of children supported through the CSA on a geographical basis. [39183]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 31 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions; pursuant to the Answer of 8th December 2005 Official Report column 1545W to the hon. Member for Kettering on the Child Support Agency (CSA) why it is not possible to break down the number of children supported through the CSA on a geographical basis.

Information to answer this question is not available for old scheme cases on the old computer system (CSCS). This is because management information for this system is drawn from a 5 per cent. sample of cases, which does not provide a sufficiently large sample size to allow the number of child support cases in any constituency to be broken down into robust estimates of the number or proportion who are paying child support in a particular constituency.

The Agency is currently undertaking a management information improvement project for the new child support system (CS2), which has already begun to deliver more robust statistics. It is envisaged that the Agency will be in a position to provide constituency level estimates in the New Year for cases on the new computer system, which will be made available on the Department's website alongside the CSA quarterly summary of statistics.

Financial Assistance Scheme

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people had received payments under the Financial Assistance Scheme by 31 December 2005. [46884]

Mr. Timms: The first payments to 13 members of the ASW (Cardiff) pension scheme were in individuals' bank accounts by Wednesday 21 December 2005.

Further payments are being made to other scheme members of qualifying schemes once trustees have provided the necessary member information.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to ensure that those who are eligible receive assistance from the Financial Assistance Scheme. [47487]

Mr. Timms: During 2004 the Department conducted two data collection exercises about FAS with the pensions industry. Prior to the start of the notification period on 1 September 2005, we made contact with every pension scheme which had taken part in these exercises, providing an application form and explanatory leaflet. At the same time, we wrote to all known firms of Pension administrators, advising them of the scheme.

At the beginning of January, we contacted by telephone, all scheme trustees who had not returned the FAS application form, reminding them that the notification period ends on 28 February. We hope to receive completed application forms from all schemes that appear potentially eligible for the FAS by the close of the notification period.

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what independent research has been commissioned to assess the *(a)* outcomes and *(b)* cost-effectiveness of services provided by (i) Jobcentre Plus and (ii) voluntary and private sector organisations; and what further research is planned. [45778]

Margaret Hodge: Jobcentre Plus' main programmes and interventions are subject to a major programme of ongoing evaluation, analysis and monitoring by the Department, supported by a programme of commissioned independent research. Commissioned evaluations of outcomes and effectiveness are published and are publicly available. They can also be found on the DWP website and include all of the new deals and pilot initiatives such as Pathways to Work.

The Department also evaluates the outcomes and effectiveness of services provided by the private and voluntary sector, the most significant of which is the Employment Zones evaluation. Independent research on customer outcomes include the working age research and analysis publication No. 176 (2003) which

compared the job outcomes for people on New Deal 25 plus, before it was re-engineered, with those on the Employment Zone provision.

Major evaluations also include a full cost benefit analysis and are carried out by DWP economists or by independent experts or a combination of both. Comparing the cost-effectiveness of Jobcentre Plus and private and voluntary sector services is difficult because Jobcentre Plus works in partnership with the private and voluntary sector. The current Employment Zones evaluation, however, will include a cost-benefit assessment. This will be carried out in-house, with administrative data analysis assessing the overall effectiveness of Employment Zones using valid Jobcentre Plus comparisons. This will be available in the autumn of 2006.

The Department will also commission a short feasibility study to explore the possibility of assessing the overall impact of Jobcentre Plus as well as some of its larger labour market programmes on a range of macroeconomic variables. Results from the feasibility study should be available in the latter half of 2006.

Copies of the DWP Research Programmes for 2004–05 and 2005–06 are available on the DWP research website http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/

Jobseeker's Allowance

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the main reasons for claimants leaving jobseeker's allowance; and how many people there were in each category of departure in each year since 1997. [44521]

Mr. Plaskitt: The available information is in the table.

Claimants leaving jobseeker's allowance by recorded reason, Great Britain: 1997–98 to 2004–05

	March to February							
	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Total JSA Terminations	3,473.3	3,088.4	3,120.6	2,903.3	2,661.3	2,624.0	2,536.0	2,337.0
Move to another benefit in 90 days[1]	472.2	386.2	388.4	378.4	338.3	328.5	266.8	243.3
Return to JSA in 90 days	911.2	904.8	948.6	878.3	802.9	796.1	752.3	686.9
Reach Retirement age/recorded as reaching retirement age	14.7	3.9	3.8	2.3	1.9	1.8	2.6	2.0
Recorded as claiming another benefit	78.3	24.3	21.9	16.4	11.6	14.6	20.0	19.8
Recorded as entering work[2]	1,145.1	1,094.3	1,071.8	796.2	587.3	668.7	858.3	751.9
Recorded as entering New Deal	4.3	3.5	6.3	5.0	4.3	4.9	5.1	4.2
Recorded as failed to attend	395.0	384.5	391.1	301.2	210.9	258.8	341.4	337.5
Recorded as entering training	44.9	57.1	63.5	40.7	24.1	33.1	47.0	51.4
Recorded as entering full time education	146.2	25.9	22.8	14.8	11.5	14.2	18.6	15.7
Recorded as gone abroad	31.9	36.8	35.3	26.4	19.2	24.4	33.0	27.7
Other reason recorded	22.7	18.2	20.7	21.4	16.0	18.0	26.1	28.0
Unknown Reason	206.8	148.7	146.4	422.2	633.2	460.7	164.9	168.5

[1] Moving to another benefit includes those claimants starting to claim income support (IS)/pension credit (PC), incapacity benefit (IB), working families tax credit (WFTC), and disabled persons tax credit (DPTC) within 90 days of the jobseeker's allowance (JSA) claim ending. It is possible that claimants may not move directly from JSA to another benefit, e.g. they may cease claiming JSA, find work and then claim IB within the given 90 day period.

[2] It is known that the number recorded as returning to work underestimates the true situation. It is not possible to determine the number that moved to employment, however the "Destinations of Benefit Leavers 2004" report showed that 62 per cent. of IS, JSA and IB leavers entered employment of 16 hours or more a week.

Notes:

1. Figures are expressed in thousands and rounded to the nearest hundred. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
2. Those reasons shown as "Recorded as" are what are completed on the JSA computer system following termination of the JSA claim. It is known that this information is not reliable and therefore figures should be used as a guide only.
3. Destinations of terminated JSA claims are assigned in the priority order shown above.
4. Number of terminations in the last year will increase following receipt of late notifications.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples (terminations dataset).

Longitudinal Data Matching

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what purposes longitudinal data matching is being used in his Department; and what assessment he has made of potential inaccuracies from using this method in benefit fraud cases. [43631]

Mr. Plaskitt: The purposes to which longitudinal data matching are used within the Department for Work and Pensions are published on the Departmental website and are held in the Library. Longitudinal data held within the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study are used to perform a range of statistical and research analyses, and some limited operational purposes, to give the Department further opportunities to evaluate the effectiveness of its businesses.

We do not use longitudinal data matching when investigating individual benefit fraud cases. Therefore we have made no assessment of potential inaccuracies from using such a method.

The majority of operational data matching for identifying fraud is still being undertaken on the Department's Generalised Matching Service; however longitudinal data are being used to inform longer term strategies for dealing with Fraud and Error. The combining of these two areas of work will allow the Department to assess and identify possible new areas of risk or inaccuracy not previously identifiable from simple data matching of current information.

New Deal/Workstep

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to extend *(a)* New Deal for Disabled People and *(b)* Workstep to help people back into work; and if he will make a statement. [46018]

Margaret Hodge: Contracts for the New Deal for Disabled People and WORKSTEP are now being extended, where necessary, to 31 March 2007. We are currently considering the future of this provision alongside the range of disability employment programmes to ensure they reflect current needs and support our proposals in the Welfare Reform Green Paper.

We will consult our key stakeholders later in the year.

Pensioners (Fuel Concessions)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total value was of help given to pensioners to help them with fuel bills in each year from 1979 to 1997. [44523]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Social Fund Cold Weather Payments scheme was introduced in October 1988. It replaced a similar but not identical Cold Weather Payments scheme which had begun in December 1986. Prior to that there had been a system of payments based on local office discretion.

The form of the current Cold Weather Payments scheme dates from 1991–92. Under the scheme, a Cold Weather Payment is made when the average temperature has been recorded as, or is forecast to be, 0°C or below over seven consecutive days at the weather station linked to the eligible customer's postcode. Eligible customers are now those awarded pension credit, or those awarded income support or income-based jobseeker's allowance who have a pensioner or disability premium or a child who is disabled or aged under 5, when the temperature criterion is met for their postcode.

Data are available only from the start of the Social Fund Cold Weather Payments scheme. Only total expenditure is available, not expenditure on pensioners. The available data is in the following table.

Winter Fuel Payments were introduced in winter 1997–98 to ensure that pensioners can afford to heat their homes in the winter months.

Cold weather payments in Great Britain

	Total expenditure (£ million)
1988–89	0.0
1989–90	0.4
1990–91	9.3
1991–92	23.0
1992–93	15.0
1993–94	12.4
1994–95	0.1
1995–96	61.6
1996–97	42.2

Notes:

1. Figures for 1990–91 include payments for the winter of 1990–91 made in April and May 1991.
2. As an indication of expenditure on pensioners, the proportion of total Cold Weather Payments expenditure on pensioners in 2000–01 was 50 per cent. (2000–01 is the first year for which both data is available and there was substantial Cold Weather Payments expenditure.) (Source: DSS Programme Accounting Computer System.)
3. Figures have been rounded to the nearest £0.1 million.
4. Total expenditure for 1988–89 was £2,510. That winter was a particularly mild one.

Source:

Secretary of State's annual reports on the Social Fund.

Pensions

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the value of the basic state pension as a proportion of average earnings were current uprating policy to continue in *(a)* 2010, *(b)* 2020, *(c)* 2030, *(d)* 2040 and *(e)* 2050. [35364]

Mr. Timms: The information is in the table:

Percentage

	Full-time median earnings	*Full-time mean earnings*
2010	17	14
2020	14	12
2030	12	10
2040	10	8
2050	8	7

Note:

The figures are based on the earnings of full-time employees as recorded by the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE). In April 2005 the figure for median earnings was £431 a week and mean earnings was £517.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many applications were made for deemed buy-back under the state second pension in each of the last five years; how many individuals have been offered deemed buy-back in each year; and how many have taken up the offer in each year. [43898]

Mr. Timms: In order for a pension scheme member to qualify for deemed buy-back, a scheme's trustees must prove to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) that the scheme qualifies for deemed buy-back. HMRC then calculates the amount required to restore state scheme rights to the level they would have been had the pension scheme member never been contracted-out. On receipt of HMRC's calculations, the trustees will determine whether the member actually qualifies for deemed buy-back, before giving the member the options for securing their accrued benefits in this way.

None of these calculations were issued before 2003. Since 2003, HMRC has issued approximately 7,000 calculations. Of the 7,000 calculations issued, 2,500 members do not qualify for deemed buy-back. HMRC has been notified of 58 pension scheme members who have opted for deemed buy-back (two members in 2004 and 56 members in 2005) and payment has been received for each of them. HMRC has received no information from the trustees regarding the remaining 4,442 pension scheme members.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the impact of the Finance Act 2004 on stakeholder pensions *(a)* in 2005 and *(b)* over the next 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [47164]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply

The Finance Act 2004 introduces a radical simplification of the pension tax rules that will sweep away the complexity in the current rules and introduce greater choice, flexibility, transparency, clarity and cost-efficiency. This will benefit all those who participate or want to participate in pension schemes.

The Regulatory Impact Assessment of April 2004 'Simplifying the Taxation of Pensions' [www.hmrc.gov.uk/ria/simplifying-pensions.pdf] sets out the Government's assessment of the impact of the new rules including the plans to evaluate the effects of the Finance Act 2004 changes on pensions. Baseline research on employers and the financial services industry is currently in development.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what research his Department has carried out into customer satisfaction with the Post Office card account; and if he will make a statement; [45577]

(2) what estimate he has made of the value of the contract for the Post Office card account; and if he will make a statement. [45579]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Post Office card account is a product provided by Post Office Limited. My Department has not undertaken any customer satisfaction research specifically relating to the Post Office card account. However, I understand Post Office Limited have recently undertaken such research.

Around 3.6 million customers of the Department for Work and Pensions currently have their benefit or pension paid into a Post Office card account. (HM Revenue and Customs and the Northern Ireland Social Security Agency also pay some of their customers into a Post Office card account, taking the total number of card accounts to around 4.25 million.) The Post Office card account contract will cost the Government at least £1 billion between 2003 and 2010. The precise value of the contract will depend on how many customers use the card account between now and the end of Government funding in March 2010.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reasons his Department has decided to end the Post Office card account (POCA) contract; how many users of the POCA will be affected by this decision; and if he will make a statement. [45586]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 26 January 2006]*: Around 3.6 million customers of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) currently have their benefit or pension paid into a Post Office card account. (HM Revenue and Customs and the Northern Ireland Social Security Agency also pay some of their customers into a Post Office card account, taking the total number of card accounts to around 4.25 million.)

The Post Office card account was introduced in April 2003 to help support the conversion of some customers from order books to Direct Payment. It was aimed at those who did not already have a suitable account and was designed as a "stepping stone" to help people who had not used a bank account before get used to banking before moving on to an account offering more features.

In line with our wider policy on financial inclusion, we have always made it clear that payment into a bank or building society account is the best option for the overwhelming majority of customers. The Post Office card account is a simple account with limited functions. It can only receive payments of benefits, pensions and tax credits. It does not, for example, allow customers to make savings on fuel bills by paying by Direct Debit; it cannot receive payments of wages; cheques cannot be paid in to the Post Office card account; and it does not pay interest on balances.

Although the card account was designed for those who did not already have a bank or building society account, 70 per cent. of people who have opened one already have an account. And the remaining 30 per cent. have shown that, by managing to open and operate a Post Office card account, they can use other easy to operate banking products—including basic bank accounts, which are widely available and accessible at Post Office branches. The Post Office card account has allowed some customers to move from receiving their benefit or pension through cashing an order book at the Post Office counter to getting used to the basics of banking. In practice, there is no real difference in accessing money at the Post Office via a bank account compared to a Post Office card account—customers can collect the same money, on the same day as they do now at the Post Office, by using a plastic card and a personal identification number.

The Post Office card account contract runs between 2003 and 2010. There was never any expectation that the Government should provide funding beyond that date and there is no case for doing so. The Post Office card account does little to promote financial inclusion. Customers will still be able to collect their benefit or pension at the Post Office by using their bank or building society account there. Around 25 different bank accounts can be accessed at Post Office branches.

We also understand Post Office Limited is developing new banking and savings products which will be aimed at existing Post Office card account customers. We would like every DWP customer who currently has a Post Office card account to do their banking at the Post Office if that is in their best interests. DWP can help people move off Post Office card accounts to having their benefit or pension paid into more suitable bank or building society accounts, and help them open new ones which can be used at the Post Office if necessary. We will work with the Post Office and other stakeholders to develop a strategy to move customers from the Post Office card account. Our priority will be to ensure that this is a straightforward process for the customers themselves.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people receive benefit or pension payments through a Post Office card account *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by region. [46881]

Mr. Plaskitt: The total number of benefit and pension accounts, which are paid by direct payment into a Post Office card account, is 4,508,800. I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave on 24 January 2006 for the breakdown by region.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what criteria will be used to assess whether the contract for the Post Office card account is continued for the payment of benefits and pensions after 2010. [46883]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Post Office card account contract is a finite contract, which ends in March 2010. The question of criteria, therefore, does not arise.

Customers will still be able to collect their benefits and pension at the Post Office. If they so wish. Around 25 different accounts can be accessed at the Post Office. The process for withdrawing money from these accounts is the same as for the Post Office card account.

Statutory Sick Pay

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what statistics his Department collects in relation to the administration of statutory sick pay on *(a)* the number of sick notes issued by doctors and *(b)* the condition for which the note was issued; and if he will make a statement. [46168]

Margaret Hodge: No such information is collected.

HEALTH

Drug Treatment Testing

12. **Dr. Naysmith:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the extent to which the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence employs models which adequately measure the change in the quality of life that new drug treatments can provide. [46711]

Jane Kennedy: The National Institute for health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has a well established methodology for measuring the quality of life benefits of the technologies it appraises. NICE frequently consults on its methodologies and invites comments from a wide range of stakeholders.

St Bartholomew's and Royal London Hospitals

14. **Meg Hillier:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the redevelopment of St. Bartholomew's and Royal London hospitals. [46713]

Jane Kennedy: We have now received the report from the strategic health authority and ministers must now consider the full findings of the review.

We are committed to delivering improvements to NHS services in this part of London. As soon as Ministers have considered the full findings of the review, we will work quickly with the local NHS to finalise consideration of the business case for the Barts and the London private finance initiative scheme.

Community Hospitals

15. **Mr. Dunne:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the future of community hospitals. [46714]

Ms Hewitt: The White Paper, "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: A New Direction For Community Services" was published yesterday, which sets out the Government's vision for the future of community hospitals. This builds on the 2005 manifesto commitment to develop a new generation of modern NHS community hospitals.

Sexual Health

16. **Anne Main:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of sexual health provision in Hertfordshire. [46715]

Caroline Flint: Primary care trusts in Hertfordshire are responsible for commissioning sexual health services, which meet the needs of their local population. A Department of Health funded national team reviewing genitor-urinary medicine and sexual health services is visiting Watford and St. Albans next week. This review will provide a push on plans to further develop and improve local sexual health services.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people were employed by the NHS to provide social health education in each year since 1997; [43128]

(2) how many staff are employed by the NHS in *(a)* St. Albans, *(b)* Hertfordshire and *(c)* England solely for the provision of sexual health education; and how many there were in each year since 2000. [44327]

Mr. Byrne: The requested information is not collected centrally. It is for primary care trusts to provide sexual health services which meet their local population needs.

Nurses

17. **Mr. Hollobone:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria were used to decide a two percent. pay award for nurses for 2006–07. [46716]

Mr. Byrne: Pay awards for nurses are determined by the independent Nurses and Other Health Professions Pay Review Body following evidence submitted by the Government and staff side representatives.

Community Health

18. **Tony Baldry:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to publish the White Paper on community health. [46717]

Mr. Byrne: The White Paper, "Our health, Our Care, Our Say: A New Direction for Community Services" was published on 30 January 2006.

Mental Health

19. **David Howarth:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on funding for mental health services in Cambridge. [46718]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Cambridge City primary care trust's allocation will grow by £27.8 million to £123.4 million for 2005–06, an increase of 29.1 percent. In 2006–07 and 2007–08 it will receive allocations of £148 million and £160 million respectively, a cash increase of £23 million or 17 percent., over two years.

The PCT's spending on mental health services has increased by nearly £16 million since 2002–03. Cambridge City PCT will continue to spend above the national average on mental health services locally.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average wait for a mental health bed was in

(a) Lancashire and *(b)* Lancaster and Wyre in the last year for which figures are available. [44720]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Patients waiting for elective admission, Mental Health specialties, Provider based, September 1997 to September 2005

Quarter (as at September each year)	Code	Name	0–2	3–5	6–8	9–11	12–14	15–17	21–23	Total	Weeks Median wait	Mean
2001	5DD	Morecambe Bay PCT	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	n/a	n/a
2002	5DD	Morecambe Bay PCT	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	6	n/a	n/a
2003	5DD	Morecambe Bay PCT	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	n/a	n/a

Quarter (as at September each year)	Code	Name	0–1	1–2	2–3	3–4	4–5	5–6	6 plus	Total	Weeks Median wait	Mean
2004	5DD	Morecambe Bay PCT	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	n/a	n/a
2005	5DD	Morecambe Bay PCT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a

Quarter (as at September each year)	Code	Name	0–2	3–5	6–8	9–11	12–14	15–17	21–23	Total	Weeks Median wait	Mean
1998	RML	Blackpool Wyre & Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	n/a	n/a
1999	RML	Blackpool Wyre & Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	11	9.8	10.0
2000	RML	Blackpool Wyre & Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	n/a	n/a
2001	RML	Blackpool Wyre & Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
2002	RW5	Lancashire Care NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
2003	RW5	Lancashire Care NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
2004	RW5	Lancashire Care NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
2005	RW5	Lancashire Care NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a

n/a = Denotes organisations where fewer than 10 patients were seen.

Notes:

Data for specialties

710—Mental Illness

711—Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

712—Forensic Psychiatry

713—Psychotherapy

715—Old Age Psychiatry

Source:

Department of Health form KH07.

Private Finance Initiative

20. **Adam Afriyie:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the use of private finance initiative projects in the NHS. [46719]

Jane Kennedy: The private finance initiative has enabled the national health service to build 78 new hospital schemes since 1997. We remain committed to the continued use of PFI. In order to ensure that future schemes continue to be locally affordable and suitable for the needs of patients we have asked all trusts with planned schemes to reappraise their proposals.

Mileage Allowances

21. **Mr. Soames:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she last discussed with NHS Employers the calculation of mileage allowance for community nurses and voluntary drivers. [46720]

Mr. Byrne: It is the responsibility of the NHS Staff Council to set mileage allowances for NHS staff. The Secretary of State has asked NHS Employers, who represent management side in England on the NHS Staff Council, to represent the NHS on this and other issues. We understand that the NHS Staff Council will consider mileage allowances for NHS staff in their work programme this year.

It is the responsibility of individual organisations to determine whether and how much to reimburse expenses for volunteer drivers. However, it would be good practice for volunteer drivers and paid staff to be paid equal mileage rates.

Detoxification Units

22. **Mr. Wallace:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of in-patient detoxification units in north west England [46721]

Mr. Byrne: The National Treatment Agency's (NTA) 'National survey of inpatient drug services in England' (2005) identified 16 services providing in-patient drug treatment in the north west region. In 2003–04, the NTA national needs assessment found 1,441 drug misusers from the north west accessed in-patient treatment.

NHS/Primary Care Trust Deficits

23. **Andrew Rosindell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her latest projections are for deficits in NHS trusts and primary care trusts in 2005–06. [46722]

Jane Kennedy: The national health service is forecasting a net year-end deficit of around £620 million for 2005–06. This amounts to less than 1 per cent. of funding available. We are taking action now with the minority of organisations that are underperforming with the aim of restoring financial balance.

24. **Mr. Bailey:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on her Department's plans to tackle deficits in NHS trusts. [46724]

Jane Kennedy: There is a deficit in a minority of national health service organisations, and a large proportion of the gross NHS deficit is in a relatively small number of organisations, so the focus of our effort will be on these organisations. KPMG have already carried out an initial assessment of 62 organisations. Following this exercise, 18 organisations will receive urgent turnaround support to help them deliver efficiency improvements, and appropriate support for a further 23 is being put in place. We have also commissioned an assessment of a further 35 organisations.

Accident and Emergency Departments

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people attended Accident and Emergency departments in *(a)* England and *(b)* West Cheshire Primary Care Trust (i) in total and (ii) on Saturday mornings in each year since 1995. [43014]

Mr. Byrne: Accident and emergency (A&E) attendance figures for England for the years requested are shown in the table and is available on the Department's website at: www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/about_data/a_and_e_attendances.htm.

The Cheshire West Primary Care Trust is not a provider of A&E services. However, the Countess of Cheshire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has been providing A&E services within the Cheshire West geographical area since 1993. Attendance figures for this trust are also shown in the table.

Total attendances at A&E departments, 1995–96 to 2004–05

	England	*Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Trust*
1995–96	14,234,290	n/a
1996–97	14,126,177	55,952
1997–98	14,364,146	55,860
1998–99	14,280,388	54,333
1999–2000	14,629,025	56,380
2000–01	14,293,307	54,712
2001–02	14,044,018	55,813
2002–03	14,045,575	55,319
2003–04	16,516,845	57,816
2004–05	17,837,180	58,310

Notes:
From 2003–04 attendances at A&E walk-in centres were included.

Source:
Department of Health form KH09, QMAE

The data requested on A&E attendance on Saturday mornings are not collected centrally.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated cost to the NHS has been of raising the target for patients being seen in Accident and Emergency departments within four hours from 95 percent. to 98 percent. [43015]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people died as a result of delays in accident and emergency departments in each of the past five years. [43062]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested could only be made available at disproportionate cost.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact of targets for accident and emergency departments on the working practices of medical assessment units. [43291]

Mr. Byrne: Assessment suggests delivery of the four-hour accident and emergency operational standard has had a positive impact on practice in medical assessment units. National best practice guidelines have been made available as such units have become standard across the national health service.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with *(a)* NHS medical practitioners and *(b)* nursing staff on the impact of the Government targets for accident and emergency on the services provided to patients by the NHS. [43292]

Mr. Byrne: The Department holds regular and frequent discussions with a wide range of national health service staff. Feedback from these sessions shows there to be a wide consensus amongst doctors and nurses that the delivery of the four-hour standard has positively transformed accident and emergency services for patients and staff.

Agency Staff (North-West)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of agency *(a)* nurses and *(b)* doctors has been in each year since 2000 in the (i) Liverpool and (ii) Southport and Ormskirk area, broken down by hospital. [43116]

Mr. Byrne: The information is not available in the format requested. However, information has been provided for each national health service trust in the Liverpool and Southport and Ormskirk area.

£000

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
The Cardiothoracic Centre—Liverpool NHS Trust					
Medical	175	15	54	55	69
Nursing, midwifery and health visiting	469	1,075	1,155	326	162
Royal Liverpool Children's NHS Trust					
Medical	431	523	647	695	703
Nursing, midwifery and health visiting	128	371	736	742	932
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust					
Medical	512	678	894	677	649

£000

	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Nursing, midwifery and health visiting	1,025	1,050	1,079	1,077	489
Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust					
Medical	—	—	1	410	139
Nursing, midwifery and health visiting	144	219	113	41	39
Walton Neurology Centre NHS Trust					
Medical	—	—	—	—	—
Nursing, midwifery and health visiting	372	332	570	116	376
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust					
Medical	510	478	701	890	758
Nursing, midwifery and health visiting	1,896	2,220	2,875	1,121	321
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust					
Medical	642	821	1,070	714	1,093
Nursing, midwifery and health visiting	896	834	416	413	375

Source:
Annual Financial Returns of NHS Trusts.

Ambulance Service

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many instances have been recorded of the ambulance service using mobile phone location data to effect a rescue operation. [43785]

Mr. Byrne: Mobile phone location information is increasingly used by ambulance services to help identify the location of 999 callers, but information on frequency and purpose of usage is not collected centrally.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many assaults on ambulance staff while on duty in Lancashire were recorded in each of the last five years; and how many prosecutions resulted in each case. [45095]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not available in the format requested.

The NHS Security Management Service (SMS), created in April 2003, has collected data on the number of physical assaults on national health service staff in England for the period 2004–05. The figure for the ambulance service was 1,329.

Information about the number of prosecutions resulting from reports of assaults on ambulance staff was not collected centrally for the period 2000–04. The number of prosecutions identified involving assaults on ambulance staff in 2004–05 in England totalled 107.

A breakdown of figures for assaults and prosecutions for each ambulance trust in England for the year 2004–05 will be released shortly.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the level of demand for ambulance services was in each ambulance trust between midnight and four a.m. on 4 December *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [45276]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not centrally collected by the Department.

Level of demand for ambulance services is based on the number of emergency calls received by ambulance trusts. The data that the Department does collect on emergency calls is published in the statistical bulletin, "Ambulance services, England: 2004–05", which is available in the Library and on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/36/79/04113679.pdf.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding her Department has allocated for training controllers to expand their local geographical knowledge to prepare for the proposed reorganisation of ambulance trusts. [44065]

Mr. Byrne: Ambulance trusts are responsible for funding training of control room staff.

Ambulance control room staff use advanced technology to match the nearest resource to patients. Therefore, they are not solely reliant on their local knowledge of the area in which they work when directing ambulances to emergency call-outs. In addition, a lot of local knowledge comes from front-line staff driving the vehicles. There are no plans to reduce the number of staff involved on front-line healthcare duties as part of the proposed reorganisation of ambulance trusts.

Brain Tumours (Treatment)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what representations she has received on the use of *(a)* temozolomide and *(b)* carmustine implants for the treatment of newly diagnosed high grade glioma; [42481]

(2) what discussions she has had with *(a)* scientists, *(b)* clinicians and *(c)* brain tumour charities on the use of (i) carmustine implants and (ii) temozolomide. [42482]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We are not aware of any formal representations on the use of temozolomide and carmustine implants for the treatment of newly diagnosed high grade glioma.

Ministers have not had any formal discussions on the use of temozolomide and carmustine implants for the treatment of newly diagnosed high grade glioma.

However, the Department has asked the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to appraise carmustine implants and temozolomide for the treatment of newly diagnosed high-grade glioma.

As part of the appraisal process NICE has consulted with the manufacturers of carmustine implants and temozolomide as well as professional and patient groups.

NICE has now published preliminary recommendations on the use of carmustine implants and temozolomide in the treatment of newly diagnosed high-grade glioma. It is

important to note that these recommendations do not constitute the Institute's formal guidance on this technology and may change after consultation.

Breast Cancer

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many women there are in West Lancashire aged 40 to 49 years with a family history of breast cancer; [45089]

(2) how many women in West Lancashire aged 40 to 49 years with a family history of breast cancer received a mammogram in 2004–05. [45093]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally.

Cancelled Operations (North-West)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations were cancelled by each hospital in the *(a)* Southport and Ormskirk and *(b)* Liverpool in the last year for which figures are available; and how many of those patients were operated on within 28 days of the operation being cancelled. [43114]

Mr. Byrne: The table shows the number of last minute cancellations for non-clinical reasons and the number of which were operated on within 28 days for hospital trusts in the *(a)* Southport and Ormskirk area and *(b)* Liverpool area.

Cancelled operations for non clinical reasons

National health service hospital trust	*Number of last minute cancellations for non-clinical reasons*	*Of which were operated on within 28 days*
Southport and Ormskirk area		
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust	92	92
Liverpool area		
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	272	245
Walton Centre for Neurology and Neurosurgery NHS Trust	146	146
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen Hospitals Universities NHS Trust	343	276
Liverpool Womens Hospital NHS Trust	62	60
Royal Liverpool Children's NHS Trust	107	87
The Cardiothoracic Centre—Liverpool NHS Trust	348	336

Notes:

1. Data are for the latest 12 months from October 2004 to September 2005.
2. A last minute cancellation is one that occurs on the day the patient was due to arrive, after they have arrived in hospital or on the day of their operation. For example, you are to be admitted to hospital on a Monday for an operation scheduled for the following day (Tuesday). If the hospital cancels your operation for non-clinical reasons on the Monday then this would count as a last minute cancellation. This includes patients who have not actually arrived in hospital and have been telephoned at home prior to their arrival.
3. An operation which is rescheduled to a time within 24 hours of the original scheduled operation should be recorded as a postponement and not as a cancellation. The QMCO collection does not record the number of postponements.
4. Some common non-clinical reasons for cancellations by the hospital include: ward beds unavailable; surgeon unavailable; emergency case needing theatre; theatre list over-ran; equipment failure; admin error; anaesthetist unavailable; theatre staff unavailable; and critical care bed unavailable.

Source:

Department of Health dataset, Quarterly Monitoring of Cancelled Operations (QMCO).

Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the anonymised annual salaries are for NHS chief executives within the Cheshire and Merseyside strategic health authority area, including the strategic health authority itself. [45094]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not held centrally but can be obtained from the annual reports of the relevant national health service organisations.

Choosing Health White Paper

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much her Department has allocated to implementing the Choosing Health White Paper; what sum has been earmarked from this allocation for the prevention, detection and treatment of *(a)* sexually transmitted diseases and *(b)* HIV/AIDS; and over what time scale. [43322]

Caroline Flint: Over the next three years £1 billion, in addition to planned mainstream funding, will be invested to catalyse action that supports people in taking responsibility for improving their health, through the implementation of the Choosing Health White Paper. Of this, £300 million, over three years, is for measures to improve sexual health.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to commission the production of a national service framework on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. [43417]

Mr. Byrne: The Department is currently considering its response to the chief medical officer's recommendation that a national service framework be formulated for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Departmental Advertising Campaigns

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the public information advertising campaigns run by her Department in the past 12 months; and what her Department spent on *(a)* newspapers and *(b)* television advertising for those campaigns. [42515]

Jane Kennedy: Media spend on public information advertising for the Department for the period 1 January to 31 December 2005 was £23.06 million. The campaigns are listed in the table with a breakdown of newspaper and television advertising costs.

£ million

Campaign	*Television advertising*	*Newspapers*
Tobacco education	12.9	1.84
Sexual health	—	0.20
E111/EHIC	—	1.13
Flu immunisation	0.80	0.38
NHS Careers	2.01	1.86
Job shops	—	0.21
Social care recruitment	1.06	0.12
Get the right treatment	—	0.55

Departmental IT Systems

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much her Department has spent on IT systems in each year since 1997; what the purpose of each system is; what the outturn against planned expenditure of each system was; and what the *(a)* planned and *(b)* actual date of completion was of each system. [41324]

Mr. Byrne: Information requested has been placed in the Library.

Diverticulitis

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what treatment is available on the NHS for the elderly who suffer from non-life threatening diverticulitis; [44981]

(2) many people the NHS treated for diverticulitis in the last year for which figures are available; and what the cost was of treating those patients; [44982]

(3) what research her Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated into the (i) life expectancy and (ii) quality of life of those suffering from non-life threatening diverticulitis. [44983]

Mr. Byrne: The symptoms, and the risk of complications, associated with diverticulitis can usually be controlled by good self-care aimed at reducing the incidence of constipation through a high-fibre diet with adequate fluid intake and exercise. For those where this is not possible stool bulking agents can be prescribed.

Information on the numbers treated for diverticulitis, and the associated cost to the national health service, is not collected.

We are not aware of any research on life expectancy, or the quality of life, for those living with diverticulitis undertaken by the Department.

Drug and Alcohol Detoxification

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact on waiting times for in-patient drug and alcohol detoxification treatment in *(a)* Lancaster and Wyre and *(b)* Lancashire if the Castle Unit at Ridge Lea Hospital in Lancaster closes. [44716]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

This is the responsibility of the Cumbria and Lancashire strategic health authority in partnership with the primary care trusts in the area.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the availability of in-patient drug and alcohol detoxification services in *(a)* Lancashire, *(b)* Lancaster and Wyre and *(c)* the North West. [44717]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally. However, the Cumbria and Lancashire strategic health authority reports that there are a mixture of private and national health service facilities available. NHS facilities include:

the Castle Unit and Harvey House at Lancaster;

Kenyon House (drugs) at Drugs North West in Prestwich and

Wentwoth House (alcohol) at Eccles.

The main referral point for drug detoxification is Kenyon House, as all three drug action teams fund bed nights there. Private units include:

Abbey Gisburn Park Hospital;

the Clifton Detox and Pierpoint house units at St. Annes-on-Sea and

the Priory Hospital Lancashire in Preston.

Waiting times for detoxification beds varies according to the differing demand from individual services.

Fertility Treatment

Mrs. Riordan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1568W, on fertility treatment, what percentage of primary care trusts (PCTs) responded to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence survey on the implementation of its guidelines on the assessment and treatment of people with fertility problems; and what percentage of all PCTs reported that they were providing at least one cycle of IVF to all eligible couples. [42726]

Caroline Flint: The overall response rate to the survey carried out by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence was 42.4 percent., the responses covering 128 primary care trusts (PCTs). Over half (63.5 percent.) of the PCTs replying said that they were offering one cycle of in vitro fertilization, with a further 31.7 percent, offering two cycles. Those responding, and indicating that they are providing at least one cycle, represent approximately 40 percent, of all PCTs. We are discussing with Infertility Network UK (IN-UK), the leading voluntary organisation representing the interests of fertility patients, ways in which IN-UK can work with PCTs to help ensure that fertility patients' voices are heard when decisions about the provision of services are made at local level.

Food Labelling

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with the Food Standards Agency about the revised food labelling system; and when she expects to report the Agency's conclusions. [45350]

Caroline Flint: The European Commission has indicated that it plans to propose revisions to the European Union legislation on nutrition labelling in 2007 in order to meet consumer needs and expectations. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) will consult with stakeholders on all aspects of the new proposals when they are published.

The FSA is currently consulting on proposals for a voluntary front of pack simplified system of nutrition labelling that will make it easier for people to make healthier food choices. This consultation closes on 8 February. The recommended scheme will be considered by the FSA's board at its open meeting on 9 March.

Foundation Trusts

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish the detailed results of the evaluations of the state of readiness to become foundation trusts of all hospitals that were examined in the pilot project in 2005. [41848]

Mr. Byrne: The outcome of the whole health community diagnostic programme will be an action plan in each trust setting out what they need to do to achieve national health service foundation trust status and an indication of when they might enter the applications process. Action plans for each trust will need to be agreed between the trust and their strategic health authority and will be considered by the trust board at a meeting where the papers will be made public in the usual way.

Gambling

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what gambling addiction services are available in *(a)* Lancashire and *(b)* Lancaster and Wyre. [44715]

Mr. Byrne: Very few problem gamblers present to the national health service for treatment and specialist services are not widely available. However, most addiction services which concentrate on substance misuse are also prepared to treat problem gamblers. However, this data are not centrally collected by the Department.

General Practitioners

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients have been registered with a GP in each year since 1997. [43531]

Mr. Byrne: From 1 April 2004 patients register with a practice rather than an individual general practitioner. Total registration data are shown in the table.

Numbers of patients registered with a general practitioner and from 2004 general practice in England

1 October 1997	50,917,256
1 October 1998	51,117,646
1 October 1999	50,898,948
30 September 2000	51,336,812
30 September 2001	51,254,833
30 September 2002	51,524,894
30 September 2003[1]	52,713,780
30 September 2004[2]	52,527,737

[1] 2003 patient data have been revised from previously published figures.

[2] Numbers of patients registered with a general practice.

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the likely effect on the number of inappropriate *(a)* investigations, *(b)* prescriptions and *(c)* referrals should multiple registration be introduced. [43568]

Mr. Byrne: These are among the considerations we are taking into account in preparing the forthcoming White Paper following the public consultation on "Your Health, Your Care, Your Say".

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the *(a)* condition and *(b)* fitness for purpose of general practitioner practice premises. [43569]

Mr. Byrne: Any person entering into a contract or agreement with a primary care trust (PCT) under which they are to provide primary medical services is required to ensure that the premises used for the provision of such services are suitable for the delivery of those services and are sufficient to meet the reasonable needs of the contractor's patients.

PCTs are responsible for monitoring compliance with these contracts or agreements including any necessary assessment of the condition and fitness for purpose of practice premises.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what data her Department collects from primary care trusts via the annual general practice assessment questionnaire. [43570]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not centrally collect any data from the general practice assessment questionnaire. The conduct of the questionnaire is performed by practices or for practices by a third party and acted upon locally.

Gershon Review

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress her Department has made towards its Gershon review targets. [42665]

Mr. Byrne: Up to September 2005, the latest for which confirmed figures are currently available we have achieved £1,709 million against our target of £6,500 million by March 2008.

Details of this early progress are provided in the Department's autumn performance report 2005 published on 7 December 2005 and is available on our website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/42/52/04124252.pdf

Haemophilia

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost is of controlling the bleeding of people with haemophilia *(a)* using recombinant factor VIII and factor IX and *(b)* using plasma derived products. [44926]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not held centrally.

Health Workers (Checks)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Education regarding checks for health workers who work with children in schools; and when such discussions took place. [45358]

Mr. Byrne: Prior to her announcement on 19 January, the Secretary of State had conversations about safeguarding children with my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on 12 and 18 January.

Herceptin

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 128W, on Herceptin, for what reasons Herceptin is excluded from section 10(6)(4) of the pharmaceutical price regulation scheme published on 3 November 2004. [43637]

Jane Kennedy: Herceptin is not excluded from the 2005 pharmaceutical price regulation scheme under paragraph 10.6.4. All branded licensed national health service medicines are subject to the scheme irrespective of which indications are licensed.

Hospital Beds

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what targets have been set for hospital bed occupancy; how many beds have been available in *(a)* general and *(b)* acute wards in hospitals in Lancashire Teaching NHS Trust in each year since 1997; and what percentage of these were occupied on average in each year. [43160]

Mr. Byrne: Evidence suggests that the optimal bed occupancy rate is around 82 to 85 per cent. These figures however are merely a guideline and it is up to the national health service locally to decide how best to manage their services.

The number of beds that have been made available in general and acute wards in Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Foundation NHS Trust, and the percentage of these that were occupied on average since 1997 is shown in the table. The data are collected on a provider rather than a commissioner basis.

Average daily number of available general and acute beds in wards open overnight and occupancy rate, Lancashire Teaching Hospital NHS Trust

	Available		*Percentage occupancy*	
	Acute	*General*	*Acute*	*General*
1997–98[1]	867	144	76.5	81.3
1998–99[1]	880	135	79.5	85.9
1999–2000[1]	890	123	80.8	87.8
2000–01[1]	894	135	82.0	90.7
2001–02[2]	903	163	82.9	90.6
2002–03	929	144	81.8	93.1
2003–04	950	135	85.3	95.4
2004–05	936	130	84.1	87.6

[1] Figures represent Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust and Preston Acute Hospital NHS Trust.
[2] Figures represent Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust
Note:
Revised 7 December 2005 following refresh of dataset in line with DH revisions Policy General beds are defined as Geriatric beds.
Source:
Department of Health form KH03

Dr. Palmer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in reducing shortages of hospital beds during winter. [46723]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Strategic health authorities are responsible for ensuring that national health service organisations work together with other stakeholders, including NHS foundation trusts, to coordinate and improve NHS services throughout the year. Effective hospital capacity planning and bed management is one key element in this local process.

It is a tribute to all NHS staff that, nationally, the patient experience in accident and emergency and elective care has continually improved over recent years. For example, over 98 per cent. of patients are now seen and treated in A&E in less than four hours.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many beds are available in *(a)* general and *(b)* acute wards in each hospital in (i) Liverpool and (ii) Southport and Ormskirk. [43115]

Mr. Byrne: The table shows the average daily number of general and acute beds available in hospital trusts in Liverpool and Southport and Ormskirk.

Average daily number of available general and acute beds, 2004–05

National health service hospital trust	*Acute*	*General*
Liverpool		
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	773	157
Liverpool Womens Hospital NHS Trust	66	—
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	947	251
Royal Liverpool Childrens NHS Trust	249	—
The Cardiothoracic Centre—Liverpool NHS Trust	217	—
Walton Centre for Neurology and Neurosurgery NHS Trust	133	—
Southport and Ormskirk		
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust	537	51

Notes:
1. General beds are defined as geriatric beds.
2. Revised 7 December 2005 following refresh of dataset in line with DH revisions policy.
Source:
Department of Health form KH03.

Hospital Patients (Liverpool)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients treated in *(a)* Alder Hey, *(b)* Liverpool Women's hospital, *(c)* Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen hospital, *(d)* Aintree hospital, *(e)* Cardio Thoracic Centre and *(f)* Walton Centre for neurology in each of the last three years were resident in (i) Southport and (ii) West Lancashire constituency. [43113]

Mr. Byrne: Information is not available in the format requested. However, the following tables show the counts of finished consultant episodes and patients at Royal Liverpool Childrens, Liverpool Womens Hospital National Health Service Trust, Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen Hospitals Universities NHS Trust, Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust, The Cardiothoracic Centre—Liverpool NHS Trust, Walton Centre for Neurology and Neurosurgery NHS Trust where the patients are resident within the Southport and Formby primary care trust (PCT) and West Lancashire PCT.

Counts of finished consultant episodes and patients NHS hospitals, England 2002–03 to 2004–05

PCT of residence: Southport and Formby PCT	2002–03 Finished consultant episodes	2002–03 Patient counts	2003–04 Finished consultant episodes	2003–04 Patient counts	2004–05 Finished consultant episodes	2004–05 Patient counts
Provider of treatment						
Royal Liverpool Childrens NHS Trust	716	416	903	481	884	507
Liverpool Womens Hospital NHS Trust	328	253	397	291	379	288
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen Hospitals Universities NHS Trust	725	395	782	474	700	460
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	1,312	972	1,396	985	1,725	1,065
The Cardiothoracic Centre—Liverpool NHS Trust	422	312	388	274	430	309
Walton Centre for Neurology and Neurosurgery NHS Trust	256	175	243	169	252	170

PCT of residence: West Lancashire PCT	2002–03 Finished consultant episodes	2002–03 Patient counts	2003–04 Finished consultant episodes	2003–04 Patient counts	2004–05 Finished consultant episodes	2004–05 Patient counts
Provider of treatment						
Royal Liverpool Childrens NHS Trust	657	444	772	463	840	438
Liverpool Womens Hospital NHS Trust	212	155	219	168	243	168
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen Hospitals Universities NHS Trust	436	245	448	253	458	272
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	985	682	1,235	794	1,199	786
The Cardiothoracic Centre—Liverpool NHS Trust	389	296	437	309	338	241
Walton Centre for Neurology and Neurosurgery NHS Trust	234	144	238	150	296	165

Notes:

Finished consultant episode (FCE)

An FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.

Patient counts

Patient counts are based on the hospital episode statistics (HES) unique patient identifier, HESID. This identifier is derived based on patient's date of birth, postcode, sex, local patient identifier and NHS number, using an agreed algorithm. Where data is incomplete, HESID might erroneously link episodes or fail to recognise episodes for the same patient. Care is therefore needed, especially where duplicate records persist in the data. The patient count cannot be summed across a table where patients may have episodes in more than one cell.

Primary care trust (PCT) and strategic health authority (SHA) data quality PCT and SHA data was added to historic data-years in the HES database using 2002–03 boundaries, as a one-off exercise in 2004. The quality of the data on PCT of treatment and SHA of treatment is poor in 1996–97, 1997–98 and 1998–99, with over a third of all finished episodes having missing values in these years. Data quality of PCT of general practitioner practice and SHA of GP practice in 1997–98 and 1998–99 is also poor, with a high proportion missing values where practices changed or ceased to exist. There is less change in completeness of the residence-based fields over time, where the majority of unknown values are due to missing postcodes on birth episodes. Users of time series analysis including these years need to be aware of these issues in their interpretation of the data.

Ungrossed Data

Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data, that is the data is ungrossed.

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre

Housing Development

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will discuss with the Deputy Prime Minister the merits of including health impact assessments in planning for areas designated for housing growth.[45348]

Caroline Flint: The Government's White Paper "Choosing health" integrated health impact assessment (HIA) into the regulatory impact assessment (RIA) process so that all Government Departments could consider the possible impact of their policies on health.

The Department has regular contact with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) on a range of issues including the integration of health considerations in planning. We have provided information on health in new ODPM guidance on strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal. Such appraisals are applied to regional spatial strategies and local development documents which are used for planning purposes.

Improving Working Lives Standard

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the programmes which form part of the Improving Working Lives standard; how much funding has been allocated to each of these programmes since their start date, broken down by financial year; from what sources the funding for these programmes has been derived *(a)* in past years and *(b)* in 2005–06; if she will make it her policy that funding will be made available to support (i) the flexible careers scheme, (ii) the NHS Childcare Strategy, (iii) the GP Returner scheme, (iv) the Golden Hello scheme and (v) the NHS Delayed Retirement scheme in five financial years; and if she will make a statement. [44056]

Mr. Byrne: The improving working lives (IWL) standard was launched in October 2000 with an initial allocation of £9 million to health organisations and funding to promote IWL in subsequent years is in the table. IWL supports the aims of the NHS Plan in relation to increasing the national health service workforce. IWL is a feature of every day management in the NHS with successful implementation of modern

employment practices and follows seven areas of good practice, which include flexible working and flexible retirement, child care and support for carers.

Improving working lives

	Funding (£)
2001–02	9 million
2002–03	1.9 million
2003–04	2.6 million
2004–05	722,000
2005–06	33,000

Initiatives such as the flexible careers scheme is one of many options for employers, which support the broader IWL ethos of promoting work life balance through flexible working. Other options on flexible working include the use of different rosters and working patterns to reflect service delivery.

The flexible careers scheme for hospital doctors was introduced in November 2001 and extended to general practitioners in 2002. The scheme supports flexible working and return to practice for doctors and general practitioners and Departmental funding from central programme budgets which is shown in the table.

Flexible Careers Scheme

	Funding (£)
2001–02	30,000
2002–03	640,000
2003–04	9.1 million
2004–05	23 million

Flexible working is now well embedded in the NHS through implementation of modern employment practice and legislation. The management and funding of the scheme is in the process of being devolved to local health organisations.

The NHS child care strategy had over £70 million invested between 2001 to 2004 to provide 150 nurseries for NHS staff. In addition, the Government committed the £100 million savings from Shifting the Balance of Power (StBoP) to extending the child care strategy, to ensure that the child care needs of all staff are met. From 2004–05 responsibility for child care has been devolved to the NHS.

In 2004–05 support for child care was extended to NHS students in the form of NHS student child care allowance. In 2004–05, £7 million was provided from central programme budget and in 2005–06, the investment will rise to approximately £16 million.

The golden hello scheme for general practitioners was replaced in April 2005 by the primary care development scheme with the aim to provide funding, targeted locally, at those areas that have the greatest recruitment difficulties in general practice. The Department allocated £13 million to support the scheme in 2005–06 to strategic health authorities.

The NHS delayed retirement scheme was replaced from 1 April 2004 by the new seniority arrangements negotiated for the new general practitioner contract. Retaining staff approaching retirement and encouraging staff to work beyond conventional retirement age one of the key features of IWL.

Independent Sector Treatment Centres

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact of independent sector treatment centres (ISTCs) on the morale of NHS staff; and whether her Department has conducted a survey of the opinion of NHS staff on the effectiveness of ISTCs. [43695]

Mr. Byrne: No such assessments or surveys have been undertaken.

Influenza

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer to question reference 40822, what the closing date is for tenders to contract to supply influenza vaccine to tackle a pandemic. [44749]

Caroline Flint: We have just concluded pre-tender meetings with the manufacturers who expressed an interest to the *Official Journal* of the European Union. The closing date for tenders was 28 November 2005. Final tenders will be issued by the end of this month following comments received on the draft issued before the pre-tender meetings.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 1 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 971W, on influenza, which manufacturers have responded to the invitation to tender for a contract to supply pandemic influenza vaccine; when the invitation to tender for the contract closed; when she expects to agree the contract to supply pandemic influenza vaccine; when she expects influenza vaccine manufacturers to have sufficient capacity to produce 120 million doses of influenza vaccine to the United Kingdom; and if she will make a statement. [44933]

Caroline Flint: We have just concluded pre-tender meetings with the manufacturers who expressed an interest to the *Official Journal* of the European Union. The closing date for tenders was 19 October 2005. Final tenders will be issued by the end of this month following comments received on the draft issued before the pre-tender meetings. It is too early to give an indication of production capabilities because this will depend upon the nature of the eventual virus.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate her Department has made of the number of people in at-risk groups who were unable to obtain a seasonal influenza vaccination in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in 2005. [45254]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not collected centrally.

IT Costs

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate she has made of the average percentage of the overall budget of *(a)* primary care trusts and *(b)* NHS trusts which was spent on IT in the most recent period for which figures are available; [42190]

(2) what percentage of the allocation to a typical *(a)* primary care trust and *(b)* NHS trust is assumed to be for information technology expenditure. [42283]

Mr. Byrne: The great majority of funding allocated to primary care trusts (PCTs) is not ring fenced, and national health service trusts do not receive allocations but are paid for the provision of care services commissioned from them by PCTs. Each NHS organisation is free, and expected, to use its resources in the way that delivers the best available value for money.

Based on NHS summarised accounts data, spending in 2004–05 on information technology (IT) represented 6.5 per cent. of total NHS trust capital expenditure, and 16.6 per cent. of total primary care trust capital expenditure.

Revenue expenditure on IT is reported through an annual national survey of NHS bodies. Based on information from the 2004 survey, the latest period for which figures are available, the average percentage of revenue allocations which NHS bodies as a whole planned to spend on IT in 2004–05 is 2.11 per cent.

Detailed information from 2004 survey returns can be found on the NHS Connecting for Health's website at: www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/publications.

Because of the different sources and accounting bases for the available information, it is not possible to differentiate separate percentage revenue figures for NHS trusts and PCTs, or to quote a meaningful aggregate figure for combined capital and revenue expenditure on IT for either NHS trusts or PCTs.

Notes:

1. Figures do not include the Department's central expenditure on IT through the national programme for IT.

2. With effect from 2004–05, NHS foundation trusts (FTs) have not been required to submit financial returns to the Department, and consequently FT data are not included in the percentages for capital expenditure.

3. Percentage revenue expenditure derives from returns provided in 2004 by 568 out of 600 NHS organisations in response to the national survey.

Khat

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact of khat on the health of its users. [43564]

Caroline Flint: The Department has made no formal assessment of the impact of khat on the health of its users, however we keep the evidence for health harms under on-going review to inform health messages and health policy.

The Advisory Council of the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) has recently been reviewing the evidence of harms associated with khat use. The Department has an observer role on ACMD so we are fully informed of the scientific evidence and independent expert judgement of its harms in the United Kingdom and elsewhere.

In December 2005 the ACMD produced a report for the Home Secretary, and a number of recommendations. The recommendations included that khat should not be brought under the controls of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, and a number of supplementary recommendations on educating and informing people of the risks posed by khat, and ensuring appropriate treatment and advice services are targeted where they are needed. The full report and recommendations can be found at www.drugs.gov.uk.

The Home Secretary announced on the 19 January that he accepted the council's recommendations in full.

Lung Disease

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy to appoint a senior policy lead within her Department on lung disease and treatment. [43895]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has no plans to appoint a senior policy lead on lung disease and treatment.

Mental Health Services

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many mental health tribunal hearings took place in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [45191]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of mental health review tribunal hearings in England that have taken place over the last five business years are as follows:

	Hearings
2000–01	11,535
2001–02	11,091
2002–03	10,076
2003–04	12,323
2004–05	11,682

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many referrals there were to *(a)* psychiatrists, *(b)* clinical psychologists, *(c)* psychotherapists, *(d)* cognitive and behavioural therapists and *(e)* other therapists in each of the last five years, broken down to the most local level for which figures are available. [40890]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available in the requested format because such information is only collected for consultant-led services. Information on the number of admissions under the care of a mental illness consultant in each of the last five years has been placed in the Library. The information is broken down according to care provider, strategic health authority and regional Government office boundaries where possible.

Midwives

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total number of midwives working in the NHS has been in each year since 1997, expressed as *(a)* headcount and *(b)* full-time equivalent; and what the total number of midwives working in the NHS was in each year since 1997 in terms of full-time equivalents per delivery. [42944]

Mr. Byrne: The total number of midwives working in the national health service since 1997 is shown in the table.

Midwives employed in the NHS as at 30 September, 1997 to 2004

	Headcount	*Full-time equivalents*
1997	22,385	18,053
1998	22,841	18,168
1999	22,799	17,876
2000	22,572	17,662
2001	23,075	18,048
2002	23,249	18,119
2003	23,941	18,444
2004	24,844	18,854

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

The number of midwives working in the NHS in terms of full-time equivalents per delivery is not collected centrally. The number of students entering midwifery training in 2004–05 was 2,374, approaching 50 per cent. more than in 1996–97.

Naltrexone

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she has commissioned on the use of naltrexone as a treatment for drug misusers; and if she will make a statement. [44644]

Jane Kennedy: The Department has asked the National Institute for Clinical and Health Excellence (NICE) to review the evidence on naltrexone and, by March 2007, deliver a technology appraisal on naltrexone as a treatment for relapse prevention.

This work has been started and will aim to look at the scientific research to see how effective natltrexone is at helping people stay off drugs, and to identify those groups of drug misusers, in the community and prison settings, who are most likely to benefit from this being prescribed to them. It will also look at advising on the optimum care package that needs to be available to those prescribed naltrexone to secure effective outcomes.

NHS Blood and Transplant

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost implications *(a)* have been and *(b)* are expected to be as a result of the merger of the National Blood Authority and UK Transplant. [43009]

Jane Kennedy: The merger between the National Blood Authority and UK Transplant will enable the new organisation to achieve savings targets, identified by the arm's length body (ALB) review, to be attained over the next three years.

NHS Blood and Transplant's specific ALB targets to be achieved by 2008–09 are a reduction in grant in aid of £11 million; further efficiency savings of £16 million; and a reduction in headcount of 153 whole time equivalents.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many *(a)* staff and *(b)* managers are employed at NHS Blood and Transplant; [42671]

(2) what change there has been in the number of managerial posts as a result of the merger of the National Blood Authority and UK Transplant. [42672]

Caroline Flint: NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) employs 6,760 staff, of whom 34 per cent. are professionally qualified clinical staff, 55 per cent. provide support to clinical staff and 11 per cent. are managerial and infrastructure support staff.

The new NHSBT Board replaced the National Blood Authority Board and the UK Transplant Board on 1 October 2005. The new NHSBT Board are working to develop the future strategy and structure for NHSBT.

NHS (Oxfordshire)

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when she expects the turnaround team to report on the situation in the NHS in Oxfordshire; [43902]

(2) what advice she has *(a)* sought and *(b)* received on the projected financial deficit of the NHS in Oxfordshire for 2006–07. [43903]

Caroline Flint: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health announced the formation of turnaround teams at the beginning of December 2005, the aim of these teams is to restore financial balance to the national health service organisations concerned.

Oxford Radcliffe NHS Trust is subject to the first phase of the work which is an initial assessment to establish the position of the trust's financial control and actions to restore financial balance.

This assessment has now finished and the strategic health authority is currently considering whether the trust should have any further support.

NHS Direct

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost was of providing answers to calls to NHS Direct in each year since 1998. [41965]

Mr. Byrne: The data requested are not centrally available.

NHS Finance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 145–46W, on NHS finance, if she will provide the equivalent figures for NHS income from fees and charges from NHS trusts in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; and if she will outline the reasons for the trend in this income stream from 2002–03 to 2004–05. [43027]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 6 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1555–58W which provided the comparable data for 2002–03 and 2003–04. The three years data are:

Fees and charges from NHS trusts

	£ million
2002–03	386.1
2003–04	531.7
2004–05	669.4

The figures refer to income from local authorities and other non-national health service income.

The increase is principally due to increases in income from local authorities for example under care trust joint arrangements or for delayed discharges, over the period.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her Written Statement of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS, on NHS finance data, what planned financial support each *(a)* strategic health authority, *(b)* primary care trust and *(c)* NHS trust will (i) receive and (ii) provide in 2005–06 at (A) month six of 2005–06 and (B) year end 2005–06; and what the forecast gross financial position of each body is at each date. [41901]

Mr. Byrne: The 2005–06 month six forecast outturn position for all national health service organisations (strategic health authorities, primary care trusts and national health service trusts) is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/fs/en

Copies of this information are available in the Library.

The figure provided on the Department's website and in the Library, are inclusive of planned support.

Detailed in-year monitoring data are used for operational management of the NHS. It is not appropriate to publish the data at this stage.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Written Statement of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS, on NHS finance data, if she will publish the year-end financial forecasts for *(a)* strategic health authorities, *(b)* NHS trusts, *(c)* primary care trusts and *(d)* the NHS in total as at (i) month seven, (ii) month eight and (iii) month nine of the financial year. [41998]

Mr. Byrne: The forecast outturn position for 2005–06, as submitted by national health service organisations at the mid-year point (month six), is a net deficit of around £620 million. The 2005–06 month six forecast outturn position for individual NHS organisations (strategic health authorities, primary care trusts and NHS trusts) is available on the Department's website, at: www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/fs/en.

Copies of this information are available in the Library.

In-year monitoring data are used for the operational management of the NHS. It is not appropriate to publish the data on an ongoing basis during the year.

NHS IT Programme

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many contractors have been involved in the delivery of the NHS IT programme; and for how long each contractor has been involved. [44925]

Mr. Byrne: The national programme for information technology, which is being delivered by the NHS Connecting for Health Agency, has contracts with six primary provider organisations. These are listed, with the date on which contracts were signed.

	Month/year contracted
National service providers	
BT (two contracts)	December 2003 and February 2004
Cable and Wireless	July 2004
Atos Origin	October 2003
Local service providers	
CSC Alliance	December 2003
Accenture (two contracts)	December 2003 (both)
Fujitsu Alliance	January 2004
BT (with consortium partners)	December 2003

Between them these organisations make up the programme's four national application and infrastructure service providers, responsible for delivering services that are common to all users nationally, and the five local service providers, responsible for delivering services at a local level.

The primary provider organisations have contracts with numerous sub-contractor companies providing, for example, hardware, software and consultancy support, many of which are used by more than one of the primary providers. Additionally, other companies not directly involved in delivering systems and services to the national health service provide, or have provided, business support to the Department and NHS Connecting for Health in connection with the national programme.

NHS Professionals

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will place in the Library the current *(a)* financial forecast and *(b)* financial position of NHS Professionals. [41117]

Mr. Byrne: The latest annual report and final accounts which give the financial information has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the budget for NHS Professionals was in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06; and what the anticipated budget is for 2006–07. [44057]

Mr. Byrne: The Department invested £26.6 million in NHS Professionals in 2004–05 and £23 million in 2005–06. Officials are currently working with NHS Professionals to agree a business plan and funding for 2006–07.

NHS Trusts (Chartered Accountants)

Mrs. Lait: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* executive finance directors and *(b)* non-executive directors of NHS trusts in England are fully qualified chartered accountants. [42535]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Obesity

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress she has made in investigating difficulties with access to specialist obesity services since her Department's pledge in June 2004. [39565]

Caroline Flint: There are 13 national health service-operated obesity clinics for children and adults located across England.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence has been commissioned to prepare definitive guidance on the prevention, identification, management and treatment of obesity. This is due in early 2007. Meanwhile, as part of its wider obesity programme, the Department completed consultation on 3 January on:

an obesity care pathway to assist health professionals in providing obesity services and

a weight loss guide to be given to patients who intend to lose weight.

The Department published guidance for primary care trusts (PCTs) on measuring the height and weight of primary school children on 11 January. In order to help PCTs develop local strategies to prevent and tackle overweight and obesity, the Department has also supported the development of an obesity toolkit to signpost the reader to relevant sources of information regarding evidence of effectiveness of interventions.

Ostomy Care

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many ostomy patients returned to hospital for treatment for complications of their surgery in the last year for which figures are available; [45053]

(2) what steps she is taking to ensure that elderly ostomy patients continue to receive help at home for the related services and appliances they require; [45055]

(3) what estimate she has made of the average age of an ostomy patient; [45057]

(4) what estimate she has made of the number of ostomy patients who also *(a)* suffer from a disability and *(b)* need a walking aid. [45058]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of ostomy patients returned to hospital due to complications from their surgery is not available.

It is the responsibility of primary care trusts to provide adequate health and social care services, including the provision of appliances, for all ostomy patients in their area.

We have made no estimates on the average age of ostomy patients, or on the number of ostomy patients living with a disability or needing a walking frame.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of surgeries resulting in ostomy performed in *(a)* England, *(b)* West Yorkshire, *(c)* Kirklees and *(d)* Huddersfield in each of the past 10 years. [45056]

Mr. Byrne: We have made no estimates for the number of people whose surgery results in an ostomy.

Patient Records

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether a trained doctor will *(a)* oversee and *(b)* verify the accuracy of the transfer of a patient's records to the new electronic system; [43010]

(2) what safeguards she has put in place to ensure that general practitioners' handwriting is not transcribed wrongly onto electronic patient records; [43011]

(3) what estimate she has made of the time it will take to transfer handwritten general practitioners' notes on to the new IT system; [43012]

(4) whether a patient's notes will be *(a)* scanned and *(b)* transcribed into the new IT system. [43013]

Mr. Byrne: National health service trusts and general practitioners (GPs) will not be required to transfer handwritten notes to the NHS Care Records Service (NHS CRS) when the services goes live locally. Rather, each patient's care record will be populated using data from existing electronic systems. Trusts and GP practices will, however, be free to supplement the transferred data from paper records where they feel it to be clinically and logistically appropriate.

GPs already frequently transfer patient records to another GP when a patient changes their address or GP. It is the responsibility of the individual clinician to ensure that electronic data they have entered or transferred to a new or replacement electronic system is correct. An electronic facility to assist this process is currently under development—the 'GP2GP' record transfer service. This will reduce the amount of re-keying required by enabling the direct transfer of the electronic component of a patient's existing care record.

The Data Protection Act 1998 establishes a set of principles with which users of personal data must comply. These include the duty to ensure that information is accurate and up to date. This duty would extend to individual GPs and other clinicians when transferring local electronic records, or transcribing or scanning paper records, to the NHS CRS. Guidance for transcribing paper records developed by the Royal College of General Practitioners and issued by the Department makes it clear that responsibility for the quality of the necessary processes lies with the individual practice.

When the NHS CRS is deployed locally, a senior clinician, for example, the principle practitioner in a GP practice is responsible for approving the transfer of data. This only occurs after industry-standard testing procedures have demonstrated that the data has been safely transferred. Verification is by a series of quantitative and qualitative pre- and post-validation checks that ensure that the data stored on the new system is the same as the original.

It is considered to be good practice for NHS trusts and GP practices to preserve the existing paper records. The facility exists to easily store a case note reference on the electronic system that allows ready identification of the paper record where this may be required.

Patient Safety

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many *(a)* patient safety incidents and *(b)* near misses have been reported by category for each hospital within the Cheshire and Merseyside strategic health authority; [45091]

(2) how many deaths were recorded as a result of patient safety incidents at *(a)* Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust, *(b)* Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospital NHS Trust, *(c)* Aintree University NHS Trust and *(d)* Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh hospitals in 2004. [45125]

Mr. Byrne: The National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) receives patient safety incident reports on a confidential basis. The NPSA does not provide patient safety incident data at a geographical or local national health service organisation level.

Primary Care Trusts (Sunderland)

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which Sunderland primary care trusts will have their final funding for the 2005–06 financial year changed against initial allocation. [42443]

Mr. Byrne: All Sunderland primary care trusts will have their final funding for the 2005–06 financial year changed against initial allocation. It is standard practice for adjustments to be made against the initial resource allocations mainly for the allocation of additional funds from centrally held budgets.

Private Finance Initiative Schemes

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which private finance initiative schemes in her Department have *(a)* reached financial close and are completed and operational, *(b)* have reached financial close and work has started on site, *(c)* are in negotiation but have not yet reached financial close and *(d)* have not yet placed advertisements in the Official Journal of the European Union; what the (i) capital value and (ii) completion or anticipated completion date is in each case; and if she will make a statement. [43647]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member for South Cambridgeshire to the reply I gave on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 158W and 159W to the hon. Member for Vale of Clwyd (Chris Ruane) and the right hon. Member for Horsham (Mr. Maude).

Psychiatrists

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* median and *(b)* mean waiting times for patients waiting to see a consultant psychiatrist as (i) an out-patient first attendance and (ii) an elective in-patient admission were in (A) Lancashire and (B) Lancaster and Wyre in each year since 1997. [44718]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Patients waiting for elective admission, mental health specialties, provider based, September 1997 to September 2005

Quarter: September	Code name	0–2	3–5	6–8	9–11	12–14	15–17	21–23	Total	Median wait (weeks)	Mean (weeks)
2001	5DD Morecambe Bay PCT	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	8	n/a	n/a
2002	5DD Morecambe Bay PCT	0	5	1	0	0	0	0	6	n/a	n/a
2003	5DD Morecambe Bay PCT	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	n/a	n/a

Quarter: September	Code name	0–1	1–2	2–3	3–4	4–5	5–6	6 plus	Total	Median wait (weeks)	Mean (weeks)
2004	5DD Morecambe Bay PCT	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	n/a	n/a
2005	5DD Morecambe Bay PCT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a

Quarter: September	Code name	0–2	3–5	6–8	9–11	12–14	15–17	21–23	Total	Median wait (weeks)	Mean (weeks)
1998	RML Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	n/a	n/a
1999	RML Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	8	3	0	0	0	0	0	11	9.8	10.0
2000	RML Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	n/a	n/a
2001	RML Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
2002	RW5 Lancashire Care NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
2003	RW5 Lancashire Care NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a

Quarter: September	Code name	0–2	3–5	6–8	9–11	12–14	15–17	21–23	Total	Median wait (weeks)	Mean (weeks)
2004	RW5 Lancashire Care NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a
2005	RW5 Lancashire Care NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a

n/a = Denotes organisations where fewer than 10 patients were seen.
Notes:
Data for specialties
710—Mental Illness
711—Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
712—Forensic Psychiatry
713—Psychotherapy
715—Old Age Psychiatry
Source:
Department of Health form KH07

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* average and *(b)* target waiting time was to see a (i) psychiatrist and (ii) psychologist for (A) adults and (B) children in (1) Lancashire and (2) Lancaster and Wyre in each year since 1997. [44719]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Estimated average waiting time from GP written referral to first out-patient appointment, mental health specialties, September 1997 to September 2005

Provider based

Quarter: September	Code	Name	Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks) 0 to <44	to <1313	to <1717	to <21	21 plus	Total	Median (weeks)	Mean (weeks)
2002	RW5	Lancashire Care NHS Trust	480	332	39	5	5	861	3.6	5.4
2003	RW5	Lancashire Care NHS Trust	470	289	28	19	0	806	3.4	5.2
2004	RW5	Lancashire Care NHS Trust	419	232	25	0	0	676	3.2	4.7
2005	RW5	Lancashire Care NHS Trust	299	156	0	0	0	455	3.1	4.2

Provider based

Quarter: September	Code	Name	Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks) 0 to <44	to <1313	to <26	26 plus	Total	Median (weeks)	Mean (weeks)
2001	5DD	Morecambe Bay PCT	71	130	42	27	270	8.5	12.9

Provider based

Quarter: September	Code	Name	Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks) 0 to <44	to <1313	to <1717	to <21	21 plus	Total	Median (weeks)	Mean (weeks)
2002	5DD	Morecambe Bay PCT	112	123	15	13	21	284	6.2	9.2
2003	5DD	Morecambe Bay PCT	126	129	20	9	0	284	5.2	6.4
2004	5DD	Morecambe Bay PCT	231	241	30	0	0	502	4.8	5.9
2005	5DD	Morecambe Bay PCT	123	111	15	0	0	249	4.2	5.7

Parts of the following organisations merged to form Lancashire Care NHS Trust

Quarter: September	Code	Name	Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral 0 to <44	to <1313	to <26	26 plus	Total	Median (weeks)	Mean (weeks)
1997	REU	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	40	87	34	32	193	9.9	16.3
1998	REU	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	56	61	28	13	158	7.5	11.7
1999	REU	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	74	68	20	5	167	5.3	8.2
2000	REU	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	77	66	25	11	179	5.8	9.9
2001	REU	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	36	98	20	9	163	8.2	10.8
1997	RJU	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	51	41	7	9	108	4.8	9.8
1998	RJU	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	46	62	7	20	135	7.2	13.3
1999	RJU	Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	42	33	7	0	82	4.0	6.1
1997	RMB	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	21	51	74	0	146	13.3	13.1
1998	RMB	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	12	23	28	33	96	19.3	25.8

Parts of the following organisations merged to form Lancashire Care NHS Trust

Quarter: September	Code	Name	Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral: 0 to <44	to <1313	to <26	26 plus	Total	Median (weeks)	Mean (weeks)
1999	RMB	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	63	41	0	0	104	3.3	4.6
2000	RMB	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	28	43	33	33	137	12.6	20.3
2001	RMB	Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	45	53	36	2	136	8.0	9.9
1998	RME	Communicare NHS Trust	4	0	0	0	4	n/a	n/a
1997	RMG	Guild Community Healthcare NHS Trust	80	86	1	0	167	4.4	5.5
1998	RMG	Guild Community Healthcare NHS Trust	55	6	0	0	61	2.3	2.6
1999	RMG	Guild Community Healthcare NHS Trust	71	22	0	0	93	2.6	3.5
2000	RMG	Guild Community Healthcare NHS Trust	62	58	0	0	120	3.9	5.1
2001	RMG	Guild Community Healthcare NHS Trust	77	35	0	0	112	2.9	4.0
1997	RML	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	31	86	45	3	165	9.4	11.1
1998	RML	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	82	91	12	0	185	5.1	6.3
1999	RML	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	41	74	19	0	134	7.2	8.1
2000	RML	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	202	98	21	5	326	3.2	5.8
2001	RML	Blackpool Wyre and Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust	254	155	22	0	431	3.4	5.2
1999	RVT	North Sefton and West Lancashire NHS Trust	91	164	15	3	273	6.5	7.4
2000	RVT	North Sefton and West Lancashire NHS Trust	166	138	0	0	304	3.7	5.0
2001	RVT	North Sefton and West Lancashire NHS Trust	65	91	0	0	156	5.3	5.8

n/a denotes organisations where fewer than 10 patients were seen.

Notes:

1. Data for specialties:
710—Mental Illness
711—Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
712—Forensic Psychiatry
713—Psychotherapy
715—Old Age Psychiatry
2. Due to small numbers, the calculation of the median wait is prone to fluctuation at PCT and SHA level. Care should be taken when interpreting these figures.
3. Waiting times apply to consultant-led appointments only. Services in many areas are now run by multi disciplinary teams.
4. Lancashire Care NHS Trust was formed in an April 2002 merger of the following organisations:
RMB—Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Healthcare NHS Trust (MH services)
RML—Blackpool, Wyre and Fyde Community Health NHS trust (MH services)
REU—Burnley Health Care NHS Trust (mental health services)
RJU—Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust (mental health services)
RME—Communicare NHS Trust (psychology and drugs services)
RMG—Guild Community Healthcare NHS Trust
RVT—North Sefton and West Lancashire Community NHS Trust

Source:
Department of Health form QM08

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Trust

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what allowance for population growth has been made in the budget allocation to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Trust *(a)* in 2005–06 and *(b)* in future years. [44323]

Jane Kennedy: Revenue allocations are made direct to primary care trusts and not to national health service trusts.

Respiratory Health

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will amend the quality and outcomes framework for general practitioners to give greater priority to respiratory health. [43897]

Mr. Byrne: There are two indicator groups in the new quality and outcomes framework for respiratory health, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The

indicator groups included in the new agreement were announced in December. However, the full details of the new quality and outcomes framework are not yet available. The guidance for the new framework and the detail of the indicators will be published shortly and a copy will be placed in the Library.

Ridge Lea Hospital

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust's proposal to close the Castle Unit at the Ridge Lea Hospital in Lancaster. [44721]

Mr. Byrne: The future of the Castle Unit at the Ridge Lea Hospital has been the subject of a recent consultation exercise by the Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust (PCT). The responses are currently being reviewed and will be discussed at a future board meeting of the PCT.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the infection rates for *(a)* chlamydia, *(b)* HIV, *(c)* gonorrhoea, *(d)* herpes and *(e)* syphilis were in the Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Primary Care Trust area in each year since 1997. [43263]

Caroline Flint: This data are only routinely published at strategic health authority (SHA) level. This is shown in table 1. Sexually transmitted infections data are not yet available for 2005. The HIV diagnoses are from reports received from laboratories and clinicians by the end of September 2005.

Table 1: Rates[1,2] per 100,000 population of diagnoses of HIV and other selected sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in Kent and Medway Strategic Health Authority between 2000–04[3]

Condition description[4]	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
HIV	4.0	4.1	6.5	6.5	7.6
Primary and Secondary Syphilis	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.6
Uncomplicated Gonorrhoea	7.2	11.8	10.6	10.1	12.7
Uncomplicated Chlamydia	41.3	39.0	59.4	72.1	116.9
Genital Herpes	24.1	25.9	25.0	23.3	27.7

[1] The denominator used to calculate the HIV rate was the population aged 15 above in Kent and Medway SHA.
[2] The denominator used to calculate STI rates was the total population of the SHA.
[3] Genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics are open access services, so the data do not relate to residents of the SHA, but diagnoses made in the clinics within the SHA.
[4] Includes HIV diagnoses made in GUM clinics and other settings such as general practice and infectious disease units. For other STIs, only diagnoses made in GUM clinics are recorded.
Source:
Reports of HIV diagnoses and KC60 Returns (other STIs)

Southport and Ormskirk Hospital

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the terms of reference are for the turnaround team sent into Southport and Ormskirk hospital. [43117]

Mr. Byrne: Following the initial assessment the teams will agree a tailored package of turnaround support with each organisation and the strategic health authority. The teams will then support the chief executives of the organisations in delivering turnaround. The type and length of engagement will be tailored to the needs of specific organisations. The chief executives will remain responsible for delivery in their organisations.

Specialist Gastric Care

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many specialist nurses there are for patients with colitis and Crohn's disease; and how many there have been in each of the last five years. [42087]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Standish Hospital, Stroud

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many bidders have been short-listed for the Standish Hospital site, Stroud; when a decision will be made; and what requirement there will be for community involvement in the project. [41651]

Mr. Byrne: 12 bids or expressions of interest were received following re-marketing of the Standish Hospital site. The local health community has been consulted on the proposals received. Ministers will make a decision as soon as possible.

Student Grants Unit

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average time taken to reply to questions *(a)* telephoned and *(a)* emailed to the Student Grants Unit (i) helpline and (ii) email address was in the last period for which figures are available. [41037]

Mr. Byrne: The NHS Pensions Agency are responsible for the NHS Student Grants Unit.

There are dedicated telephone lines for universities who are to directly contact the Student Grants Unit without delay. From a limited exercise conducted between September and December 2005 it was apparent that other callers could experience some delay in having their calls dealt with.

Vulnerable Adults

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she plans to extend the Protection of Vulnerable Adults scheme to *(a)* the NHS and *(b)* other health and social care settings not covered by the relevant provisions of the Care Standards Act 2000. [44903]

Mr. Byrne: In response to Sir Michael Bichard's Inquiry in June 2004, and in conjunction with the Department for Education and Skills, we have been

developing a new vetting and barring scheme, legislation to provide for which will be introduced in February 2006, subject to the agreement of Parliament. This new scheme will apply to all national health service and social care settings.

Young People (Culinary Ability)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish a summary of results of the survey of young people's attitudes to cooking and culinary ability; how much this survey cost; what public health interventions its evidence will be used to support; and if she will make a statement. [41955]

Caroline Flint: We have been encouraged by the interest in the survey of young people's attitudes to cooking and culinary skills. The survey's findings will, at the earliest opportunity, be placed on the 5 A DAY website at www.5aday.nhs.uk.

The survey cost £8,000 to undertake.

The survey was designed to inform the development of the 5 A DAY programme with a focus on young independents aged 16 to 24. Survey results included:

33 per cent. of 16 to 24-year-olds have passed off a ready meal as their own and

one in 10 young people never cook a proper meal for themselves because they do not know how

To help this group of young people improve their culinary skills, the Department has produced a new free recipe guide, "Fuel for Living". The guide provides simple and cost effective recipe ideas and cooking tips, to assist young people in preparing meals and increasing their fruit and vegetable consumption.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 1 February 2006

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development on how many occasions his Department consulted citizens' juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens' jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens' jury. [46237]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development has not consulted citizens' juries on departmental policies in the last five years.

Civil Servants (Overseas Visits)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what costs were incurred by his Department as a result of sending civil servants on overseas visits in each of the last 10 years. [46281]

Mr. Thomas: Figures for travel costs within administration costs budgets for years which information is readily available are shown as follows:

	£000
2001–02	2,358
2002–03	2,645
2003–04	10,677
2004–05	12,001

The figures for travel reflect all domestic and overseas travel for Ministers, Advisers and Officials and include costs for all travel, accommodation and subsistence. It is not possible to disaggregate costs for Officials' travel overseas without incurring a disproportionate cost.

Information for earlier years is not readily available and in some cases will no longer be held.

In 2003–04, DFID introduced new procedures to draw together administration costs, including those travel costs which had previously been recorded on the programme budget. These changes have increased transparency and has enabled DFID to manage administration costs more effectively. Figures for 2003–04 onwards now include travel costs that were previously funded by country programmes and as a result are not comparable with earlier years.

All official travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules contained in DFID's Staff Handbook and complies with the Civil Service Management Code.

EU Agricultural Subsidies

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the impact of EU agricultural subsidies on people in developing countries; and if he will make a statement. [46740]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development supports a range of research on the impacts of developed countries agricultural policies on developing countries. One current programme is with the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) on the impacts of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) agricultural Policies on developing countries. The research outputs are available at www.fao.org/trade The Government recognise the damaging impact that trade-distorting subsidies in the EU and other OECD countries have on developing countries and we are committed to securing reductions in these subsidies, through reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and the World Trade Organisation talks.

The most recent common agricultural policy reform package agreed in 2003–04 marks a significant shift in the EU's agricultural policy. The decoupling of subsidies from production should increase the market orientation of European farmers, leading to reductions in production and disposal of subsidised surpluses abroad.

The Government also fully supports the commitment made as part of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Doha Development Agenda

> "to reduce, with a view to phasing out, all forms of export subsidies, and substantial reductions in trade-distorting domestic support."

There was progress towards this at the recent WTO ministerial in Hong Kong, where the EU agreed to phase-out its export subsidies by 2013.

Health Projects (Funding)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what proportion of his Department's budget for 2005–06 is allocated to projects for *(a)* AIDS, *(b)* tuberculosis and *(c)* malaria. [46879]

Mr. Thomas: DFID will spend at least £1.5 billion on AIDS related work over three years (2005–06 to 2007–08). The Department does not have a specific target for the year 2005–06. There are no targets for the Department's spending on TB and Malaria. However, DFID has already committed to double its funding to the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria to £100 million for 2006 and the same for 2007.

HIV/AIDS

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1329W, on HIV/AIDS (paediatric care), if he will list the countries in which the UK funds AIDS programmes. [46381]

Mr. Thomas: DFID directly and indirectly supports HIV and AIDS related activities across all its 16 priority countries in Africa. These are Democratic Republic of the

Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In well-developed states, DFID focuses on supporting national government decision-making processes and associated institutional reforms in line with the "3 ones" principles" and uses aid instruments such as general budget support. In "fragile states" where working with government has been more difficult, we have been supporting UN agencies and civil society organisations to provide a range of services.

In Asia, DFID funds HIV and AIDS programmes in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Vietnam, Cambodia and China. Most are not stand-alone DFID programmes, but are jointly funded. Burma is funded through our support to the UN.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, regional programmes cover a wide range of countries. In Latin America, the Brazil Sexually Transmitted Diseases/ AIDS Programme provides technical support across the region. Focus countries are Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru. In the Caribbean, the Regional Programme covers a wide range of island states, with a focus on six countries in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda, and St. Kitts & Nevis). A new project supporting the private sector response to HIV and AIDS is under way in Jamaica and Barbados. A programme tackling AIDS-related stigma and discrimination covers all countries in the Caribbean.

In the Overseas Territories, support is provided to the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre to provide technical support and services for all of the Caribbean Overseas Territories (Montserrat, Turks and Caicos, British Virgin Islands, Bermuda, Cayman Islands and Anguilla).

In Europe and Central Asia, DFID supports HIV and AIDS programmes in Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), through a programme working jointly with the World Bank. Flexible technical assistance programmes are also funded in Central Asia, Russia, Ukraine and Serbia and Montenegro, working with the Joint United Nation Programme for HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS).

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 6 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1189W, to the hon. Member for South-West Surrey (Mr. Hunt) on HIV/AIDS, what progress has been made since the publication of the good practice framework in March 2005 towards *(a)* increasing access to paediatric medicines and *(b)* stimulating research and development into paediatric formulations. [46833]

Mr. Thomas: DFID published 'Increasing People's Access to Essential Medicines in Developing Countries: a Framework for Good Practice in the Pharmaceutical Industry' in March 2005, with widespread pharmaceutical industry support. The framework was developed in close consultation with the industry and with its stakeholders, including the World Health Organisation (WHO), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and institutional investors. The framework, which recommends increased research and development into treatment and vaccinations for children, builds on the good work of many of the companies in the industry, and encourages pharmaceutical companies to go further by:

Engaging in widespread differential pricing of essential medicines in developing countries, especially the world's poorest, with particular attention given to patented medicines.

Increasing research and development investment for diseases affecting developing countries, including through public private partnerships.

Working to support broader health and development goals in developing countries.

and, increasing reporting and transparency around access to medicines activities.

The first recommendation related to research and development encouraged increased investment in medicines and vaccines for children. This issue has been discussed with pharmaceutical companies on a number of occasions since the launch, including at a well attended meeting of pharmaceutical companies and Government Departments on 30 September last year. Another meeting was held on 31 January to discuss differential pricing to make medicines cheaper in developing countries. The next meeting of the group will focus on paediatric issues.

The UK Government have also made significant progress on developing innovative financing to incentivise increased investment in research and development, including for paediatric formulations of medicines such as antiretroviral medicines. Research and development tax credits to increase investment in research and development for medicines and vaccines for AIDS, TB and Malaria were introduced in 2002. Last year the UK Government launched the international finance facility for immunisation, and announced plans for advanced market commitments to prompt the development of new medicines and vaccines for diseases affecting developing countries, including for paediatric formulations.

DFID also supports specific research on health in developing countries, including work on communicable diseases, sexual and reproductive health, maternal and paediatric health and HIV. DFID has funded research on the appropriate use of existing medicines in developing country settings including, clinical trials demonstrating the efficacy of co-trimoxazole prophylaxis in reducing mortality among children living with HIV and co-funding of the Development of Antiretroviral Treatment in Africa (DART) Trials with the Medical Research Council (MRC) exploring HIV treatment in resource limited settings, including for children and other vulnerable groups.

Millennium Development Goals

Andrew Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what arrangements have been made by the UK to deliver the commitment made at the Millennium Review Summit of September 2005 to support comprehensive national strategies to achieve the millennium development goals by providing the necessary increases in aid of sufficient quality and timeliness. [46587]

Hilary Benn: The UK has argued strongly for increased levels of aid and debt relief to support partner countries in implementing strategies to achieve the Millennium

Development Goals. Commitments made by European and G8 governments last year will increase global aid from $79 billion in 2004 to $129 billion in 2010. The UK wants to increase the impact of this by creating the International Finance Facility. Governments also made commitments on improving the quality of aid, by providing more direct support to partner governments'.

The UK has published expenditure plans for 2005–06 to 2007–08, and we intend to meet by 2013, the UN target of providing 0.7 per cent. of gross national income (GNI) as development assistance.

The United Kingdom's proposals for supporting countries to accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals are set out in the paper "From Commitment to Action" prepared by the Department for International Development (DFID) and Her Majesty's Treasury. I have arranged for copies of this document to be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what paediatric-centred policies have been put in place further to the Department's commitment to focus on the needs of children in the publication of its 2004 HIV and AIDS Treatment and Care Policy. [46832]

Mr. Thomas: DFID's HIV and AIDS Treatment and Care Policy, published in July 2004 alongside the UK's strategy for tackling HIV and AIDS in the developing world, focuses on supporting countries to develop and implement their own country specific policies using guidance from multilateral such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), organisations that receive regular DFID funding. Like the rest of the international community DFID relies on the WHO for technical guidance on these issues.

In November 2004, the Medical Research Council's (MRC) clinical trials unit reported that using a widely available antibiotic drug could cut AIDS-related deaths in children after infancy by 43 per cent., by stopping infections associated with a weakened immune system. The outcome of the DFID-funded trial is that co-trimoxazole is now in the WHO paediatric treatment guidelines for children with HIV, and is now regarded as standard treatment even in the poorest countries. The treatment was also found to reduce the need for children's hospital admissions by 23 per cent.

In December 2004, DFID and the MRC jointly funded (£4.7 million) the Antiretroviral Therapy Research for Children (ARROW), run by the MRC clinical trials unit. The trial will address ways of providing antiretroviral therapy to children in resource poor settings and could both reduce costs of treatment as well as reducing side effects, and will begin in the next few months.

The UK is co-hosting, with UNICEF, the Global Partners Forum for Children and AIDS on 9 and 10 February. The forum will focus on key blockages to scaling up towards universal access to prevention, treatment and care for children. Paediatric treatment is one of the six key areas.

DFID has regular meetings with the pharmaceutical industry to advance the framework for good practice in the pharmaceutical industry, published in March 2005. The next meeting of this group will be dedicated to discussions on paediatric treatment.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Departmental Responsibilities

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor General if he will make a statement on the responsibilities of each directorate in the *(a)* Treasury's Solicitor's Department, *(b)* Serious Fraud Office and *(c)* Crown Prosecution Service. [41728]

The Solicitor-General: The responsibilities of the directorates in each of the three Departments are shown as follows:

(a) Treasury Solicitor's Department

Litigation group: Provides civil litigation services to Government Departments and other publicly funded bodies.

Employment and Commercial Practices Group: provides employment litigation ,and/or advisory services and gives advice on general contractual issues to Government Departments and other publicly funded bodies.

The Department-specific Advisory Divisions, several co-located with client Departments, provide legal support for all aspects of the client Department's work.

The European Division provides and co-ordinates legal services in support of the Government's policies in relation to the European Union, including conducting all litigation on behalf of the U.K. in the European Court of Justice.

The Bona Vacantia Division raises money from the estates of those who die intestate, and from the assets of devolved companies, on behalf of the Crown.

The Government Legal Service Secretariat supports the Treasury Solicitor (Head of the GLS) and GLS teams on a range of management and professional issues affecting more than one Department.

The Directorate of Corporate Strategy is responsible for planning and implementing strategic, business and policy development throughout the Agency.

The Treasury Solicitor's Department's Estimate also covers funding for HMCPS, and for the Attorney General's Office, which provides legal and policy advice and support to the Law Officers.

(b) Serious Fraud Office

The SFO has five investigation and prosecution divisions, each containing a number of multi-disciplinary case teams comprising lawyers, financial investigators and support staff. These divisions are supported by:

Accountancy Support and Forensic Computing—the former allocating support from a central resource; the latter responsible for the seizure, processing and analysis of all electronic-based evidence.

Asset Recovery Unit, which provides assistance on and handles applications for restraint and confiscation orders.

Finance and Establishment Division.

Mutual Legal Assistance Unit, which assists overseas authorities where there is evidence in England, Wales or N. Ireland relating to a suspected fraud overseas.

(c) Crown Prosecution Service

Policy Directorate: developing prosecution policy and providing practical guidance to CPS staff, as well as representing the interests of the CPS within the CJS.

Business Development Directorate: supporting and monitoring the 42 CPS areas in delivering Criminal Justice targets, and in the coordination and implementation of change.

Finance Directorate: developing and managing the planning and financial management framework, dealing with spending reviews etc.

Human Resources Directorate: supporting the CPS on all issues relating to people employed within the Service.

Business Information Systems Directorate: responsible for all aspects of the development and delivery of the CPS' Information and Communications Strategy.

Organised Crime Division: set up to provide a dedicated service to SOCA.

Special Crime Division: prosecutes/assists the prosecution of the most sensitive, specialised and novel cases.

Counter Terrorism Division: advises on, and prosecutes, cases of terrorism, incitement to racial hatred, war crimes, official secrets and other offences within the definition of "state crime".

Equality and Diversity Unit: Develops and supports the CPS equality and diversity policy.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Press Dining Room

Jim Dowd: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission for what reason a one-way electronic lock and alarm has been fitted to the fire exit door from the Upper Committee Corridor North to the Press Dining Room; how much this cost; and what assessment has been made of the impact on the safety of those using the Press Dining Room in the event of an emergency. [47154]

Nick Harvey: The mechanical alarmed door lock between the Upper Committee Corridor staircase and the Press Dining Room has been in situ for many years. It is designed to allow people to escape in an emergency from the staircase into the Dining Room. The fire risk assessment does not identify a requirement for escape in the opposite direction. The cost of installation is unknown.

Westminster Hall

Mr. Dismore: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission if the Commission will consider *(a)* replacing the temporary boarding fencing off Westminster Hall for building works with perspex screens and *(b)* creating perspex windows in the boards to allow visitors to the Palace and Officers to view Westminster Hall and the progress of works there until normal access is restored. [47202]

Nick Harvey: Portholes are to be cut into the screen to allow a view of the works in progress and they will be complemented by a temporary information display. A photo montage is in the course of preparation which will give Members, staff and visitors a view of Westminster Hall.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Coroners

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans the Department has to reform the law in relation to coroners. [44773]

Ms Harman: I intend to publish a draft Bill to reform the law in relation to coroners in the late spring. I plan to make a further statement shortly.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what representations she has received from the Hertfordshire coroner on the powers available to him to conduct appropriate inquiries into the Potter's Bar rail crash; and what response she has made to those representations. [44774]

Ms Harman: The Hertfordshire coroner wrote to my officials on 8 November 2005 questioning the adequacy of his powers to conduct inquests which would effectively investigate the fatalities arising from the Potters Bar rail crash. He stated that if such inquests went ahead, his other inquests would be delayed as a result. He further indicated that he would seek to appoint a judge as his deputy to conduct the inquests. It has been agreed in principle that a judge would be released to conduct the inquests and the coroner has been informed of this.

Court Service

Mr. Harper: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the average length of time was for the Court Service to notify the police of conviction details following a verdict in court for *(a)* all offences and *(b)* offences which require amendment of the sexual offenders register in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [44623]

Ms Harman: Information about the average length of time for the Courts Service to notify the police of conviction details following a verdict in court for *(a)* , all offences and *(b)* offences which require amendment of the sexual offenders register in the last 12 months is not recorded centrally. However, figures showing how expeditiously the Courts notify the police of all case outcomes, against a target time of three days are in the following table.

Magistrates courts

The production and despatch of the court register within three working days of the court hearing in England and Wales

Area	*Number of registers completed within the survey period*	*Number of registers produced within 3 working days*	*Percentage of registers produced within 3 working days*
October-December 2004	79,143	70,932	89.6
January-March 2005	81,409	72,233	88.7
April-June 2005	81,470	72,217	88.6
July-September 2005	81,468	72,489	89.0
12 month total	323,490	287,871	89.0

Crown court

The number of Crown court results to the Police National Computer (PNC) within three working days of the court hearing in England and Wales

Area	Number of results completed within the survey period	Number of results produced within 3 working days	Percentage of Results produced within 3 working days
October-December 2004	27,782	21,959	79.0
January-March 2005	25,543	21,092	82.6
April-June 2005	19,001	15,749	82.9
July-September 2005	11,923	10,311	86.5
12 month total	84,249	69,111	82.0

Departmental Estate

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what *(a)* building and *(b)* refurbishment projects are planned by her Department in (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07; and what the expected costs are of each project. [37410]

Ms Harman: My Department has *(a)* (i) undertaken no new building projects in 2005–06. (ii) My Department has no building projects planned for 2006–07. Building projects are defined as 'new builds' as per the Treasury guidance referred to as follows.

My Department has *(b)* (i) undertaken no refurbishment projects in 2005–06 and (ii) has no refurbishment projects planned for 2006–07. Refurbishment projects are defined as 'upgrading' as per the Treasury guidance referred to as follows.

The answer provided relates solely to building and refurbishment projects on the HQ estate of the Department for Constitutional Affairs. It does not cover HM Court Service, Associated Offices or NDPB's as this information is neither collated nor managed by DCA and to obtain it would incur a disproportionate cost.

Trials (Location)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many trials in *(a)* magistrates courts and *(b)* the Crown court were moved to a different location at the request of the (i) prosecution and (ii) defence in each year since 1990. [47185]

Ms Harman: Information on the reason for cases being transferred to a different location is not held centrally for either magistrates courts or the Crown court and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost to the Department.

WALES

Business Rates

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much was raised in business rates in *(a)* Rhyl, *(b)* Prestatyn, *(c)* St. Asaph, *(d)* Bodelwyddan, *(e)* Rhuddlan, *(f)* Dyserth and *(g)* Denbigh in each of the last 10 years. [46171]

Nick Ainger: Figures for individual towns and communities are not held centrally, and I understand from Denbighshire county council that they could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Denbighshire county council's contribution to the non-domestic rates pool in each year since the re-organisation of local government is provided in the following table.

Contribution to the non-domestic rates pool by Denbighshire county council

	£000
1996–97	12,936
1997–98	12,729
1998–99	12,475
1999–2000	13,721
2000–01	14,206
2001–02	16,285
2002–03	14,164
2003–04	15,059
2004–05	14,367

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Members Travel Expenses

Tom Brake: To ask the Leader of the House how much was claimed by hon. Members for travel by *(a)* air, *(b)* rail and *(c)* motorcycle in the last two financial years for which figures are available; and what the 10 highest claims were in each year. [46257]

Mr. Hoon: The following figures report the cost of air and rail travel on parliamentary business within the UK plus certain European travel for the financial years 2003–04 and 2004–05. Details of claims relating to travel by motorbike are recorded together with claims for all forms of motor mileage and are not separately reportable.

£

	10 highest claims	
	Rail	Air
2003–04	18,203	25,399
	15,328	19,648
	15,304	19,504
	13,138	19,223
	12,633	17,608
	12,429	16,381
	12,410	15,851
	11,775	15,696
	11,292	15,636
	10,906	15,591
Total claimed	1,698,207	1,295,780
2004–05	19,044	30,855
	15,216	24,151
	14,067	18,527

£

	10 highest claims	
	Rail	Air
	12,466	17,943
	12,028	17,532
	12,021	17,074
	11,954	16,780
	11,540	16,383
	11,336	16,332
	11,305	16,289
Total claimed	1,818,704	1,234,017

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Local Government Finance

8. **Mr. Rob Wilson:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received regarding the local government finance settlement. [46940]

Mr. Woolas: During the consultation period on the local government finance settlement, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister received 336 written representations from local authorities, hon. Members and others. I and ministerial colleagues also met 60 delegations.

Buncefield Oil Depot

9. **Mike Penning:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the explosion, fire and subsequent investigations at the Buncefield fuel depot in Hemel Hempstead. [46941]

10. **Mr. David Gauke:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the costs of tackling the Buncefield depot fire. [46942]

The Deputy Prime Minister: Following the incident at the Buncefield fuel depot the Health and Safety Executive and the Environment Agency were asked to conduct an investigation into the causes of the explosion. This inquiry is being chaired by Lord Newton of Braintree. In addition, the Hertfordshire fire and rescue service are carrying out their own internal investigation. Central Government and the Government Office for the East of England are also reviewing the lessons to be learned. These reviews will help inform future planning and emergency preparation.

The response to the Buncefield fire was led by Hertfordshire fire and rescue service, with support from 16 other fire and rescue services from across the country together with the high volume pumping capability funded by the Government's new dimension programme. It will take some time to determine the full costs involved. This exercise is being led by Hertfordshire county council who are working closely with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on the formulation of a claim for financial assistance under the Bell win scheme.

Housing

11. **Mr. Beith:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact of future population growth on housing needs in the North East of England. [46943]

Yvette Cooper: The North East assembly has submitted to the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister a draft revision of the North East regional spatial strategy. This includes work on the implications of future population growth and housing needs. It will be considered at an examination in public. The North East regional housing strategy also includes consideration of population changes.

12. **David Taylor:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the supply of affordable housing in the East Midlands; and if he will make a statement. [46944]

Yvette Cooper: The East Midlands regional housing board is supporting a programme of sub-regional housing market assessments, which will help identify affordable housing needs and the supply required to meet them contributing to the review of the regional spatial strategy. The first of these reports will be concluded during the summer of 2006.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his most recent estimate is of the number of children living in overcrowded housing conditions in *(a)* London and *(b)* England. [32053]

Yvette Cooper: There are two measures of overcrowding—the statutory definition and the bedroom standard.

Based on the bedroom standard, the number of children living in overcrowded households over the three-year period 2002–03, 2003–04 and 2004–05 was *(a)* 275,000 in London and *(b)* 880,000 in England. The total number of overcrowded households in England on this basis is estimated to be around 500,000.

Information on compliance with the statutory standard is not collected centrally. Using data from the "Survey of English Housing" for the period 1997–98 to 1999–2000 and from the 1996 "English House Condition Survey" it was estimated that there were 25,000 households in England that were so overcrowded that the statutory standard was breached. However, reliable estimates for London on this basis are not available—neither are figures for the number of children that live in statutory overcrowded households.

East of England Regional Plan

13. **Mr. Prisk:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the progress of the East of England regional plan. [46945]

Yvette Cooper: The East of England plan is currently under going its examination-in-public (EiP). The EiP is running to timetable and should be concluded at the beginning of March. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects to receive the panel's report during the summer and publish the final plan early in 2007.

Northern Way

14. **Vera Baird:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact of ports development in the South East and East of England on the Northern Way development plan's objective for promoting port development in Tees Valley. [46946]

Mr. Woolas: The Northern Way is developing an evidence base to promote economic growth in the North including the potential of its ports. It is for them to decide the specifics of their strategy. It is the Government's policy to promote improved economic performance in all our regions.

Chicken Farming

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will issue planning guidance on applications for chicken farming establishments which takes account of avian influenza and the presence of the virus H5N1 in Europe. [43386]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* There are no plans to issue such planning guidance. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is putting contingency plans in place to reduce the risk of avian influenza to the UK. In consultation with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Defra has produced guidance for bird-keepers on the best way to do this. Further to this, the ODPM wrote to local planning authorities on 16 December 2005 drawing their attention to this guidance and reminding them of the need for reasonableness and proportionality should they need to consider planning applications for works required to isolate domestic poultry from wild birds.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received about planning permission for large scale chicken farming establishments that are in proximity to *(a)* residential areas and *(b)* educational establishments. [43387]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is not aware of general representations on planning policy for chicken farming establishments. It would not be appropriate to comment on individual planning applications given they may come to the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister for decision on appeal.

Christmas Cards

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will estimate the cost to his Department of sending Christmas cards in 2005. [45915]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The cost of purchasing official Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Christmas cards in 2005 was £1,834.10 + VAT. It is policy to send mail by second class post wherever possible. All expenditure incurred in the purchase of official Christmas Cards is made in accordance with the departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in Government Accounting.

Freedom of Information

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the cost to local authorities of responding to freedom of information requests made in 2005. [46682]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Government undertook a survey of a sample of local authorities covering the period 16 May to 12 August to obtain evidence on the impact on local government of the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act (FoI) on 1 January 2005. This survey suggested that the cost of FoI to local government was approximately £4.9 million per year in the short-to medium term. The Local Government Finance Settlement 2006–07 and 2007–08 includes an additional £4.9 million in each year above existing spending plans to reimburse authorities for these costs under the New Burdens principle.

Housing Benefit

Meg Hillier: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many applications for housing benefit extended payments were made in 2004–05; and how many of those applications were successful. [44811]

Mr. Plaskitt: I have been asked to reply.

The information is not available.

Local Government Finance

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received from the Royal borough of Windsor and Maidenhead on the rate support grant since its announcement. [47265]

Mr. Woolas: Consultation on the 2006–07 Local Government Finance settlement ran from 5 December to 11 January. During that period the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister received 336 written representations. The Royal borough of Windsor and Maidenhead made no previous written representation; I met a delegation form the council to discuss the settlement on Tuesday 10 January.

All representations received have been considered in reaching the final 2006–07 Local Government Finance settlement.

Official Travel

David Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his air travel in an official capacity cost in each year since he became Deputy Prime Minister. [46634]

Jim Fitzpatrick: All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the 'Ministerial Code and Travel' by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information for the financial years 1995–96 to 2004–05. Information for 2005–06 will be published as soon as it is ready after the end of the current financial year.

During the financial year 2004–05, expenditure on domestic flights by my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister was £1,041. Information in respect of my right hon. Friend's domestic air travel taken since the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed on 29 May 2002 until 2003–04 can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

David Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total cost was of his official travel in each year since he became Deputy Prime Minister. [46636]

Jim Fitzpatrick: All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the 'Ministerial Code and Travel' by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

For information on the cost of ministerial vehicles provided to departments in 2004–05 I refer the hon. Member to the letter from Roy Burke, chief executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA) in November 2005. For information for the financial years 2000–01 to 2003–04 I refer the hon. Member to the letters from the chief executive of the GCDA to the hon. Member for Buckingham (John Bercow) dated 10 January 2005 and to the then hon. Member for Arundel and South Downs dated 13 September 2003. Copies of these letters are available in the Library of the House.

During the financial year 2004–05, expenditure on rail travel by my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister was 4,624. Information in respect of my right hon. Friend's rail travel taken since the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002 until 2003–04 can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information for the financial years 1995–96 to 2004–05. Information for 2005–06 will be published as soon as it is ready after the end of the current financial year.

During the financial year 2004–05, expenditure on domestic flights by my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister was £1,041. Information in respect of my right hon. Friend's domestic air travel taken since the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed on 29 May 2002 until 2003–04 can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

David Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total cost was of his overnight accommodation while travelling on official duties in each year since he became Deputy Prime Minister. [46637]

Jim Fitzpatrick: All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel' by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, in respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The list includes the total cost of travel and accommodation. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. These report information for the financial years 1995–96 to 2004–05. Information for 2005–06 will be published as soon as it is ready after the end of the current financial year.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Education

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what opportunities are made available by her Department in Tamworth constituency *(a)* to retrain, *(b)* to reskill and *(c)* to educate local adult residents to improve their chances of taking up paid employment. [42080]

Phil Hope: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write my hon. Friend with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

The Government's Skills Strategy, "21st Century Skills: Realising Our Potential" (July 2003) and "Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work" (March 2005), set out our plans for increasing opportunities for adults to develop their skills for paid employment.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 27 January 2006:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary question to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, where you ask what opportunities are made available by her department in Tamworth constituency to *(a)* retrain *(b)* reskill and *(c)* educate local adult residents to improve their chances of taking up paid employment.

Tamworth and Lichfield College is the principal further education (FE) college serving learners in the Tamworth district. Residents also have the opportunity to study in a number of other FE colleges within accessible travelling distance.

In 2004–05, some 9,500 adults enrolled on programmes of study at Tamworth and Lichfield College across a wide range of subject areas. Particularly large numbers (5,000 enrolments) were to programmes in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). These qualifications are adaptable to many employment sectors, and our regional and local market intelligence shows that, increasingly, employment opportunities will be in higher skilled and more technical jobs where ICT competencies will be an important part of the overall skills profile sought by employers.

In terms of the total employment demand, the health sector is forecast to be Staffordshire's second biggest sector over the next 10 years. Over 1,800 adults enrolled to programmes in Health, Public Services and Care at Tamworth and Lichfield College in 2004–05. College provision, therefore, is supporting residents to take advantage of new and emerging employment opportunities.

In addition to provision to support vocational training and upskilling, Staffordshire local education authority receives funding from LSC for the provision of non-accredited adult and community learning activities across the eight district councils in Staffordshire. The aim of the provision is to engage learners in learning programmes and activities to develop skills for life and personal development. Tamworth and Lichfield College delivers this provision on its Tamworth campus and an additional 17 community venues in the district. In 2003–04 the college enrolled 2,284 learners on 160 adult community programmes.

Learndirect offer a range of flexible learning opportunities though e-learning. The study can take place at the learndirect centres, of which there are 5 in the Tamworth area, or anywhere a learner can access a computer with a good internet connection. Courses include literacy and numeracy, and many are free.

Trust this is helpful.

Disabled People (Skills Levels)

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to increase the skills levels of disabled people in Hartlepool; and if she will make a statement. [42982]

Phil Hope: More people than ever before with self-declared learning difficulties and/or disabilities are now engaged in LSC-funded education and training with 579,000 learners across the post-16 sector in 2003–04 at a total cost of around £1.3 billion. We want to work closely with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to continue to break down the barriers that people with disabilities face in accessing quality training. The Learning and Skills Act 2000 places a statutory duty on the LSC to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different racial groups, men and women, and between disabled and non-disabled. To support that work, the LSC has introduced equality and diversity impact measures as a planning tool to promote greater equality of opportunity in both fair access to and outcomes from publicly-funded training.

Earlier this year, in our White Paper "Skills Getting on in business, getting on at work" we outlined how the LSC is providing capital funding to support colleges and training providers in making the necessary changes to their accommodation, in order to improve access for disabled learners.

However, responsibility for the planning and funding of skills training in Hartlepool, including skills for people with disabilities, is the responsibility of the LSC. Mark Haysom, the council's chief executive, has written to my hon. Friend with further information and a copy of his letter has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 30 January 2006:

I am writing to you to follow up the Secretary of State's answer to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding increasing the skills levels of disabled people in Hartlepool.

I have set out below a summary of current activity with learners in the town:

The main providers of post-16 learning in Hartlepool are Hartlepool College of Further Education and Hartlepool Sixth Form College. Both have been supported recently with funding in relation to improving access for learners with disabilities. All providers of Apprenticeships, Work Based Learning and Entry to Employment in Hartlepool have had an Access Audit to ensure that their facilities and premises are accessible to people with disabilities.

In excess of 1,900 people taking part in learning in Hartlepool are supported with Additional Learning Support Funding. This funding provides specific individual support in respect of learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

18 learners from Hartlepool with a learning difficulty/and or disability have achieved a Level 1 or Level 2 qualification through the Employer Training Pilot. This is 7% of those taking part.

73 young people from Hartlepool who consider themselves to have a learning difficulty and/or disability are currently on Apprenticeship programmes and improving their skills and employment opportunities at levels 2 and 3. 42 young people from Hartlepool who consider themselves to have a learning difficulty and/or disability are currently on entry to employment programmes and are improving their skills and employment opportunities leading to level 2 qualifications.

Hartlepool College of Further Education is working with Catcote Special School in Hartlepool to increase provision for learners aged 19+ with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This project is increasing personal, social and skills for working life for 14 adults.

Hartlepool Sixth Form College is running a Pathways project1 which supports 26 learners with multiple learning difficulties aged 26 to 63. Learners follow the Certificate in Personal, Social and Health Education.

We have recently approved funding for the Shaw Trust to deliver support to unemployed 19–24 year olds with learning difficulties and/or disabilities that I have previously had specialist support in a local provider, or have returned from a residential college. The project will support them in community and work based settings. Participants will benefit from improved social skills to encourage independent living and progression, making aspirations and employment goals attainable. 50 learners will be supported across the Tees Valley.

In addition to the examples given above, people with disabilities have full access to the extensive range of skills training available in the colleges and learning organisations within Hartlepool.

Budgets for investment in services for learners with learning needs and disabilities for 2006–07 will shortly be allocated to regions and local LSC's enabling them to plan support for next year. This will be in the context of our plans for significant budget increases for these learners over the next few years. We have increased the overall budget for learners with learning needs and disabilities from £138 million to £157 million for 2006–2007 and this will increase again to £181 million in 2007–2008, rises of 14% and 15% year on year from 2005. These rises are significantly greater than the overall increase in our budget over the same period, which increases by 3% and 5%.

We are making this additional investment in response to the national review of support for learners with disabilities carried out for us by Peter Little. While the review is still out for consultation and we will need to agree nationally how the LSC's expenditure on learning is matched by what other agencies pay for by way of social and domestic support, we acknowledge that our own contribution must rise. This is because the overall number of learners with disabilities is rising as the effect of medical advances continues.

At a time when numbers of young people are falling and 80% of the workforce of 2010 is already in the labour market we regard it as essential that the aspirations and abilities of all learners are supported and developed.

I hope this information helps to support the answer to your parliamentary question.

Extended Schools

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the requirement for extended schools referred to on page 10 of the White Paper, "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All". [46446]

Beverley Hughes: By 2010 we expect all schools to offer access to a core offer of extended services, with half of all primaries and a third of all secondaries doing so by 2008. The core offer includes 8 am-6 pm wraparound child care; a varied menu of study support activities such as sport and arts clubs; swift and easy referral to specialist health and social care services such as speech therapy; parenting support; and wider community use of school facilities. How this develops in each community will vary depending on the needs of that community. Some will have greater need for more child care, others will be able to rely on working with existing providers. A survey of 4,000 schools has shown that many are already delivering parts of this offer, with the vast majority already providing some activities or care before or after school. There has been enthusiasm from local authorities and schools to engage with the extended schools support programme, with over 5,000 schools joining this year.

Foundation Stage Profile

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many statements are included in the Foundation Stage Profile. [46134]

Beverley Hughes: The QCA Foundation Stage Profile scales booklet covers 13 areas of development related to the early learning goals. For each area, the booklet offers a series of statements, numbered 1 to 9, describing aspects of development within that area (117 statements in all). For each individual child, teachers decide which of the nine statements in each area best describe the child's stage of development. Schools report to the local authority, as the child's "score", 13 numbers ranging from 1 to 9.

Literacy and Numeracy (Hampshire)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of how many adults lacked basic *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy skills in (i) 1997 and (ii) 2005 in (A) Hampshire, (B) Portsmouth, (C) Southampton, (D) the Isle of Wight and (E) each (1) borough and (2) district council in Hampshire. [47482]

Phil Hope *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* The Department does not collect annual data on adult literacy and numeracy skills and it is therefore not possible to provide estimates for 1997 and 2005. However, in 2002/03, the Department for Education and Skills conducted the 'Skills for Life Survey'. This is a national needs and impact survey of literacy and numeracy, which provides estimates of the level of basic skills within England among adults aged 16–65 years old.

The assessment levels correspond to the literacy and numeracy National Standards: these were introduced in 2002 to provide a framework for all adult screening tests, diagnostic tools, programmes of study and qualifications. Learners are assessed for levels of literacy and numeracy from Entry Level 1 to Level 2. Level 2 is broadly equivalent to a higher grade GCSE (A*-C).

The survey provides estimates for Learning and Skills Council areas and districts. Within the Learning and Skills Council area of Hampshire and The Isle of Wight, the Skills for Life Survey estimates that around 7 per cent. of adults had literacy levels below Level 1 (equivalent to a GCSE D-G) and around 43 per cent. had numeracy levels below Level 1 (Table 1 and 2).

Table 1: Estimates, based on the Skills for Life Survey, of Adult Literacy Levels for Learning and Skills Council: Hampshire and Isle of Wight

Literacy	*Number*	*Percentage*
Entry Level 1 Skills and below	6,025	1
Entry Level 2 Skills	5,430	0
Entry Level 3 Skills	61,295	6
Total Entry Level Skills	72,750	7
Level 1 Skills	464,400	42
Level 2 Skills and above	572,100	52

Table 2: Estimates, based on the Skills for Life Survey, of Adult Numeracy Levels for Learning and Skills Council: Hampshire and Isle of Wight

Numeracy	*Number*	*Percentage*
Entry Level 1 Skills and below	23,400	2
Entry Level 2 Skills	116,730	11
Entry Level 3 Skills	335,470	30
Total Entry Level Skills	475,600	43
Level 1 Skills	339,000	31
Level 2 Skills and above	294,900	27

At a district level, the Skills for Life Survey estimates around 10 per cent. of adults have literacy levels below Level 1 (equivalent to a GCSE D-G) within Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight and around 50 per cent. have numeracy levels below level 1 (Table 3 and 4).

Table 3: Estimates, based on the Skills for Life Survey, of Adult Literacy Levels for Districts

	Total Entry Level		*Level 1 Skills*		*Level 2 Skills*	
Literacy	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Portsmouth	10,340	9	55,890	47	51,540	44
Southampton	14,140	10	63,140	45	62,850	45
Isle of Wight	7,820	10	35,970	47	32,950	43

Table 4: Estimates, based on the Skills for Life Survey, of Adult Numeracy Levels for Districts

	Total Entry Level		*Level 1 Skills*		*Level 2 Skills*	
Numeracy	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Portsmouth	62,540	53	35,900	30	19,330	16
Southampton	77,700	55	41,340	30	21,080	15
Isle of Wight	39,010	51	23,910	31	13,810	18

A copy of the full report of this survey has been placed in the House of Commons Library and all geographical estimates are on the Skills for Life website [http://www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus_skillsforlifesurvey/].

School Milk (Shropshire)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what subsidies her Department has provided for primary schools in Shrewsbury constituency for daily school milk; and if she will make a statement. [44976]

Jim Knight: I have been asked to reply.

The EU funds a scheme which subsidises the provision of milk to primary and nursery schools. In England the Government supplements the EU subsidy for primary schools by payment of an annual maximum of £1.5 million in national aid. Participation in the subsidy scheme, which is administered by the Rural Payments Agency, is entirely a matter for schools or local education authorities. Shropshire county council is on the Agency's register of subsidy claimants.

Sure Start

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which *(a)* private, *(b)* voluntary and *(c)* public sector organisations delivered services in Sure Start programmes in each year for which figures are available. [43842]

Beverley Hughes: Services in Sure Start programmes have been delivered by organisations from a range of sectors, for example, voluntary and community sector organisations, such as community development trusts, statutory partners, including local authorities and health authorities, and some private companies. Information on the extent to which individual organisations are involved is not collected centrally.

Training Schemes

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she has taken to aid the provision of training schemes for Surrey Heath residents over 50 years old. [39769]

Phil Hope: We are committed to safeguarding a wide range of adult learning opportunities in every area, including provision for learners over 50, and we will ensure that adult learning provision in Surrey Heath is provided through the funding from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to further education colleges, local authorities and other providers. As this is an operational matter, Mark Haysom, the LSC's Chief Executive has written to the hon. Member with further information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 23 January 2006:

I refer to the written reply by Phil Hope to your Parliamentary Question. The Minister has asked that I write to you with further information.

Adult and Community Learning (now called Personal and Community Development Learning) is an important source of provision for older people. We are safeguarding funding for this provision for future years.

For other forms of provision, the LSC has agreed clear funding priorities with the Government as public resources are necessarily finite. Our highest priorities are to support increased participation and achievement of 16–18 year olds and to support adults without skills for life and full level 2 qualifications which are important for basic levels of employability. Many older people come within these latter priority categories and around a quarter of enrolments in LSC funded provision in Surrey are by people over the age of 50.

Surrey County Council, our Adult and Community Learning provider in the county, has developed provision for older people in two communities with high levels of multiple deprivation, one of which is in Surrey Heath. Building on earlier work by the Pre-Retirement Association, the purpose of these was to develop a transferable and innovative curriculum of recreational learning to encourage older people to regard learning and skills acquisition as a positive and natural accompaniment to growing older. Amongst other things, this led to the formation of an 'older and bolder club' for health activities and recreation. The University of the Third Age has a presence in Surrey Heath to encourage lifelong learning for older people not in employment and relevant courses are also delivered by the WEA (with funding from the LSC.)

To help shape future provision, the Surrey Lifelong Learning Partnership has run focus groups on our behalf, involving older learners, to identify provision of particular interest. Analysis of needs against provision on a geographic basis means that we can now identify where there is relatively high and low participation in learning for over 50s to provide a basis for review of future provision.

Our future provision in Surrey will also be influenced by our South East Region's annual statement of planning priorities in which we have a commitment to "pilot curriculum opportunities for older workers to change their occupations or extend their careers". To this end, we are developing a project, with European funding support, to identify different ways of delivering learning to older people. This will include targeted information, advice and guidance and the development of courses specifically to meet the needs of older people seeking to extend their careers.

Looking further forward, demographic changes—with fewer young people entering the labour market and an expectation of longer working life—mean that, nationally, we will need to provide a broader programme of support for older people to keep their skills up to date. We will be working with the Department for Education and Skills to define and plan the nature of this broader support.

I hope this further information is helpful.

Work Experience

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Key Stage 3 pupils undertook work experience in each year between 1995 and 2005, broken down by year group; and in which sectors. [25127]

Jacqui Smith: We have no figures for the period 1995 to April 2001. From April 2001, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) took on the delivery responsibility for links between schools and businesses. Mark Haysom, the LSC's chief executive has written to my hon. Friend and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 22 December 2005:

Further to your question to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills requesting the number of Key Stage 3 pupils who undertook work-experience placements between 1995 and 2005.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) collects data for work-experience placements for Key Stage pupils in Years 10 and 11. It does not collect information on Key Stage 3 students as part of the LSC Education Business Link funded activity.

Yours sincerely

Work-based Learning

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding has been allocated to work-based learning in *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2006–07 and *(c)* 2007–08 for (i) 16 to 19-year-olds and (ii) 19 years plus at (A) Level 1, (B) Level 2 and (C) Level 3. [33349]

Bill Rammell: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) through an annual Grant Letter that sets out the LSC's key priorities. The operational delivery of individual programmes, taking account of these priorities and the funding made available by the Department, is a matter for the LSC. The following table details the allocations for work based learning programmes for the relevant financial years. In addition funding allocations are given for the adult skills programme Train to Gain.

£000

	2005–06	*2006–07*	*2007–08*
Work Based Learning (16–18)	606,357	669,189	675,181
Entry to Employment (16–18)	220,208	208,369	204,044
Work Based Learning (19+)	268,973	202,767	229,000

£000

	2005–06	2006–07	2007–08
WBL total	1,095,538	1,080,325	1,108,225
Train to Gain programme	161,027	230,000	399,000
Overall total	1,256,565	1,310,325	1,507,225

Data for allocations to programmes by qualification level are the responsibility of the LSC and the council's Chief Executive Mark Haysom has written to the hon. Member with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 21 December 2005:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills regarding funds allocated to Work-based Learning (WBL) in the three years from 2005–06 to 2007–08, for qualification levels 1, 2 and 3.

I need to begin by pointing out that the Learning and Skills Council does not allocate funding on the basis of qualification levels. We allocate funds to providers based on locally agreed provider development plans. These reflect a sound assessment of local employer, sector and individual needs, as well as Government policy, priorities and targets.

We afford our local teams considerable flexibility to move funds around to meet specific needs, hence we cannot say with certainty at this time, how much will be spent at each learning 'Level' for the years in question.

We do however gather information that enables us to see how much has been spent on the various elements of the WBL programme. For the most recently completed academic year, 2004/05, we know that the amounts were:

£344 million for Advanced Apprenticeships, which are geared towards the achievement of a Level 3 qualification;

£443 million for Apprenticeships, geared towards Level 2;

£228 million for Entry to Employment, Level 1; and

in addition, some £45 million of our WBL programme budget was spent on training towards NVQs only (Levels 1–4)

DEFENCE

Ascension Island

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* names and *(b)* grades were of his Department's officials who visited Ascension Island and participated in the preliminary summit of 30 November 2005. [47308]

Mr. Ingram: Two officials from the Ministry of Defence visited and participated in a preliminary summit in Ascension Island on 30 November 2005, one from our policy and defence relations (South) organisation and another from our permanent joint headquarters. Under the Data Protection Act, their names are withheld.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the conditions governing the use of Ascension Island by the United States air force. [47330]

Mr. Ingram: The use by the United States air force of Ascension Island is based on the 1956 Bahamas Agreement between the United Kingdom and the United States, and has been developed further through a number of local agreements covering the operational activities undertaken there.

Boards of Inquiry

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what restrictions are in place on legal personnel supporting families at board of inquiry meetings; and for what reasons such restrictions are in place. [47325]

Mr. Touhig: A board of inquiry is an internal review conducted to investigate a matter and to report. It is not a court and it does not meet in public. The presence of families may inhibit the openness of witnesses, in addition to being impractical as boards of inquiry can last for months and necessitate travel both inside and outside the United Kingdom. In the case of an inquiry into a fatality or serious accident, we seek to ensure that the next of kin are fully briefed on the inquiry's progress and outcome.

Casualties (Iraq/Afghanistan)

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department is considering making available a breakdown of casualty figures for the deployments in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan. [45218]

John Reid: Yes. The MOD intends to publish casualty figures for Iraq on the MOD website in the next few weeks, identifying the number of personnel categorised as "Seriously Injured" and "Very Seriously Injured". The figures will be updated regularly. I will write to inform the right hon. Member prior to the first publication.

The MOD will also release in the same way these categories of information for any UK casualties that occur from 1 January 2006 onwards as a result of operations in Afghanistan. Information for previous years is not held centrally and will take some time to collate. I will write to the right hon. Member when the figures are available and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Defence Staff (Deployment)

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the distribution in each region and country of *(a)* regular service personnel, *(b)* direct civilian employees of the Department, *(c)* civilian personnel in the UK defence agencies and trading funds as at 1 October 2005. [45547]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 25 January 2006]:* Information on the posted location of Service personnel is published in TSP 10 (UK regular forces distribution across UK), which shows the number of Service personnel by Government office region and local authority. A copy of this publication is available in the Library of the House, showing data as at 1 October 2005.

The following table shows the number of civilian personnel in the UK, Defence agencies and trading funds as at 1 October 2005 by Government office region.

Civilian personnel[1] in UK Defence agencies and MOD—owned trading funds by Government office region and country at 1 October 2005

Number: FTE

	North-east	North-west	Yorkshire and Humber	East Midlands	West Midlands
MOD total excluding Agencies and Trading Funds	430	580	1,520	1,770	1,710
Total Agencies and Trading Funds Agencies	90	2,240	2,350	760	4,440
Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency	—	—	—	—	—
Army Training and Recruitment Agency	[2]—	20	930	20	210
British Forces Post Office	—	—	[2]—	—	10
Defence Analytical Services Agency	—	—	—	—	—
Defence Bills Agency	—	560	—	—	—
Defence Communications Service Agency	[2]—	20	50	[2]—	60
Defence Estates	10	50	130	50	510
Defence Medical and Education Training Agency	—	—	10	—	40
Defence Procurement Agency	20	160	10	10	50
Defence Storage and Distribution Agency	[2]—	240	40	10	1,510
Defence Transport and Movements Agency	—	10	—	—	100
Defence Vetting Agency	—	—	310	—	—
Disposal Services Agency	—	—	—	—	—
Duke of York's Royal Military School	—	—	—	—	—
Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency	40	130	540	100	300
Naval Recruiting and Training Agency	10	10	[2]—	10	10
Pay and Personnel Agency	—	350	[2]—	—	—
RAF Training Group Defence Agency	10	30	190	460	620
Service Children's Education	—	—	—	—	[2]—
Veterans' Agency	[2]—	620	10	10	10
Trading Funds					
Army Base Repair Organisation[3]	—	—	90	—	770
Defence Aviation Repair Agency	—	—	—	—	—
Defence Science and Technology Laboratories	—	—	—	10	230
Meteorological Office	—	30	30	60	30
UK Hydrographic Office	—	—	—	—	—
Locally engaged civilian staff	•	•	•	•	•
Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) staff	•	•	•	•	•
Civilian level 0 total	•	•	•	•	•

	Eastern	London	South-east	South-west	Wales
MOD total excluding Agencies and Trading Funds	5,370	4,610	7,320	10,940	770
Total Agencies and Trading Funds Agencies	1,960	2,510	9,580	13,000	2,560
Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency	—	—	50	120	—
Army Training and Recruitment Agency	110	40	1,390	990	140
British Forces Post Office	10	220	30	20	—
Defence Analytical Services Agency	—	70	10	120	—
Defence Bills Agency	—	—	—	[2]—	—
Defence Communications Service Agency	520	320	500	1,840	20
Defence Estates	350	190	460	390	40
Defence Medical and Education Training Agency	10	90	440	10	—
Defence Procurement Agency	70	90	100	3,180	10
Defence Storage and Distribution Agency	40	1	130	400	210
Defence Transport and Movements Agency	—	60	140	[2]—	—
Defence Vetting Agency	—	[2]—	—	[2]—	—
Disposal Services Agency	20	60	[2]—	10	—
Duke of York's Royal Military School	—	—	120	—	—
Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency	670	670	2010	1,510	200
Naval Recruiting and Training Agency	[2]—	10	530	80	80
Pay and Personnel Agency	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	440	—
RAF Training Group Defence Agency	30	20	460	150	100
Service Children's Education	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Veterans' Agency	[2]—	10	20	70	10
Trading Funds					
Army Base Repair Organisation[3]	90	—	[2]—	540	10
Defence Aviation Repair Agency	—		830	—	1,710
Defence Science and Technology Laboratories	—	640	1,150	1,030	—
Meteorological Office	40	10	200	1,140	30
UK Hydrographic Office	—	—	10	930	—
Locally engaged civilian staff	•	•	•	•	•
Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) staff	•	•	•	•	•
Civilian level 0 total	•	•	•	•	•

	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Unknown	Overseas	Total
MOD total excluding Agencies and Trading Funds	3,860	3,020	860	1,040	43,800
Total Agencies and Trading Funds Agencies	3,120	360	280	1,440	44,700
Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency	30	—	—	[2]—	210
Army Training and Recruitment Agency	60	10	[2]—	[2]—	3,940
British Forces Post Office	10	—	[2]—	[2]—	300
Defence Analytical Services Agency	—	—	—	—	200

	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Unknown	Overseas	Total
Defence Bills Agency			10	—	570
Defence Communications Service Agency	110	[2]—	20	130	3,590
Defence Estates	210	280	10	130	2,830
Defence Medical and Education Training Agency	—	—	[2]—	—	600
Defence Procurement Agency	110	10	20	120	3,960
Defence Storage and Distribution Agency	660	—	10	10	4,270
Defence Transport and Movements Agency	20	—	[2]—	[2]—	340
Defence Vetting Agency	—	—	—	—	320
Disposal Services Agency	[2]—	—	—	—	100
Duke of York's Royal Military School	—	—	—	—	120
Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency	1,330	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	7,510
Naval Recruiting and Training Agency	10	20	[2]—	[2]—	770
Pay and Personnel Agency	—	—	[2]—	[2]—	800
RAF Training Group Defence Agency	50	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	2,130
Service Children's Education	—	—	[2]—	990	1,000
Veterans' Agency	10	10	—	[2]—	790
Trading Funds					
Army Base Repair Organisation[3]	90	—	—	—	1,600
Defence Aviation Repair Agency	280	—	20	—	2,840
Defence Science and Technology Laboratories	—	—	150	[2]—	3,220
Meteorological Office	120	20	10	30	1,740
UK Hydrographic Office	[2]—	—	—	—	950
Locally engaged civilian staff	•	•	•	•	15,410
Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) staff	•	•	•	•	2,370
Civilian level 0 total	•	•	•	•	106,260

[1] This table uses the revised definition of civilian personnel (see www.dasa.mod.uk).
[2] less than 5.
[3] From the 1 January 2006 reporting, DASA has been able to identify a methodology to correctly identify all of the ABRO staff. Estimated October 2005 figures based on the new methodology are broken down as follows: ABRO Estimate October 2005 total 2390 FTE, broken down by Government Office Region: Yorks and Humber 130, West Midlands 1010, South West 810, Eastern 140, South East 100, Scotland 90, Wales 20. The differences between ABRO published and estimated figures are included within the MoD Total Excluding Agencies and Trading Funds figures above Overall figures by Government Office Region would be unaffected by any impact of ABRO staff estimates.

Notes:
1. All figures are rounded to the nearest 10, as a result totals may not always equal the sum of the parts.
2. Figures include values for part time staff proportionate to those of full time staff.

Source:
DASA (Civilian)

Iraq

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many 30mg pyridostigmine bromide tablets *(a)* personnel from (i) the 7th Armoured Brigade, (ii) 3 Commando Brigade, (iii) 16 Air Assault Brigade, (iv) 102 Logistics Brigade and (v) HQ Armoured Division, *(b)* Royal Navy personnel in the Gulf and *(c)* Royal Air Force personnel in the Gulf took daily during the 2003 invasion of Iraq on Op Telic; [44221]

(2) what percentage of *(a)* the 7th Armoured Brigade, *(b)* 3 Commando Brigade, *(c)* 16 Air Assault Brigade, *(d)* 102 Logistics Brigade, *(e)* HQ Armoured Division, *(f)* Royal Naval personnel in the Gulf and *(g)* Royal Air Force personnel in the Gulf took nerve agent pre-treatment tablets during the 2003 invasion of Iraq on Op Telic; and for how many days in each case; [44222]

(3) how many nerve agent pre-treatment tablets were re-supplied to *(a)* the 7th Armoured Brigade, *(b)* 3 Commando Brigade, *(c)* 16 Air Assault Brigade, *(d)* 102 Logistics Brigade, *(e)* HQ Armoured Division, *(f)* Royal Naval personnel in the Gulf and *(g)* Royal Air Force personnel in the Gulf during the 2003 invasion of Iraq on Operation Telic. [44223]

Mr. Touhig: Nerve agent pre-treatment sets (NAPS) tablets were issued to armed forces personnel serving with Operation Telic in single strips of 21 tablets. The recommended dosage rate is one Pyridostigmine Bromide (30mg) tablet every eight hours—ie three per day. Thus, a single strip contains a week's supply.

A total of 7,266,504 tablets were supplied to Operation Telic, in the form of 346,024 strips of 21. These were issued to approximately 32,000 personnel, over a three month period as follows:

Month	Strips supplied	Total tablets
January 2003	85,573	1,797,033
February 2003	155,541	3,266,361
March 2003	104,910	2,203,110
Total	346,024	7,266,504

Information is not held centrally on how many of these tablets were then issued locally to individual units in theatre, and could only therefore be provided at disproportionate cost.

Nor is it known how many tablets were actually taken daily by individual personnel. This is because the tablets were self-administered by personnel on command, rather than being administered by medical officers. For this same reason, information is not held as to what percentage of personnel took the tablets.

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46754]

Mr. Touhig: The decision to hold events to mark religious festivals is one for commanding officers and civilian line managers and records of such events are not held centrally.

Religious belief is regarded as a private matter in the Ministry of Defence and armed forces. It is the Department's policy to allow personnel to meet their religious observances provided this does not interfere with operational effectiveness, health and safety requirements or business needs. Armed forces and Ministry of Defence civil service personnel may request leave to celebrate religious festivals where these fall outside national public holidays. Such requests are considered objectively and met wherever practical. Areas for worship or contemplation are made available in Ministry of Defence and armed forces establishments wherever practicable.

A "Guide on Religion and Belief in the Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces" was published last year to raise awareness of faith and cultural issues.

Medical Training to the Midlands

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reasons the use of land owned by his Department reduces the cost to his Department of the Medical Training to the Midlands; whether the use of land owned by *(a)* another Government Department and *(b)* the private sector would alter the cost of the project; and if he will make a statement. [47001]

Mr. Touhig: Acquisition of non-Ministry of Defence (MOD) land always carries additional costs (legal, professional fees etc) as well as requiring an outlay of capital. There might also be disposal costs to be taken into account if the acquisition led to existing MOD land becoming surplus. It is for this reason that before considering such an acquisition to meet a new requirement, we always first look at the suitability of land and property already owned by the Department. This is consistent with the wider Government policy on asset management. We also need to ensure that our estate is no larger than is required for defence purposes and that it is efficiently used. If a privately-owned site were to offer specific advantages (for instance in terms of location, features or potential value for money) then an exception might be made, but this would be considered on a case by case basis.

Parachute Regiment

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the establishment is of each battalion of the Parachute Regiment; and how many vacancies there are in each battalion. [46080]

Mr. Touhig: The following table shows the strength of the individual battalions of The Parachute Regiment compared to the Infantry element of the establishment as at 1 December 2005.

	Strength	*Establishment*	*Difference*
1st Battalion of The Parachute Regiment	490	580	-90
2nd Battalion of The Parachute Regiment	510	580	-70
3rd Battalion Of The Parachute Regiment	510	580	-70
Total	1,510	1,730	-220

Notes:
1. The figures quoted are as at 1 December 2005 and are for UK regular trained Army officers and soldiers only and therefore exclude mobilised reserves, full-time reserve service and other reserves.
2. Strength totals for the 2nd Battalion include 90 soldiers on detachment with The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards.
3. The establishment figures include only the infantry posts and exclude attached personnel of other arms and services such as chefs, clerks etc.
4. The strength figures do not include officers and soldiers in The Parachute Regiment that are serving outside the battalion, or personnel from other capbadges that are attached to the battalion. The officer element excludes personnel with the rank of colonel and above.
5. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

In addition to those Parachute Regiment personnel serving with the battalions there are 480 (excluding colonels and above) members of the regiment posted elsewhere.

Public and Commercial Services Union

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* representations he has received and *(b)* meetings he has had with (i) representatives from the Public and Commercial Services Union and (ii) other interested groups in relation to job cuts and outsourcing of functions in his Department in Northern Ireland. [46795]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* Representations have been made to Defence Ministers in writing and at meetings. In 2002, the trade unions tabled a claim for enhanced redundancy compensation for any MOD civil servants in Northern Ireland made redundant as a result of the peace process. A delegation of TU representatives from TGWU, GMB, AMICUS, TGWC, PCS and Prospect met with me in London in December 2004 and I met other TU representatives (GMB, Prospect, TGWU, PCS, JCC and AMICUS) in Northern Ireland in November 2005.

There has also been correspondence from a number of Members of Parliament on the same issue.

QinetiQ

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what safeguards he has put in place to ensure that intellectual property developed by Qinetiq remains in the UK following that company's flotation. [44157]

John Reid: In common with other companies which carry out MOD-funded research, ownership of intellectual property generated as a result of MOD contracts remains with QinetiQ, although MOD has free rights to such information for its own use, or for use by its contractors for defence and security purposes. The MOD also has rights to disclose such information to other governments for international co-operation purposes.

Should QinetiQ wish to use UK government-funded intellectual property in programmes with overseas governments or contractors, arrangements exist, established in July 2001, which allow MOD to prevent transactions that it judges would cause an unmanageable conflict of interest or

otherwise be contrary to the defence or security interests of the UK. These arrangements will remain in place after the initial public offering in QinetiQ. QinetiQ is also subject to the same security and export controls as any other UK company.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he plans to ease the restrictions on QinetiQ's involvement in defence manufacturing. [44158]

John Reid: When QinetiQ became a company in July 2001, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) put in place a range of measures to ensure that the company did not undertake activities that could cause an unmanageable conflict of interest affecting its ability to carry out work for MOD customers.

In addition, the MOD had a separate right to require QinetiQ to seek our specific approval if it wished to carry out certain defence manufacturing activities which might also cause a conflict of interest. In reviewing the operation of the compliance regime, the Department has concluded that the existence of this additional approvals process on top of the wider conflict of interest protections has caused some confusion, and that there is scope for simplifying the regime. Consequently, the MOD has agreed with the company that the separate defence manufacturing approvals process will be removed from 1 April 2008, by which date the MOD will be in a position to open its research programme to full competition, potentially providing greater opportunities for the rest of industry to bid for work and increasing the options available to MOD customers. This change will not affect the level of protection available to customers who will exercise their rights through the wider provisions contained elsewhere in the compliance regime.

SevenCs

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the effect of the acquisition of SevenCs by the UK Hydrographic Office on other commercial enterprises in the hydrographic industry. [47220]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* Prior to the acquisition the UK Hydrographic Office concluded that a change of ownership of SevenCs would, of itself, have little or no effect on other commercial enterprises in the hydrographic industry. The acquisition should, however, work to the benefit of the industry as a whole by invigorating the development of digital navigation products, which will in turn enhance safety of life at sea.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the acquisition of SevenCs by the UK Hydrographic Office. [47222]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* On 30 November 2005 the UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) acquired SevenCs, a leading navigational software development company, based in Hamburg. This acquisition was in line with the UKHO's strategic direction and within its remit as a Ministry of Defence Trading Fund.

The purpose of the acquisition was to ensure an open route to market for all digital navigational data, including the UKHO's. It was strategically important for the UKHO, and in order to discharge the UK's responsibilities under the International Convention on Safety of Life at Sea, that the UKHO safeguard an open system, which does not tie the end-user to a particular brand of data.

Sudan

Mr. Ellwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many UK military personnel are working *(a)* under the NATO flag and *(b)* under the EU in relief efforts in Sudan. [46861]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom currently has one officer based in Ethiopia as NATO's senior military liaison officer to the African Union (AU), whose work includes supporting the AU mission in Darfur. A second officer will be deployed shortly and will be based in Sudan. The UK also has one officer based in Sudan as part of the EU support for the AU mission.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Biodiversity

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how the Government plan to assess whether they have met the target of halting biodiversity loss by 2010. [45688]

Jim Knight: The Standing Committee of the UK Biodiversity Partnership has agreed to use a set of 18 headline indicators to assess whether the target of halting biodiversity loss by 2010 has been met. These are based on the framework being used within the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. Some of the indicators are already published; others require further development. The full set of indicators is as follows:

Focal areas	*Indicators*
Status and trends of the components of biological diversity	1. Trends in populations of wild birds: *(a)* farmland birds; *(b)* woodland birds; *(c)* coastal and sea birds 2. Plant diversity in the wider countryside 3. Status of BAP Priority Species 4. Status of BAP Priority Habitats 5. "Trends in genetic diversity of cultivated plants" 6 *(a)* Extent of SACs, SPAs and SSSI/ASSIs; *(b)* Proportion of features of SACs and SPAs in favourable condition
Sustainable use	7. Proportion of woodland area under certified management 8. Area of land under agri-environment scheme agreement 9. Proportion of commercially exploited fish stocks around the UK harvested sustainably

Focal areas	Indicators
Threats to biodiversity	10. Nitrogen deposition 11. Number and costs of invasive alien species 12. Impact of climate change on biodiversity
Ecosystem integrity and ecosystem goods and services	13. Marine trophic index 14. Connectivity/fragmentation of ecosystems 15. Water quality in aquatic ecosystems
Status of access and benefits sharing	16. Percentage of European patent applications for inventions based on genetic resources and/or traditional knowledge that disclose the source of these resources and knowledge
Status of resource transfers and use	17. Funding to biodiversity: in economic and development cooperation (response) in EU research, monitoring and management
Public opinion	18. Public awareness and participation

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the results of the 2005 reporting round for the UK Biodiversity Action Plan will be published; and how this information will be used to improve the delivery of biodiversity conservation up to 2010. [45689]

Jim Knight: The results will be published in a new report later this year. This will provide UK and county level information on how individual species and habitats are faring, emerging influences by sector, and constraints to delivery. We are committed to making full use of these results. And we will look to make them relevant to a range of different audiences and stakeholders.

The responsibility for implementing measures to conserve biodiversity is a devolved matter. And the results of the 2005 reporting round will feed into the individual strategies for biodiversity and the environment in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures the Government *(a)* have introduced and *(b)* are planning to introduce to halt biodiversity loss by 2010. [45690]

Jim Knight: Under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) there are costed and targeted national action plans for 436 of our most threatened habitats and species in the UK. These are supported by approximately 150 local biodiversity action plans, often at county level. The most recently completed review of progress was conducted in 2002 and the latest published information on progress was issued in 2003: "UK Biodiversity Action Plan—tracking progress". A further report on progress to 2005 will be published this year.

The England Biodiversity Strategy, "Working with the grain of nature" was published in 2002. This brings together England's key contributions towards halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010. The strategy sets out a programme of activity to integrate biodiversity into policy making and practice. The third annual stock-take of progress under the strategy was published on 29 December 2005. This highlights coverage of more than 1 million hectares of land by Environmental Stewardship agreements, a new Planning Policy Statement on Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, a new policy on ancient and native woodland, and a substantial increase in investment in water and wetland management for wildlife.

Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill, we propose to extend a duty to all public authorities in England and Wales to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. And we are also committed to publishing a Marine Bill to provide a new framework for marine conservation.

We will publish new priorities, targets and plans for meeting our target of halting biodiversity loss by 2010, following reviews being undertaken under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

The UK commitment towards international efforts to reduce the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010 is contained in the World Summit on Sustainable Development Delivery Plan for international biodiversity (http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/delivery/global-local/international/wssd/delivery-plans.htm). The plans set out the intermediate steps needed to meet the UK's long term aims, and reports on progress to date.

The UK also continues to fund and administer the Darwin Initiative. This has played a major role in conserving endangered species and habitats throughout the world. Since its launch in 1992, we have committed more than £45 million to more than 400 projects in more than 100 countries.

Border-straddling Farms

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms straddle the border between *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* England and Scotland. [43333]

Jim Knight: The following figures relate to single payment scheme applications made in 2005:

(a) There are 463 applicants who have land both in England and Wales. 176 have applied to RPA and 287 to NAWAD.

(b) There are 128 applicants who have land both in England and Scotland. 64 have applied to RPA and 64 to SEERAD.

Bovine TB

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the annual Government expenditure on the development of a vaccine against bovine tuberculosis in *(a)* cattle and *(b)* badgers has been since 1998. [46730]

Mr. Bradshaw: From 1998–99 to 2004–05, and including the forecast for the year 2005–06, Defra has spent £3.5 million on research into a vaccine against bovine tuberculosis for badgers, and £3.8 million on research into finding a vaccine for cattle.

In parallel with this, Defra has been researching diagnostic tests for badgers and cattle. From 1998–99 to 2004–05, and including the forecast for the year 2005–06, Defra has spent £1.1 million on badger test development, and £2.3 million on cattle test development.

The Government continues to pursue the development of vaccines for cattle and badgers. On 9 June 2005, we announced details of work on natural transmission studies in cattle and a field study to obtain licensing data for injectable BCG in badgers, to start in 2006.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of parishes where badgers removed during the Krebs trial were found to be free of bovine tuberculosis. [45840]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 26 January 2006]:* The results of the randomised badger culling trials are still being collected and analysed by the Independent Scientific Group, which is responsible for them. The information requested has not yet been made available by the ISG.

Climate Change

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department plans to take to ensure the travel undertaken by the Young Climate Change Champions is carbon-neutral. [47580]

Mr. Morley: Under the Climate Change Champions youth competition we are looking to avoid and minimise carbon-intensive travel for all Defra facilitated journey's as far as possible. As part of this we will, for example, ensure that the nine chosen Champions, guardians and Government officials travel by surface transport, predominantly by train, on the fact finding tour to Switzerland. We will also be looking to offset any unavoidable emissions incurred as a result of the competition.

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department has allocated to the 'Tomorrow's Climate, Today's Challenge' programme. [47581]

Mr. Morley: Defra has committed £12 million to the 'Tomorrow's Climate, Today's Challenge' climate change communications initiative to March 2008.

Coastal and Marine Resources Atlas

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost was of maintaining the online Coastal and Marine Resources Atlas in each of the last three years. [46856]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* Prior to its launch this week, the Coastal and Marine Resource Atlas was a research project. The Coastal and Marine Resource Atlas was produced collaboratively by the following organisations:

Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)
Scottish Executive (SE)
Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)
Energy Institute (EI)
Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)
Environment Agency (EA)
English Nature (EN)
Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)
Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)
Hampshire County Council (HCC)
Essex County Council (ECC)
Kent County Council (KCC)

The direct cost of development since September 2003 was £211,000. Defra contributed £71,000 towards these cost. The breakdown by year are:

£

	Overall costs	*Defra contribution*
2003–04	12,600	10,000
2004–05	135,600	35,000
2005–06	62,800	26,000

The costs of maintaining the system will be significantly less.

Countryside and Rights of Way Act

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will consider extending the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 legislation to riverside areas. [45666]

Jim Knight: The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 already includes rights of access on foot for open-air recreation for some riverside areas, which have been mapped as open country and registered common land. We have no plans to extend this at present.

Countryside Stewardship Scheme

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many live agreements there were under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme within two miles of *(a)* an urban area and *(b)* the coast (i) in the agreement year 2004 and (ii) from the scheme's inception to November 2005; [46970]

(2) how many hectares were in live agreements under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme within two miles of *(a)* an urban area and *(b)* the coast (i) in the agreement year 2004 and (ii) from the scheme's inception to November 2005; [46971]

(3) how much funding was provided under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme for *(a)* live agreements and *(b)* live agreements providing public access (i) within two miles of an urban area and (ii) within two miles of the coast (A) in the agreement year 2004 and (B) from the scheme's inception to November 2005. [46973]

Jim Knight: This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from buildings occupied by her Department in the past 12 months. [43433]

Jim Knight: I following table shows thefts of items valued at over £100 from core DEFRA buildings from 1 January to 31 December 2005.

Description	*Value (£)*
Fujitsu Laptop computer	600
Kodak digital camera	200
Fuji digital camera	400
Nokia mobile phone	300
2 x Dell laptops and accessories	2,000
Dell PDA; Nokia mobile phone	305
Sony Discman	100
Toshiba laptop computer	650
Dell flat screen monitor	100
Dell flat screen monitor	100
Dell laptop and docking station	1,050

Departmental Energy Use

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much energy was consumed by her Department in each of the last five years; and how much was spent on energy in each year. [45507]

Jim Knight: Defra was created in June 2001. The following information relates to the four years since then.

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Energy consumed KWh (Thousand)	155,195	143,957	141,421	134,585
Energy consumed (weather corrected) KWh (Thousand)	164,586	150,381	148,169	142,671
Cost of energy (£000)	3,952	4,155	3,984	4,407

Departmental Equipment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* laptops and *(b)* mobile phones her Department bought in each year since 1997; and what the cost of each category of equipment was in each year. [41268]

Jim Knight: DEFRA came into being in June 2001. From information held centrally the cost of each category of equipment in core-DEFRA since 2001 is:

£

	Mobile phones	*Laptops*
2001–02	93,272	1,083,488
2002–03	25,721	817,008
2003–04	28,761	897,982
2004–05	70,685	165,111

As at 12 January 2006, core-DEFRA had 2,030 mobile phones. Information for the previous financial years is not held centrally and mobile phone numbers for those years could only be provided at disproportionate cost. For the financial years 2001–02, 2002–03, 2003–04, 2004–05 (end April 04-end September 04) the numbers of laptops were 789, 966, 880 and 163 respectively. On 1 October 2004, DEFRA owned 1,575 laptops which were transferred to IBM's ownership under the e-D contract between IBM and the Department. Since this date, and to 12 January 2006, DEFRA has requested a further 926 laptops from IBM. Under the e-D contract DEFRA does not purchase laptops but pays a service charge for each item.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39969]

Jim Knight: The cost of pension contributions incurred by the core Department, the Pesticides Safety Directorate and the Veterinary Medicines Directorate are shown in the following table:

£

	2003–04	*2004–05*	*2005–06*[1]
Defra	25,453,000	27,164,000	39,464,000
PSD	654,000	718,000	1,041,000
VMD	542,000	575,000	798,000

[1] *Estimate*

Figures for 2002–03 are not available.

Figures for the non-departmental public bodies and remainder of the Executive Agencies are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The breakdown of costs by country and English region cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost.

For 2005–06, employers' contributions are payable to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) at one of four rates in the ranges 16.2 to 24.6 per cent. of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The Scheme Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation; last carried out as at 31 March 2003. The contribution rates reflect the cost of benefits as they accrue (net of employee contributions), not the costs as they are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

Mr. Francois: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much has been spent in each year since 1997 by her Department on salaries paid to civil servants. [41583]

Jim Knight: Departmental expenditure on salaries and wages paid to permanent staff is shown in note 2.A of the departmental annual resource accounts. Figures for the Department since 2001–02 are shown in the following table.

There are no figures provided for DEFRA's predecessor Departments as this information could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

	Expenditure on salaries (£000)	Expenditure on salaries as percentage of total spend[1]
2001–02	261,694	4.8
2002–03	305,285	6.7
2003–04	325,206	6.5
2004–05	333,874	5.9

[1] Total spend is defined as total public spending as shown in Table 1 of the DEFRA departmental report 2005 (Cm 6537).

Departmental IT Systems

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department has spent on IT systems in each year since 1997; what the purpose of each system is; what the outturn against planned expenditure of each system was; and what the *(a)* planned and *(b)* actual date of completion of each system was. [41317]

Jim Knight: Since the creation of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs during the financial year 2001–02, the Department has spent the following amounts on IT systems:

	£
2001–02	53,746,277.74
2002–03	52,328,672.88
2003–04	57,143,428.57
2004–05	62,460,067.88

The figures quoted above include the cost of maintaining an in-house IT service, including centralised applications development, prior to the outsourcing of this function on 1 October 2004 to International Business Machines (UK) Ltd, and from that date any payments made under the new arrangements.

I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by the then right hon. Minister of State for Rural Affairs to the hon. Member for St. Ives (Andrew George) on 21 October 2004, *Official Report*, column 832W, that provided that the final contract to IBM has a potential cost of £509 million over 10 years.

Specific information as requested for each system is not held centrally and to gather this detail would incur a disproportionate cost to the Department.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many staff employed by her Department live in Castle Point. [42815]

Jim Knight: The home addresses of staff are not held in a form that would enable the number living within a parliamentary constituency to be determined without incurring disproportionate cost.

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by her Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41352]

Jim Knight: The car fleet of DEFRA and associated Executive Agencies comprises of:

(a) 333 owned cars, and

(b) 86 lease cars.

This excludes HGV's, vans, 4x4's, and people carriers in the fleet.

Of these 372 are diesel, 21 are petrol, 18 dual fuel petrol/LPG and eight petrol/electric hybrids.

A spreadsheet made available in the Library of the House provides owned and leased vehicles detailing make, model and fuel type.

We are unable to provide information on fuel efficiency of each car, as this would be at disproportionate cost.

Eggs (Sensitive Product Status)

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to seek sensitive product status for eggs in shells in the forthcoming World Trade Organisation talks. [37673]

Jim Knight: In October, in the run-up to the 6th Ministerial meeting in Hong Kong, the EU made an offer on improved market access for agricultural products. Others, such as the US, did so too. An agreed feature of the market access negotiations is that all countries will be permitted to protect sensitive products, by applying less than the agreed reduction rates to the tariffs on these products. The EU suggested that up to 8 per cent. of a country's tariff lines on agricultural products should be deemed sensitive products. The US suggested 1 per cent., so there is a considerable divide here that, because the matter was not discussed or decided at Hong Kong, still needs bridging.

The Commission has not made any list of sensitive products available as yet; nor is it likely to do so before the figure for sensitive products is agreed. The EU may yet have to offer a lower figure than 8 per cent. in order to secure a Doha deal. In addition, agreeing the treatment of sensitive products is, of course, as important as agreeing the number.

The UK Government are not endorsing any product as sensitive until the number and treatment of sensitive products is agreed. In general, you will be aware that the UK Government wishes to see only a minimal number of sensitive products as we believe a large number would undermine the potential benefits of the Doha Round.

The representatives for the Egg Industry can lobby the Commission direct. The UK Government will review its own position when we know the parameters we have to work to.

Fallen Goats

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she *(a)* takes and *(b)* plans to take to monitor the extent to which her Department's approved agents collecting fallen goats under the compulsory Scrapie Monitoring Scheme operate in accordance with biosecurity regulations. [45701]

Mr. Bradshaw: A key objective of the Government's Animal Health and Welfare Strategy is to raise biosecurity standards on farms and hauliers involved in the collection of fallen goats from farms should adhere

to biosecurity protocols issued by DEFRA. This includes making sure that vehicles and equipment are maintained in good working order at all times, and, in particular, that surfaces liable to contamination are thoroughly cleansed and disinfected.

Action will be taken against any haulier involved in the collection of fallen goats from farms who fails to adhere to these biosecurity protocols.

Farming

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* dairy, *(b)* arable and *(c)* mixed farms there were in West Lancashire in (i) 1976, (ii) 1980, (iii) 1990 and (iv) 2000. [45037]

Jim Knight: The number of holdings by farm type in West Lancashire are as follows:

	(a) Dairy	*(b) Cereals*	*General cropping*	*(c) Mixed*
(i) 1990	16	43	349	28
(ii) 2000	13	59	218	23

Notes:
Figures prior to 2000 cover main holdings only. Figures from 2000 onwards include main and minor holdings. A holding is defined as minor if it meets all the following conditions:
(a) The total area is less than six hectares.
(b) The labour requirement is estimated to be less than 100 standard person days.
(c) There is no regular full-time farmer or worker.
(d) The glasshouse area is less than 100 square metres.
(e) The occupier does not farm another holding.
Source:
June Agricultural Survey

Comparable data for earlier years are not available.

Green Ministers Group

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many times the Green Ministers' Group has met in the past 12 months. [47582]

Mr. Morley: Following the general election in May 2005, the Cabinet Sub-Committee of Green Ministers (ENV(G)) was replaced by the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development in Government (EE(SD)) whose members are departmental Sustainable Development Ministers It is established practice under exemption two of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees.

Grey Squirrels

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she plans to have with landowners to persuade them to allow the culling of grey squirrels on their land. [46433]

Jim Knight: The decision to control grey squirrel lies with individual landowners and we have no plans to carry out culling of grey squirrel on private land. However, we will be encouraging landowners to cull grey squirrels in priority areas where there is a critical threat to woodland and priority species such as the dormouse, red squirrels and woodland birds.

The recently published Grey Squirrels and England's Woodlands: Policy and Action Statement set out specific areas for action by the Forestry Commission over the next three years. These are:

Research into new methods of controlling grey squirrel;

Advice on best practice;

Grants to woodland owners;

Supporting partnerships and encouraging co-operative action;

Applying best practice on the public forest estate.

The Red Alert North England Partnership which includes DEFRA and the Forestry Commission have agreement with the owners of the 16 designated red squirrel reserves that grey squirrel will be culled. They are still working with landowners in the buffer zones to ensure grey squirrels are also controlled in these areas. The Forestry Commission's English Woodland Grant scheme will enable incentives to be offered towards the cost of grey squirrel control.

Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings of the EU *(a)* Committee for the implementation of the Directive concerning integrated pollution prevention and control, *(b)* Committee for the adaption to technical progress and application of the Community award scheme for an eco-label and *(c)* Committee on the monitoring mechanism of emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the Community have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provision was made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [39001]

Mr. Morley: In respect of the implementation of the Directive concerning integrated pollution prevention and control, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1463W.

There were no meetings of the Committee for the adaption to technical progress and application of the Community award scheme for an eco-label.

The Committee on the monitoring mechanism of emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, met on 20 July and 16 September during the UK Presidency. The Committee was chaired by the European Commission. The UK was represented by a Defra official.

The devolved Administrations are routinely asked to represent their views.

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46757]

Jim Knight: An article was placed in Defra's Office Notices (29 September 2005 edition), which raised awareness of forthcoming Jewish religious festivals, including Yom Kippur. No specific measures were taken to raise awareness of Hanukkah.

However, Defra's Diversity and Equality unit (DEU) maintains an extensive intranet site, providing help and guidance to all staff, which gives comprehensive information on the world's major religions/faiths, including Judaism. The site also contains an annually updated interfaith calendar, which details the major festivals of all the major religions/faiths throughout the year. Furthermore, the site contains guidance on the regulations implementing the EU Employment Directive 2000, which came into force on 2 December 2003, under which it is unlawful, to discriminate in employment and training on grounds of religion or belief.

In recognition of the diversity of faiths/religions practiced by Defra staff, managers are encouraged, where practical, to allow non-Christian staff to work on privilege days falling on Christian holidays, and take the equivalent time at a later date to allow them to celebrate/observe their own religious festivals. In addition, Defra wherever possible, makes space available for staff who wish to pray.

Live Exports

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's policy is on live *(a)* sheep and *(b)* calf exports to Europe. [46622]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department would prefer a trade in meat to the long distance transport of live animals to slaughter, whether in the UK or across borders. We would also like to see a lower limit for maximum journey times.

There is currently no export of calves and we are pleased that the use of veal crates will be banned throughout the EU from 1 January 2007 (though they have already largely been phased out). This will mean that calves in Europe will enjoy the same minimum levels of welfare as UK calves have done since 1990.

All animals should be transported in good conditions. New welfare in transport rules come into force in January 2007 under EC Regulation 1/2005. The UK supported the new regulation as it does much to help improve animal welfare in transport, such as improved enforcement of the rules, and new training and authorisation procedures but we regret that it did not lower the maximum journey times to slaughter.

Livestock Movements

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will review the need for the current six-day rule as it applies to the movement of sheep. [47036]

Mr. Bradshaw: I do not believe that this is the right time for a review. In 2003, the extensive cost benefit analysis into movement standstills demonstrated the significant benefits of standstill regimes in reducing both the size and cost of a disease outbreak. And these conclusions remain valid.

Standstills confer significant protection when disease is present but undetected. I do not believe that it would be at all desirable to remove this protection from the sheep industry.

Organic Farming

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of farms are managed to Soil Association organic standards in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* the Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency. [43254]

Jim Knight: Soil Association Certification Ltd are one of the 10 private bodies currently approved by DEFRA for the inspection and certification of organic farmers in the UK in accordance with Council Regulation (EEC) 2092/91.

Of the 192,824 agricultural holdings in England, 2,562 currently hold organic certification and of these 1,613 are certified by the Soil Association. The corresponding figures for the Tees Valley are 842, three and zero and for Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland 229, one and zero.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms have converted to Soil Association organic standards since 1997. [43255]

Jim Knight: Soil Association Certification Ltd are one of the ten private bodies currently approved by DEFRA for the inspection and certification of organic farmers in the UK in accordance with Council Regulation (EEC) 2092/91.

In 1997 there were 1,027[1] organic farms in the UK of which 750[2] were certified by the Soil Association. Currently there are 4,016[3] organic farms in the UK, of which 2,237[3] are certified by the Soil Association.

[1] Source—Soil Association Food and Farming Report 1999.

[2] Source—Soil Association.

[3] Source—DEFRA Statistics.

Pheasant Shooting

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department collects information on the number of farms that have started pheasant shoots as part of their business since 2000. [44207]

Jim Knight: The Department does not have any information on the number of farms that have started pheasant shoots as part of their business since 2000.

The most recent information collected on shooting was on the 2003 June agricultural and horticultural census. The results show that an estimated 2,150 farms in England are engaging in shooting as a commercial activity. This figure includes the shooting of all game species and also includes non-game shooting, for example, clay pigeon shooting.

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many grants her Department has made for pheasant rearing as part of farm diversification in each year since 2000. [44214]

Jim Knight: Since 2000, DEFRA has funded the following relevant projects as part of the support available for farm diversification:

one project funded through delegated grants under the objective 1 programme in Cornwall from 2001 to 2003

one project funded through a Countryside Service Sustainable Development Grant in 2004–05 to assist the running of a private shoot; and

a further project involving game processing for retail sale after the birds had been shot. This was funded through the rural enterprise scheme in 2003–04

ERDP (England rural development plan) schemes do not target specific sectors of the food industry, including people involved with pheasant rearing. It is up to individual applicants to come up with projects that meet the criteria of ERDP schemes. ERDP schemes are also competitive, and there is no guarantee that an entirely eligible application will receive funding.

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department collects statistics on the number of pheasants reared for shooting each year. [44216]

Jim Knight: The Department does not collect statistics on the number of pheasants reared for shooting. However, research carried out for the Department in summer 2005 estimates that the number of pheasants reared for shooting in Great Britain each year is in the region of 20 to 30 million birds.

School Milk

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to change the way the school milk subsidy scheme is administered; and if she will make a statement. [43875]

Jim Knight: The Rural Payments Agency must administer the school milk subsidy scheme in accordance with regulatory, accreditation and audit requirements set by the EU. These rules allow little scope for changing current practice.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which local authorities participate in the school milk subsidy scheme. [43876]

Jim Knight: The following local authorities currently participate in the school milk subsidy scheme in England.

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Bath and North East Somerset Council
Birmingham City Council
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Blackpool Borough Council
Bournemouth Borough Council
Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Brighton and Hove City Council
Buckinghamshire County Council
Bury Metropolitan Borough Council
Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Cambridgeshire County Council
Cheshire County Council
Cornwall County Council
Coventry City Council
Cumbria County Council
Darlington Borough Council
Derby City Council
Derbyshire County Council
Devon County Council
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
Dorset County Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Durham County Council
East Riding of Yorkshire Council
East Sussex County Council
Essex County Council
Fordbridge Parish Council
Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council
Gloucestershire County Council
Halton Borough Council
Hampshire County Council
Hartlepool Borough Council
Herefordshire County Council
Hertfordshire County Council
Isle of Wight Council
Kent County Council
Kingshurst Parish Council
Kingston upon Hull Learning Services
Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Lancashire Education Authority
Leeds City Council
Leicester City Council
Leicestershire County Council
Lincolnshire County Council
Liverpool City Council
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
London Borough of Barnet
London Borough of Bexley
London Borough of Brent
London Borough of Bromley
London Borough of Camden
London Borough of Croydon
London Borough of Ealing
London Borough of Enfield
London Borough of Greenwich
London Borough of Hackney
London Borough of Hammersmith
London Borough of Haringey
London Borough of Havering
London Borough of Hillingdon
London Borough of Hounslow
London Borough of Lambeth
London Borough of Lewisham
London Borough of Merton
London Borough of Newham
London Borough of Redbridge

London Borough of Richmond
London Borough of Southwark
London Borough of Sutton
London Borough of Tower Hamlets
London Borough of Waltham Forest
London Borough of Wandsworth
Luton Borough Council
Manchester City Council
Medway Council
Middlesbrough Council
Milton Keynes Council
Newcastle City Council
Norfolk County Council
North East Derbyshire District Council
North East Lincolnshire Council
North Lincolnshire Council
North Somerset Council
North Tyneside Council
North Yorkshire County Council
Northamptonshire County Council
Northumberland County Council
Nottingham City Council
Nottinghamshire County Council
Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Peterborough City Council
Plymouth City Council
Poole Borough Council
Portsmouth City Council
Reading Borough Council
Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Royal Borough of Kingston
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
Rutland County Council
Salford City Council
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Sefton City Council
Sheffield County Council
Shropshire County Council
Slough Borough Council
Smiths Wood Parish Council
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
South Gloucestershire Council
South Tyneside Council
Southampton City Council
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
St. Helens Council
Staffordshire County Council
Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Suffolk County Council
Surrey County Council
Swindon Borough Council
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
Telford and Wrekin Council
Thurrock Council
Torbay Council
Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
Walsall Council
Warrington Borough Council
Warwickshire County Council
West Berkshire Council
West Sussex County Council
Westminster City Council
Wigan Council
Wiltshire County Council
Winsford Town Council
Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
Wokingham District Council
Wolverhampton City Council
Worcestershire County Council
York City Council

Set-aside

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many UK farmers have applied for set aside payments for each of the last seven years; and how much was allocated for set aside payments in each such year. [43546]

Jim Knight: The following table details the number of farmers in England that have applied for set-aside broken down into the totals for each of the last seven scheme years.

It also details, by scheme year, the total amount paid for set-aside.

	Number of applications	*Value of set-aside paid (£)*
1999	31,373	157,352,422
2000	30,892	104,002,110
2001	32,909	163,175,036
2002	30,707	120,681,975
2003	30,571	152,041,890
2004	30,670	111,390,408
2005[1]	34,014	11,148,768

[1] The payment for 2005 is an estimate.

The variation in payment value is due to fluctuations within the aid rates applicable.

A proportion of 2005 scheme year claims are still being validated, so the precise number and value might change.

The other parts of the UK are the responsibility of their respective devolved administrations.

Stray Animals

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether funding has been made available to local authorities to enable them to fulfil their responsibility for looking after stray animals under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. [47175]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* Funds will be transferred from the police to local authorities to reflect the transfer of responsibility for stray dogs under

section 68 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. Negotiations over this transfer of funds are currently taking place between DEFRA, the Home Office, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Local Government Association and section 68 will not commence until an agreement has been reached.

Tail Docking

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether all tail docking of animals is prohibited. [45753]

Mr. Bradshaw: No, the docking of dogs' tails is allowed but only if performed by a vet. The routine tail docking of piglets is prohibited, but they can be docked on the advice of a vet where tail biting is likely to occur. The tail docking of cattle is prohibited except in an emergency by a vet. And the Docking and Nicking of Horses Act 1949 prevents the docking of a horse's tail and restricts the import of a horse with a docked tail.

The Animal Welfare Bill will prohibit the mutilation of animals for non-medical reasons, with exemptions set out in secondary legislation.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government are taking to prevent people from travelling abroad to get their dogs' tails docked. [45760]

Mr. Bradshaw: The docking of dogs' tails is currently legal if performed by a vet and the Government do not consider it necessary to restrict the ability of people to take their dog abroad to get it docked.

Anyone travelling abroad with a dog has to comply with appropriate veterinary requirements when entering the country of destination, and when re-entering the UK.

UK Regional Development Regulations

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the likely impact of the proposed EU budget on the EU regional development programme, with particular reference to UK regional development regulations (RDRs); and when an announcement will be made on the next tranche of RDRs. [43834]

Jim Knight: Based on the assumption that this question relates to UK rural development programmes which will be developed in light of the new Rural Development Regulation (EC Regulation No. 1698 of 2005) and come into force from 1 January 2007, the overall budget for rural development in Europe has been set at €69.75 billion for the period 2007–13.

The agreement on the EU budget deal allows member states, including the UK, to begin the necessary preparatory work for the next round of rural development programmes to run from 2007. The allocation of EU rural development funds to member states has yet to be determined and will be subject to proposals currently being devised by the European Commission. The figure of €69.75 billion is similar to current rural development expenditure, although the focus of this expenditure in the new financial perspective will be upon the new member states.

Importantly, the agreed budget deal included a provision allowing member states, at their discretion, to transfer up to 20 per cent. of pillar 1 funds and make them available for expenditure on rural development measures. Decisions on the overall level of transfer needed will depend on the UK's share of EU funding for rural development, and on the overall size and content of the new rural development programmes to operate from 1 January 2007. In England, we hope to launch a public consultation on the next rural development programme in February 2006.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

BBC World Service

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received about the BBC World Service's decision to cease broadcasting non-English language services in parts of eastern Europe, Thailand and Kazakhstan; and what assessment has been made of the likely impact of this decision. [47297]

Mr. Straw: I have received representations from Members of Parliament and members of the public in the UK, as well as from some Governments and members of the public in the countries concerned. Many have expressed concern and opposition to the changes while some have endorsed the reprioritisation of the BBC World Service. The changes involved were decided on the basis of a thorough assessment of the reach and impact of all its language services. The overall impact of the closures has been judged to be low.

Correspondence

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects to reply to the letter of 31 October from the hon. Member for Bognor Regis and Littlehampton regarding his constituent, Mr. M. A. Lindsay. [33481]

Dr. Howells: My noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, replied to the letter of 31 October from the hon. Member on 7 December 2005.

Côte d'Ivoire

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the security situation in Côte d'Ivoire. [46525]

Ian Pearson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave my hon. Friend, the Member for Stroud (Mr. Drew) on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2240–41W.

Departmental Websites

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the cost of maintaining his main departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46304]

Ian Pearson: The cost of maintaining the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Web Platform, which hosts all of the FCO's public facing websites for 2004–05 was £548,000. Costs for the main FCO website are included within this overall cost. The number of unique visits to the FCO website for each of the 12 months during that year were as follows:

	Visits
2004	
April	1,079,439
May	1,168,731
June	1,214,901
July	1,217,242
August	1,211,198
September	1,213,467
October	1,490,828
November	1,262,186
December	1,052,104
2005	
January	1,158,188
February	920,028
March	981,640

Ethiopia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the human rights situation in Ethiopia. [45552]

Ian Pearson: The UK is concerned about governance, human rights and the detention of opposition leaders, journalists and members of civil society in Ethiopia. We have raised our concerns directly and at the highest level with the Ethiopian Government, most recently when my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development visited Ethiopia on 18 January.

During his visit, my right hon. Friend called for an independent investigation into the alleged recent human rights violations in Oromiya; a prompt, fair and open judicial process for those currently detained; international jurists to observe the trials, and that an independent international organisation be allowed to inspect all the places where people are currently being detained. On 17 December 2005, in a meeting with my noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, Prime Minister Meles agreed to observation of trials of the opposition by international jurists, the first of whom has been appointed.

We remain committed to supporting poverty reduction and the democratisation process in Ethiopia. We will continue to work with the Government of Ethiopia, the international community and other stakeholders to make progress on human rights and governance in Ethiopia.

European Community

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the legislative items introduced under articles *(a)* 94, *(b)* 95 and *(c)* 308 of the treaty establishing the European Community in the past 12 months. [46782]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 18 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 904W. The Government do not keep a central overview of legislative items introduced under articles 94, 95 and 308 of the treaty. The Europa website provides a means of searching for all legislation. This is available at: http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/search/search_lif.html New proposals are listed by subject-matter on the main page at: http://www.europa.eu.int/index_en.htm

Overseas Territories

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what ministerial visits to the Overseas Territories are planned before January 2007; and if he will make a statement. [47096]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: No specific trips are planned but foreign engagements for Government Ministers are kept under constant review. It is not practice to announce such visits until they are firm. Because of the unpredictable nature of world events, final decisions on overseas visits are often not possible until very shortly before the day of travel and an announcement is sometimes not possible until a visit is under way.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment the UK Government have made of the vulnerability of each of the Overseas Territories to *(a)* natural disasters and *(b)* man-made disasters; and if he will make a statement. [47099]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The UK Overseas Territories are mostly small islands, which are potentially at risk from a range of man made and natural disasters. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has a rolling programme of capability reviews to assess the vulnerability of those most at risk and offer advice on measures to mitigate a disaster's impact and manage the crisis. The review process also assesses a territory's ability to deal with disasters locally.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what contingency plans his Department has in place for *(a)* natural and *(b)* man-made disasters in each of the Overseas Territories. [47100]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Foreign and Commonwealth Office Rapid Deployment Teams are ready at all times to respond to crises and disasters all over the world including the Overseas Territories. There is also a dedicated Overseas Territories Management Oversight Committee, which supports the Governor in time of disaster, and works with other Government Departments including the Department for International Development, in organising the UK's response in London. Each Overseas Territories has ownership of its own disaster contingency plans.

Rendition

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether individuals have been subject to rendition from the United Kingdom to an overseas country since 1997. [47586]

Dr. Howells: No.

Rohingya People

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of Rohingya people living in *(a)* Bangladesh, *(b)* Pakistan, *(c)* Saudi Arabia, *(d)* United Arab Emirates, *(e)* Malaysia and *(f)* Thailand. [45555]

Ian Pearson: We do not normally hold figures for the total number of Rohingya people living in third countries.

However, inquiries carried out by our Missions suggest that there are between 450,000 and 500,000 Rohingyas living in Saudi Arabia, 11,000 in Malaysia and between 150,000 and 220,000 in Bangladesh. We have no overall figure for Rohingyas living in Pakistan, but there are an estimated 80,000 living in Karachi.

There are no figures available for Thailand or the United Arab Emirates.

Slave Trade Abolition (Bicentenary)

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will use the 2007 bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade to press for effective worldwide prohibition of slavery and for the establishment of mechanisms to monitor and report on compliance. [47333]

Ian Pearson: The Government are committed to marking in 2007 the 200th anniversary of the passing of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act. My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister is chairing an Advisory Group, which includes a broad range of faith, community, city and cultural representatives, to develop proposals on the Government's contributions to the bicentenary. We will want to look both to the past and to the lessons that have been learnt and to raise awareness of the millions of people still living under contemporary forms of slavery. Around the world, the UK works in partnership with foreign Governments, international organisations and civil society to break the cycle of poverty and social exclusion that are at the root of most forms of contemporary slavery. Together with the Advisory Group, we will consider how best to use this opportunity to make progress on the range of issues that persist today.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what discussions he had had with the Government of Sudan on permitting civil society within Sudan access to the work of the African Union without fear of harassment; [46044]

(2) what plans he has to help facilitate a civil society forum in Sudan. [46049]

Ian Pearson: On 22 January 2006, the 35 participants in an open civil society forum on working with the African Union in Khartoum, organised by the Sudanese Organisation Against Torture, were detained for more than three hours at the conference venue by the Sudanese authorities. All were released unharmed. Our ambassador in Khartoum raised this with the Government of Sudan, and attended the scene during the detention. Other embassy staff were on hand to speak to the participants and provide consular assistance which, thankfully, was not needed. We are clear that such harassment of civil society is unacceptable and that the Government of Sudan must strictly uphold the freedoms of expression and association that are guaranteed under the constitution of Sudan. We are pressing the EU presidency to lead a formal high-level protest to the Government of Sudan in the coming days, and will continue to raise this matter with the Government of Sudan.

The UK strongly supports the development of civil society in Sudan. We are supporting a capacity building programme for civil society organisations and the media in Sudan including providing more than £200,000 over three years to support the work of the Sudanese Organisation Against Torture. We are also contributing to the Multidonor Trust Fund which is developing a civil society programme to support civil society voice and advocacy.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Colin Worton

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 317W, on Colin Worton, by what criteria claims for *(a)* compensation and *(b)* an ex gratia payment are assessed. [46455]

Mr. Hanson: There are two schemes for awarding compensation for miscarriages of justice. These are the statutory scheme under Section 133 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 and the ex gratia arrangements which were set out in a statement to the House of Commons on 29 November 1985, *Official Report*, columns 691–692, by the then Home Secretary and which have been adopted by successive Secretaries of State for Northern Ireland since then.

Section 133 provides that the Secretary of State shall pay compensation to a person who has been convicted of and punished for a criminal offence, where the conviction is subsequently reversed or a pardon is granted on the ground that a new or newly discovered fact shows beyond reasonable doubt that there has been a miscarriage of justice. Compensation shall not be paid where the non-disclosure of the unknown fact was wholly or partially attributable to the person convicted.

A reversal in this context refers to a conviction which has been quashed either on an out-of-time appeal, or on a reference under the Criminal Appeal Act 1995, section 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000 or section 12 of the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005.

Under the ex gratia scheme compensation may exceptionally be granted where a person has spent time in custody following a wrongful conviction or charge, where there has been serious default on the part of the police or some other public authority, or where facts emerge, either at trial or on appeal within time, that completely exonerate the accused.

Crosshill Quarry

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what standards were applied in deciding that the two positive samples collected from Crosshill Quarry, Crumlin, in November 2004 were not considered hazardous *(a)* for human consumption and *(b)* to aquatic organisms. [46333]

Angela E. Smith: Asbestos fibres were detected in two water samples collected on 5 November 2004 from *(a)* the discharge point from Crosshill Quarry, and *(b)* the receiving waterway 30 metres downstream. Analysis of the samples collected showed that they contained, respectively, twenty one thousand (21,000) and four thousand two hundred (4,200) asbestos fibres per litre of water. To put the above-mentioned number of asbestos fibres in context, the USA Environment Protection Agency has set a limit on the number of fibres allowed in drinking water at seven million (7,000,000) per litre. Moreover, it is the view of the World Health Organisation (WHO) that there is no consistent evidence that ingested asbestos is hazardous to health and thus it is concluded that there is no need to establish a health-based guideline value for asbestos and drinking water. The Department is guided by the WHO advice on the matter.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on what dates in *(a)* July 1984 and *(b)* February 2004 water and soil samples were collected from Crosshill Quarry, Crumlin; and what the results of each of those samples were. [46334]

Angela E. Smith: Environment and Heritage Service of Department of the Environment did not collect water or soil samples from the Crosshill Quarry site in July 1984 or February 2004. Records held by Environment and Heritage Service contain no evidence that samples were collected by the owners of the site on any date in July 1984 or February 2004.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland under what authority the contractor was permitted to cut the railway carriages at Crosshill Quarry, Crumlin, into three sections between 25 November 2003 and February 2004. [46335]

Angela E. Smith: Antrim borough council was the regulatory authority for Crosshill when the site operator proposed the reburial of the carriages and when work commenced. The Department of the Environment was not in a position to give authority for the work.

No additional authority was required from the Health and Safety Executive. Nevertheless, the site operators did provide HSE with a method statement for their proposals for the reburial of the carriages.

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action was taken to identify the source of white asbestos found in Crosshill Quarry, Crumlin, in February 2005; what investigation was undertaken by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [46336]

Angela E. Smith: It has not been possible to be conclusive about the exact source of the asbestos fibres found in the soil samples. This site was used for several years as a landfill for demolition waste, and the asbestos fibres identified are typically found in a range of construction and demolition waste.

The Department undertook an initial soil survey for asbestos at Crosshill Quarry in February 2005, and in light of the results recommended that remedial actions be undertaken by the site operators. On completion of these remedial actions, the Department undertook a further soil survey in July 2005. The remedial actions have been effective in significantly removing the asbestos fibres in the two identified areas in the February tests.

Ministerial Car Fleet

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 637W, on the Ministerial Car Fleet, from what budget ministerial cars and drivers are paid. [46469]

Mr. Woodward: Cars and drivers for Northern Ireland Office (NIO) Ministers are provided by either the Police Service of Northern Ireland or the Government Car and Dispatch Agency, who then recover their costs directly from the NIO.

Police

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many officers based in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* Wales have been (i) transferred and (ii) seconded into the Police Service of Northern Ireland in each year since the implementation of the Patten Report. [44888]

Mr. Woodward: The number of officers transferred and seconded from GB police services into the Police Service of Northern Ireland since the year 2000 to date has been provided in the following tables.

(i) Officers transferred from GB Police Services

Transferred	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006 (to date)*
England	0	2	25	7	8	13	1
Scotland	0	0	0	2	2	1	1
Wales	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

(ii) Officers seconded from GB Police Services

Seconded	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006 (to date)*
England	2	2	0	2	1	3	12
Scotland	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Wales	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what arrangements are in place to ensure that bodies within the responsibility of his Department comply with the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. [3542]

Mr. Hain: Historically because the Race Relations Act 1976 did not apply to Northern Ireland it was understood that the provisions of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 did not apply. The Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and Executive have a parallel and similarly stringent mechanism through Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1993 which has race as an equality category. However the Department has agreed with the Commission for Racial Equality that the Northern Ireland Office will operate on the principle that section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act and amendment Order applies to all of the Northern Ireland Office functions both in Northern Ireland and Great Britain. It was further agreed that the Department' s equality related statutory duties will be reviewed as part of a wider review of the NIO's equality scheme under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Commission for Racial Equality will review compliance when the reviewed equality scheme is completed.

Speech Therapy

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the possible impact of the cancellation of the speech therapy degree course for 2005–06 at the University of Ulster on speech therapy waiting lists in Northern Ireland. [46675]

Mr. Woodward: Entry to the speech and language degree course at the University of Ulster is being deferred for the academic year 2006–07. This decision is part of a phased move to change the duration of the course from four years to three years, which is in line with courses in England, Wales and Scotland. Plans have been put in place to ensure that there will be no year without a supply of graduates available for employment in the Health and Personal Social Services.

US Visa Applications

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2247W, on US Visa Applications, how many applications his Department has discussed with the US Consulate in Belfast in each of the last 15 years. [46466]

Mr. Hain: None. Decisions on applications for visas are a matter for the US Administration.

Waste Management Grant Scheme

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the potential impact on councils' draft rates estimates of the changes in the Waste Management Grant Scheme. [45432]

Angela E. Smith: The reduction of £3 million in the Waste Management Grant Scheme will impact on all 26 councils to varying degrees. Only individual councils can define the precise effect this has on the district rate. However, the Department of the Environment has conducted a provisional assessment of the impact based on district councils' spending profiles. It indicates that councils which invest in capital projects will be unaffected, whereas others who utilised the scheme for revenue spend may have to raise their rates by between 1 and 2.5p.

Whatever money councils choose to raise, it will be in addition to the capital moneys from the Waste Management Grant Scheme.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for what reasons the Waste Management Grant Scheme for 2006–07 has been reduced to £7 million; and if he will make a statement. [45433]

Angela E. Smith: The reduction was made in light of the Priorities and Budget exercise for 2005–08, which took into account the ongoing pressures on all elements of the Northern Ireland block allocation. The £7 million budget for 2006–07 reflects the pattern of carry over in councils' capital spend.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for what reasons local councils were not notified of changes in the Waste Management Grant Scheme before the Northern Ireland Local Government Association Strategic Forum on 12 January. [45434]

Angela E. Smith: District councils were made aware of the possibility of a reduction to the grant and closure of the Waste Management Grant Scheme during the summer of 2005. When this was confirmed in October 2005, councils made adjustments to their spending plans.

In light of pressures on the Northern Ireland budget, Ministers have had no option but to take a firm line on resource funding. Their approval to provide funding for the last year of the scheme, granted at the end of December 2005, was given with the condition that the money should only be used for capital projects as originally planned.

EHS was not in a position to advise councils while it pressed for a relaxation to the resource funding position, which it continued to do until mid-January. When it became clear that there was no prospect of change, the matter was raised at the NILGA meeting on 12 January 2006.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will allow allocations for the Waste Management Grant Scheme in Northern Ireland to be spent on revenue expenditure. [45435]

Angela E. Smith: Flexibility in the application of the Waste Management Grant Scheme arose in the past from in-year monitoring, which enabled a degree of both capital and resource spend. Pressure on budget for 2006–07 means that flexibility is no longer available.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for what reasons the Waste Management Grant Scheme funding in Northern Ireland must be spent only on capital expenditure.[45436]

Angela E. Smith: The basis of the Waste Management Grant Scheme was as a capital grant for the provision of smaller infrastructure elements. Its increased use for associated resource projects has depended upon in-year

monitoring, enabling flexibility between capital and resource elements, but that flexibility cannot be provided for 2006–07.

Hard decisions had to be made during the most recent Budget process, and this resulted in the loss of flexibility for the use of funds for resources.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what measures are available to him to ensure that local councils in Northern Ireland are able to meet their waste management requirements. [45437]

Angela E. Smith: I fully recognise the difficulties faced by local councils in meeting their waste management requirements, particularly those contained in the EU Landfill Directive. My Department is committed to working in partnership with councils to assist them with these responsibilities and to this end, we have set up a number of important working groups comprising representatives from central and local government.

The Northern Ireland Landfill Allowances Scheme (NILAS) Implementation Steering Group was established in June 2005 with the aim of ensuring that Northern Ireland maximises the possibility of achieving the Landfill Directive targets for the reduction of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfill.

One of the key tasks facing local councils is the provision of a network of new infrastructure to ensure that landfill diversion targets are met. In April 2005, the Department established a Waste Infrastructure Task Force to help councils with the planning and procurement of new waste management facilities.

The main work of the task force involves identifying appropriate structural arrangements for the procurement of waste infrastructure; the likely location, type and cost of the facilities; and a suitable procurement and funding package.

From a financial point of view, the Department of the Environment's Environment and Heritage Service continues to support councils through grants for the treatment and safe disposal of fridges and end of life vehicles.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Correspondence

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will respond to the letter of 22 December 2005 from the hon. Member for East Devon seeking an inquiry into the recent events at English National Opera. [47306]

Mr. Lammy: I will be sending a response to the hon. Member within the next few days.

Departmental Sustainable Development

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department takes to report publicly on its key sustainable development impacts. [46865]

James Purnell: Key operational sustainable development impacts are publicised on our website under the heading 'Framework for Sustainable Development' (see http://www.culture.gov.uk/about_dcms/sustainable_development/sustainable_development_framework.htm). I intend to publish a Sustainable Development Action Plan very shortly, followed by a progress report by the end of 2006. Our sustainable development strategy, which covers all aspects of our involvement with sustainable development, is available electronically on our website and hard copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

EU Media Plus

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which UK *(a)* programmes and *(b)* films have received funding from the EU Media Plus programme; and if she will make a statement. [46836]

James Purnell: The Government support the Media Plus programme and recognise the benefits it brings to help create a sustainable and successful film industry in the UK.

Since 2001, the UK film industry has benefited from over €28 million, approximately £19.5 million, through the Media Plus programme, and a further €500,000 (£341,000) through the related i2i initiative.

Specific projects to have received such funding include films such as East is East and Christmas Carol—The Movie. Slate funding received has led to the development of films such as Sylvia, A Cock and Bull Story and Girl with a Pearl Earring.

In addition, the New Talent scheme has been particularly beneficial for the UK. The British scriptwriter, Duane Hopkins, received the 2004 MEDIA New Talent award in 2004 for his feature-length screenplay Better Things.

TV programmes that have also benefited from the funding scheme include Why We Fight and the forthcoming In Search of Mozart.

I am arranging for the complete list of UK programmes and films that have received financial assistance from the EU Media Plus programme to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46753]

Mr. Lammy: DCMS is a diverse organisation that values its staff as individuals. Although the Department does not specifically celebrate Hanukkah and Yom Kippur its diversity training promotes the need for staff to be sensitive to colleagues observing or already celebrating religious or cultural events. We also provide a religious and cultural guide and an interfaith calendar which is available to all staff on our intranet site.

Libraries

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her Department's policy is on stocking Bibles in libraries. [47917]

Mr. Lammy: This is a matter for each local library authority.

Licensing Act (Welsh Forms)

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what progress has been made on providing Welsh language versions of the licensing forms issued in relation to the Licensing Act 2003. [45027]

James Purnell *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* My officials have been exploring with the Welsh Language Board which other documents relating to the licensing process should be prescribed in Welsh, in addition to the applications forms. They hope to conclude those discussions shortly. We will then consult key stakeholders before finalising the regulations and laying them before Parliament in April. Subject to the usual parliamentary process, we would expect the Order prescribing the forms to come into force in the early summer. The Department is also discussing a proposed DCMS Welsh language scheme with the Welsh Language Board with the aim of treating the Welsh and English Languages equally in the conduct of public business.

National Cultural Goods

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received on the adoption of legislation in the United Kingdom to *(a)* prevent seizure and *(b)* guarantee the security of national cultural goods on loan from other countries; and if she will make a statement. [46671]

Mr. Lammy: My Department has received four letters on this subject, one of which was on behalf of a number of museum and gallery directors most affected by this issue. I am meeting the directors on 2 February to discuss what can be done to prevent the seizure of international works of art in the UK and reassure lenders that it continues to be safe to exhibit in the UK.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the adequacy of UK provisions to guarantee the security of national cultural goods on loan from other countries; and if she will make a statement. [46672]

Mr. Lammy: The Government have reviewed the extent of the protection already available to state owned property, including national cultural goods, in the United Kingdom under the State Immunity Act 1978, and we will be considering the introduction of legislation to provide immunity from seizure for international works of art.

Olympic Games 2012

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her latest estimate is for the cost of hosting the 2012 Olympic games; and if she will make a statement. [45123]

Tessa Jowell: As I said in my recent answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Edgbaston (Ms Stuart) on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2296W, I have commissioned KPMG to provide advice on the costs of the London 2012 Olympic games. Their work, which is ongoing, will inform our strategy for managing the Olympic project.

Stonehenge

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials from her Department have discussed with the National Trust the proposals from consultants for a new northern corridor route for the proposed A303 Stonehenge road improvement. [47005]

Mr. Lammy: I am aware of outline proposals from the National Trust's consultants on a new northern corridor route for the A303 past Stonehenge. The Department for Transport will be meeting the National Trust to discuss this and other issues. My Department will chair the next Stonehenge programme board on 22 February which will provide a further opportunity for discussion.

Television Broadcasts (Violence)

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether her Department plans, under the Government's Respect Agenda, to monitor and evaluate the effect on antisocial behaviour of the broadcasting of violent acts during peak-time television programming. [46677]

James Purnell: No. Responsibility for what is broadcast on television and radio rests with the broadcasters and the organisations which regulate broadcasting—the Office of Communications (Ofcom) the governors of the BBC, and the Welsh Fourth Channel Authority.

Under section 2.4 of Ofcom's Broadcasting Code, which applies to all broadcasters, programmes must not include material which, taking into account the context, condones or glamorises violent, dangerous or seriously antisocial behaviour and is likely to encourage others to copy such behaviour. This has been in place since July 2005. Ofcom periodically commissions research which informs the development and interpretation of its code.

Television Licences

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many fines for the non-payment of television licences have been imposed in each London constituency for each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [47409]

James Purnell: Information on fines for unlicensed use of a television receiver is not recorded separately from other offences under the Wireless Telegraphy Acts 1949 to 1967 and the Communications Act 2003, although the majority of offences under these acts are likely to relate to television licence evasion; nor is information held by constituency. The number of offenders receiving fines for all offences under the above Acts in the Metropolitan and City of London police force areas, for each of the last five years for which information is available, was:

	Number of fines
2000	16,105
2001	6,071
2002	10,267
2003	7,066
2004	12,131

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many fines for the non-payment of television licences have been imposed in *(a)* Barnsley and *(b)* Doncaster in each of the last five years. [46557]

James Purnell: Information on fines for unlicensed use of a television receiver is not recorded separately from other offences under the Wireless Telegraphy Acts 1949 to 1967 and the Communications Act 2003, although the majority of offences under these acts are likely to relate to television licence evasion. The number of offenders receiving fines for all offences under the above Acts in the Barnsley district magistrates court and Doncaster magistrates' court, for each of the last five years for which information is available, was:

Number

	Barnsley district magistrates court	Doncaster magistrates court
2000	571	567
2001	420	381
2002	617	888
2003	251	362
2004	328	423

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Annual Leave

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research he has commissioned on the average number of days of paid annual leave taken by low-skilled workers. [45697]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government asked the Low Pay Commission to consider the impact of extending annual leave entitlements. The following table from their annual report for 2005 shows the paid leave entitlement for low-paid working age employees in autumn 2003.

Paid leave entitlement (excluding bank holidays) for low-paid working age employees by hours, autumn 2003

Percentage

Paid leave entitlement	Part-time	Full-time	All
Fewer than 10 days	41.1	6.8	24.4
10 to fewer than 12 days	4.2	3.4	3.8
12 to fewer than 20 days	18.2	14.0	16.1
20 days or more	36.6	75.8	55.7

Source:
Labour Force Survey, ONS Autumn 2003.

Departmental Expenditure

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many widescreen televisions have been purchased by his Department for use in London Headquarters in each of the last five years; and what the cost was in each year. [39144]

Alan Johnson: The Department is unable to identify separately widescreen televisions purchased from expenditure on other electrical audio-visual equipment such as flatscreen displays or traditional cathode ray tube TVs.

Departmental Sickness Absence

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many days sick leave on average staff in his Department have taken in each of the last five years; and what percentage of total working days this represented in each year. [28767]

Alan Johnson: The following sets out average sick absence in the DTI HQ (including Small Business Service) in each of the last five years; and percentage of total working days this represented in each year. All data include weekends and public and privilege holidays; and therefore based on working year of 335 days.

	Headcount		Full-time equivalent	
	Average days	Percentage of total working days	Average days	Percentage of total working days
2005	5.7	1.72	5.9	1.77
2004	8.0	2.39	8.2	2.46
2003	7.0	2.09	7.2	2.16
2002	7.0	2.08	7.2	2.13
2001	6.7	2.01	6.9	2.07

Departmental Staff (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff employed by his Department live in Castle Point. [42820]

Alan Johnson: Ten staff from the Department of Trade and Industry and its agencies have given their home address as being in Castle Point.

Equal Opportunities (Funding)

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what factors he took into account in deciding on the level of funding to be allocated to *(a)* the Commission for Racial Equality, *(b)* the Disability Rights Commission and *(c)* the Equal Opportunities Commission. [46693]

Meg Munn *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* The information is as follows.

(a) The Commission for Racial Equality is funded by the Home Office.

(b) The Disability Rights Commission is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions.

(c) My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry decides the level of funding for the Equal Opportunities Commission in accordance with agreed business plans.

EU Accounts Modernisation Directive

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to inform businesses of their requirements under the EU Accounts Modernisation Directive. [46955]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* Regulations implementing the bulk of the EU Accounts Modernisation Directive were made in November 2004. Guidance for companies on the effect of the amendments was placed on the DTI website prior to that date. Regulations implementing the requirement of the Directive to produce a Business Review and introducing the Operating and Financial Review were made in March 2005. Guidance covering both aspects of the 2005 regulations was placed on the DTI website prior to that date. Following a decision not to proceed with the Operating and Financial Review the guidance has now been updated to relate solely to the Business Review and consultation is under way about what changes to the Businesses Review is needed as a consequence.

European Public Procurement Law

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions his Department has had with the European Commission concerning the impact of European public procurement law on the costs to small and medium-sized enterprises in the UK of bidding for public contracts. [39575]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* The UK played an active role in the negotiations on proposals from the European Commission regarding the two new European public procurement directives which were implemented on 31 January 2006. DTI was involved in that process where SME's interests were taken into account. These new directives, which replace existing EU rules on public procurement, will help to improve the procurement process for suppliers, including SMEs, and contracting authorities through their greater clarity and the scope they provide to take account of modern procurement methods and systems.

Foreign Farm Workers

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department is taking to ensure that foreign farm workers working in the United Kingdom are paid above the national minimum wage. [44980]

Jim Knight: I have been asked to reply.

Any person employed to work in agriculture, anywhere in England and Wales, is entitled to be paid at least the appropriate agricultural minimum wage rate set out in the Agricultural Wages Order. This includes all foreign nationals legally entitled to work in the United Kingdom. The Agricultural Wages Order is enforced by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs in England and the National Assembly for Wales Agriculture Department in Wales. If a worker considers s/he might have been underpaid they should contact the Agricultural Wages Team on 0845 000 01 34 and they will arrange for the matter to be investigated.

Gas Supplies

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the dates on which his Department had discussions with *(a)* Ofgem, *(b)* Energywatch and *(c)* gas supply companies regarding erroneous transfers of customers' gas supplies to other suppliers. [47584]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has extensive contact with Ofgem, Energywatch and gas and electricity suppliers about a range of aspects of domestic gas and electricity supply, including erroneous transfers. DTI, Ofgem and Energywatch have been closely involved in the suppliers' Customer Transfer Programme, which began in June 2003. This is a very substantial project that is designed to improve all aspects of the switching process, including reducing erroneous transfers. Such transfers have already fallen significantly. In 2005 there were around 110 complaints per month about erroneous transfers of gas supply. In the same period, gas transfers were running at an average of 300,000 per month. This compares with 150 complaints per month in 2004, and 290 per month in 2003. I expect complaints about erroneous transfers to decline still further once the Customer Transfer Programme is completed in March 2006.

National Weights and Measures Laboratory

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the national targets are for the National Weights and Measures Laboratory; and what the performance has been of relevant offices in Devon and Cornwall in relation to those targets. [38481]

Alan Johnson: The National Weights and Measures Laboratory targets approved by DTI Ministers for 2005–06 are:

To report a break even in the Income and Expenditure Account for 2005–06.

To satisfy all its customers as demonstrated by at least 95 per cent. of them reporting that they are satisfied or very satisfied with NWML's provision of services.

To complete all Type Approval work (new patterns, variants, amendments, renewals, additions, Test Certificates, and OIML Certificate of Conformity) within 10 weeks (45 working days).

In respect of European approvals (new patterns only) to achieve an average time per job of better than five weeks (23 working days).

In respect of UK approvals (new patterns only) to achieve an average time per job of better than seven weeks (32 working days).

To complete calibration jobs within the time requested by customers, with at least 95 per cent. of all jobs (including preparation of certificates) completed within 18 working days of acceptance of the work and an average completion time of less than 13 working days.

To complete 85 per cent. of the milestones scheduled for year 1 of the National Measurement System (NMS) Legal Metrology Programme by their due dates.

In respect of approved verification to complete the evaluation of the application and supporting Quality documentation within 30 working days (six weeks) of receipt for at least 80 per cent. of applications.

To complete implementation of the MID by 30 October 2006 (interim target to submit all requisite draft regulations to the European Commission by 30 April 2006).

Chief Executive to reply within 10 working days to all letters from Members of Parliament delegated to him for reply.

To meet RoHS Regulations enforcement contract delivery targets by dates specified in the MoU with DTI.

To meet savings and efficiency targets (financial and headcount) in the NWML Efficiency Delivery Plan.

Nuclear Energy

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which *(a)* power generation companies and *(b)* investment institutions have indicated a positive interest in (i) building and (ii) investing in new nuclear build. [46567]

Malcolm Wicks: Many companies regularly express interest publicly in a variety of energy infrastructure projects that relate to a number of different generating technologies, including nuclear, renewables, gas and carbon capture and storage.

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of electricity used in the UK was produced from nuclear energy in the latest year for which figures are available. [48021]

Malcolm Wicks: In 2004, the latest full year for which data are available, 19 per cent. of the electricity supplied to customers in the UK was from nuclear sources.

Operating and Financial Review

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what impact assessment was made of the decision in November 2005 not to require listed companies to prepare Operating and Financial Review statements. [45501]

Alun Michael: The Government have decided to widen their current consultation on company narrative reporting requirements. This will ensure that all points of view and relevant up-to-date evidence are taken into account while the current Company Law Reform Bill is going through Parliament.

The Government took the decision in November 2005 to repeal the mandatory requirement on quoted companies to prepare an Operating and Financial Review (OFR) as contained in the OFR regulations so that they are required to prepare a Business Review instead. This decision was made in the light of the Government's strong commitment to sustainable development, strategic forward-looking narrative reporting and its policy of not imposing unnecessary burdens on UK companies, and taking into account the large body of evidence from previous consultations on narrative reporting.

Chapter 6 of Part 15 of the Company Law Reform Bill contains provisions relating to narrative reporting by companies. The Government are now inviting comments on any considerations which Ministers should take into account in deciding whether, and if so how, to frame amendments to these or other provisions of the Company Law Reform Bill to ensure effective forward looking narrative reporting by quoted companies, including, where appropriate, on social, community, employee and environmental matters. The consultation is therefore extended to invite views from all stakeholders on the full range of options for reporting, including matters previously contained within Schedule 7ZA of the Companies Act 1985 and within the Accounts Modernisation Directive (2003/51/EC), and any other matters relevant to narrative reporting.

The Government will also consider in light of responses to this consultation whether existing business reporting requirements should be amended by regulations under secondary legislation as an interim measure before the new Bill comes into force. For the avoidance of doubt, however, no such changes would apply to financial reporting periods which had commenced before any new regulations had been passed. This is to ensure that companies have certainty as to their current legal reporting obligations and have adequate time to prepare for any changes.

The closing date for responses to this consultation is 24 March 2006. The Government are keen to ensure conclusions can be reached in a time scale which allows any resulting policy changes to be introduced and debated during the appropriate parliamentary stages of the current Bill.

The Government have already issued an invitation for views on narrative reporting on a more limited basis (my statement of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 177WS). Comments already received as a result of that invitation will be taken into account in this wider consultation exercise. Those who have already expressed a view are welcome to submit further comments should they so wish.

Company Law

Mark Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how he intends to ensure that companies meet their social, environmental and community responsibilities in his review of company law; and if he will make a statement. [47328]

Alun Michael: The Company Law Reform Bill is part of a wider programme of Government and market-led reform to support enterprise, encourage investment and promote long-term performance in order to ensure that Britain remains one of the best places in the world to set up and run a business.

A key part of the Bill is the statutory statement of directors' duties. This will provide greater clarity on what is expected of directors. It will also recognise in statute that business prosperity and responsible business behaviour are two sides of the same coin: directors are required to promote the success of the company in the collective best interests of shareholders, having regard to wider factors such as the interests of employees, the community and the environment. Re-stating this requirement will help directors to understand that they need to look beyond the short-term financial bottom line, but company law is not the right vehicle for addressing specific social, environmental or community issues.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what cost-savings he expects to result from the Company Law Reform Bill when enacted. [47375]

Alun Michael: The Government's Regulatory Impact Assessment for the Company Law Reform Bill, presents an estimated range for the total direct benefits that are expected to result from provisions in the Bill. This range is £160 million to £340 million per year. Details are available at http:www.dti.gov.uk/cld/pdfs/clrbria.pdf

Parliamentary Questions

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he will reply to question number 39575, tabled by the hon. Member for Westmoreland and Lonsdale on 19 December 2005; and what the reasons are for the delay in replying. [47583]

Alan Johnson: I have answered the hon. Member's question today. I apologise to the hon. Member for the delay in responding.

Post Office

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will place in the Library a copy of the report received from Post Office Ltd on pilot schemes for innovative ways of providing a service. [46062]

Barry Gardiner: We have very recently received the analysis we requested from the Post Office on pilot studies trialling new models of service delivery. We are viewing this and will encourage the Post Office to draw it together into a report for publication.

Power Generation

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the number of new electricity generators which may be required to take account of *(a)* the decline in energy generated by existing power stations that will come to the end of their working lives over the next decade and *(b)* an increase in demand of (i) 20 per cent., (ii) 30 per cent. and (iii) 40 per cent. over the next decade. [46679]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's first Annual Report on Security of Supply lists planned major new electricity projects (www.dti.gov.uk/energy/publications/policy/sec_supply_first_report.pdf). This will be updated in the next report of the Joint Energy Security of Supply Working Group, which will also consider the position on electricity supply and demand over the next decade. The report will be published shortly.

Race Equality Impact Assessments

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many Race Equality Impact Assessments his Department had completed in *(a)* April 2004 to March 2005 and *(b)* April 2005 to November 2005; and how many assessments in each period resulted in a change of policy. [32830]

Meg Munn: The DTI has completed three Race Equality Impact Assessments (REIA) since April 2004. In one case, the assessment of the impact on race equality recorded in the REIA reflected the considerable changes made to the original proposals to mitigate potential adverse effects. In the other two, the REIAs did not result in a change of policy. The DTI is reviewing its Race Equality Scheme, including an analysis of completed Race Equality Impact Assessments, with a view to publishing a revised, more effective scheme by June 2006.

Radioactive Waste

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the countries from which *(a)* radioactive waste and *(b)* spent fuel has been received but not yet returned; and what the (i) radioactivity level and (ii) quantity held is in each case. [46037]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 26 January 2006]:* The UK does not allow the import of radioactive waste, but overseas spent fuel is received in the UK for reprocessing.

Sellafield

Spent fuel has been received for reprocessing at Sellafield from these countries: Japan, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and the Netherlands. To date no waste as a result of reprocessing has been returned overseas.

Details of fuel deliveries and the programming of reprocessing of customer's fuel are operational and commercial matters for British Nuclear Group and its customers, but the total amount of foreign spent fuel to be reprocessed under new reprocessing contracts signed since 1976 is around 4,500 tonnes, which will result in 400, 5,000 and 25,000 cubic metres of High, Intermediate and Low Level Waste respectively.

Non-Sellafield sources

Countries from which spent fuel has been received but not yet returned:

Country	*Kg HM*
Belgium	13.9
Denmark	54.3
France	115.8
Germany	582.6
Holland	5.9
Georgia	4.4

Waste return clauses are in force for the above material, excluding Georgia.

It is not possible to give current radioactivity levels for this material as the levels on receipt would be considerably different from those today. To attempt to calculate notional radioactivity levels from the above weights could give an erroneous result.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the costs to be borne by his Department resulting from the delay in implementing the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive. [47941]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to the replies I gave on 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1764–65W.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the extra costs to be borne by manufacturers resulting from uncertainty caused by the delay in implementing the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive. [47943]

Malcolm Wicks: The delay to implementation of the Directive will mean savings for many manufacturers. These are likely to exceed significantly any costs arising from the delay.

TRANSPORT

Channel Tunnel

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether he has made an assessment of the impact of the channel tunnel on the level of traffic on UK roads; and if he will make a statement; [46539]

(2) whether he has made an assessment of the net impact of the channel tunnel on the UK economy; and if he will make a statement. [46540]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* The Department has not made any specific assessment of the effect of the channel tunnel on UK road traffic levels or the UK economy more generally.

Christmas Cards

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will estimate the cost to his Department of sending Christmas cards in 2005. [45924]

Ms Buck: The information requested is set out as follows.

Christmas card 2005

	Cost including VAT (£)
Central Department	1,780
Highways Agency	2,488
Maritime and Coastguard Agency	1,769
Vehicle and Operator Services Agency	664
Vehicle Certification Agency	[1]
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	2,981
Driving Standards Agency	3,213
Government Car and Despatch Agency	[1]

[1] No card.

Note:
The information refers to the cost of the cards. It is not possible to separate out postage costs from normal mail, although the policy is to mainly use second class.

Concessionary Travel

Mr. Benyon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the funding provided in the 2006–07 local government finance settlement to *(a)* West Berkshire council and *(b)* other local authorities to provide free bus passes for all those who are entitled to them; [46246]

(2) what estimate he has made of whether *(a)* West Berkshire council and *(b)* other local authorities will require additional funding above that provided in the local government finance settlement to finance the free bus pass scheme; and what assessment he has made of sources of additional funding. [46248]

Ms Buck: The Government are providing an extra £350 million for 2006–07 through the formula grant system which will be sufficient to fund the cost to local authorities. There is general agreement that there is enough additional money overall for the local authorities. The extra funding is not ring-fenced; therefore it is not possible to identify the concessionary fares funding for individual local authorities. All local authorities, including West Berkshire council, have a responsibility to offer older and disabled people free off-peak local travel on buses and we expect this to be done in an efficient and effective way, balancing all the available resources.

Mr. Benyon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the payments to bus operators by *(a)* West Berkshire council and *(b)* other local authorities in England under the free bus pass scheme; and what percentage of the payments in (i) West Berkshire and *(b)* England will be met from central Government grant in 2006–07. [46251]

Ms Buck: None. The Department for Transport has issued guidance to local authorities on implementation but it is for individual concessionary travel authorities, to design and operate their local concessionary fares scheme. The Government are providing an extra £350 million for 2006–07 which will be sufficient to fund the cost to local authorities of the introduction of free off-peak local bus travel for pensioners and disabled people.

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the local authorities in the County of Durham which have received funding to introduce the concessionary travel scheme; and how much was paid to each. [46785]

Ms Buck: All the districts in the County of Durham receive funding for concessionary fares through the formula grant system. The extra funding is not ring-fenced; therefore it is not possible to identify the current funding for concessionary fares for individual local authorities. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister consulted on the formula to be used for funding the extension to free off-peak local bus travel for pensioners and disabled people from 1 April. The funding will continue to not be specifically allocated.

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the cost of extending the concessionary travel scheme for aged and disabled people in Easington to include cross boundary travel to Tyne Wear and Teesside. [46745]

Ms Buck: None. Cross-boundary concessionary travel is offered at the discretion of the local authority based on their judgement of local needs and their overall financial priorities.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the annual expenditure on vehicles by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40006]

Ms Buck: Information on actual and projected spend on vehicles has been placed in the Libraries of the House. The expenditure data typically comprises purchase price, fuel and servicing. Charges relating to the specialist nature of the Department for Transport fleet, such as adaptations, have also been included in some cases.

The information requested as iii) a), b), c) and d can only be provided at disproportionate costs.

For details of expenditure on ministerial vehicles provided to the Department by the Government Car and Despatch Agency I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 20 December 2005 from the chief executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker). Copies of this letter are available in the Library.

Departmental Website

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost of maintaining his main departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46309]

Ms Buck: The total cost of the Department for Transport's main website at:

www.dft.gov.uk for the financial year 2004–05 was £290,035. This cost includes hosting, maintenance and development. It does not include staff costs.

Unique visitors to the Department for Transport website—2005

	Unique visitors
January	117,333
February	117,722
March	134,296
April	134,561
May	125,765
June	122,320
July	112,853
August	136,300
September	127,740
October	125,336
November	137,404
December	115,945
Total	1,507,575

In the period of the last financial year (2004–05) the total number of unique visitors was 1,302,712 with a total number of visits of 2,842,657. The cost per visit over the same period was therefore 0.1 pence.

Highways Agency

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the administration costs are of the Highways Agency to date in the financial year 2005–06. [44669]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency's administration costs to 31 December 2005 in the financial year 2005–06 are £70,166,841. This figure includes salary costs.

Lockerbie Station

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the footbridge at Lockerbie railway station is being considered for funding under the Railways for All scheme. [45294]

Ms Buck: Decisions on Railways for All funding relating to stations in Scotland will be a matter for Scottish Ministers and we are working closely with Transport Scotland, the new national transport agency. We propose to publish shortly the final Railways for All strategy, which will include details of how the funding will be targeted.

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what account is taken of the needs of users at Lockerbie railway station when timetabling for cross-border rail services. [45295]

Derek Twigg: Cross Country is the main operator of cross border rail services at Lockerbie railway station at present. The specification for the new Cross Country franchise is currently being developed and the needs of Lockerbie will be one of the factors to be taken into account. We expect to consult on the specification in the summer of 2006.

London Commuter Services

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which commuting service into London had the highest passengers in excess of capacity level in the last year for which figures are available. [41134]

Derek Twigg: In 2004, which is the last year for which data are available, the London commuting services with the highest passenger in excess of capacity were:

Time	*From*	*To*	*Train operator*	*Arrive*	*Train capacity*	*Passengers*	*PIXC*
07:40	Ashford	London Victoria	South Eastern Trains	09:28	266	466	200
18:09	London Bridge	Beckenham Junction	Southern	18:44	205	286	81
17:50	London Bridge	Rochester	South Eastern Trains	18:51	420	586	166

Since the data were collected, both Southern and South Eastern Trains have introduced new rolling stock on these services which provides greater passenger capacity.

London Underground

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will meet the Mayor of London and raise the renegotiation of the public-private partnership deal for the London Underground; and if he will make a statement. [47208]

Ms Buck: I refer the hon. Member to my previous answer of 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 144W.

Off-peak Bus Travel

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 26 January, PQ 44701, if he will break down the figure of £350 million for the provision of off-peak bus travel into main cost areas and provide the assumptions which underlay the calculation of each such area. [47127]

Ms Buck: The £350 million was based on analysis which estimated the overall costs, in 2002–03 prices, at £250 million of moving from existing provision. An additional £100 million was added to allow for the reimbursement of authorities already offering free off-peak local bus travel (e.g. London, Merseytravel and Centro (the West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive), inflation, and to act as a contingency for the uncertainty of the additional take-up.

Pedestrian Rail Crossings

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what recent representations he has received on the safety of pedestrian rail crossings; [45724]

(2) if he will visit Benfleet railway station in Essex to assess the safety of the two unmanned pedestrian crossings in its vicinity; [45725]

(3) if he will undertake a review of the safety of unmanned pedestrian railway crossings; and if he will make a statement; [45726]

(4) if he will make it his policy to facilitate and speed up the closure of little-used unmanned pedestrian foot crossings of railway lines. [45727]

Derek Twigg: The Department receives correspondence on a range of issues including, safety at individual level crossings.

I meet the health and safety executive's an a regular basis to review safety issues including level crossing safety. I have at present no plans to visit Benfleet station. It is for HSE's HM Railways Inspectorate (HMRI) to assess whether Network Rail is controlling the risks at the two un-staffed pedestrian crossings at Benfleet station. I have asked the appropriate HMRI representative to contact the hon. Member to see how best to deal with your concerns.

Network Rail seeks to close crossings where viable alternatives exist which are acceptable to local residents and crossing users. Level crossing safety is governed by a legislative framework that facilitates the efficient management of level crossing risk and includes powers to ensure adequate protective measures are put in place. As part of this legislative framework, HSE's HM Railways Inspectorate, on behalf of the Secretary of State ensure on a case-by-case basis that individual level crossings are compliant with the legislation and thereby ensure that essential safety standards are being met.

Public Transport (Government Grants)

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much in Government grants was allocated for subsidies to public transport per head of population in *(a)* West Yorkshire, *(b)* South Yorkshire and *(c)* North Yorkshire in 2005–06. [46816]

Ms Buck: The following grant per head of population was allocated in 2005–06:

	£
(a) West Yorkshire	17.40
(b) South Yorkshire	29.68
(c) North Yorkshire	18.40

These figures include integrated transport block funding and major public transport scheme funding allocated through the Local Transport capital settlement, and expected spend on Department for Transport bus grants (Rural Bus Subsidy Grant and Bus Challenge). Figures can vary year on year, particularly on the amount allocated to major transport schemes.

The figures do not include local authority spend on public transport subsidy funded from Revenue Support Grant (that spend is not allocated by Government for use particularly on transport) or payments made direct to operators of Bus Service Operators Grant (that is not allocated on a geographical basis).

The figures do not include funding allocated for rail. Central Government supports rail services in the north of England through direct franchise payments (subsidies) to the Train Operating Companies (TOCs), but these allocations are not available on a local authority area basis. Further payments are also made to PTEs for the specific provision of rail services in their respective areas, but the total subsidy figures will not be known until the end of 2005–06.

Railways

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people were employed by the Strategic Rail Authority; and how many were employed in a *(a)* technical or advisory capacity and *(b)* administrative posts. [41741]

Derek Twigg: As at 1 April 2005 the number of people employed by the Strategic Rail Authority was 409. A breakdown of this number is not available in the form requested.

As at 1 February 2006 the total number of people employed by the Strategic Rail Authority is 24. These remaining staff will be employed on issues affecting South East Trains and in carrying out work to enable the authority to be wound down later this year.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the change in the number of passenger kilometres travelled on the railways between London and Shrewsbury in each of the last five years. [45354]

Derek Twigg: Passenger miles travelled between London and Shrewsbury in the last five years, and the annual percentage change, are as follows:

	Passenger miles (millions)	*Percentage change on previous year*
2001–02	9.4	—
2002–03	9.1	-3.78
2003–04	8.9	-1.32

	Passenger miles (millions)	Percentage change on previous year
2004–05	8.6	-3.21
2005–06	9.1	+4.82

Note:
For 2005–06, figures are available only for the period from April to January. To allow a proper comparison to be made, figures for other years also relate to the April to January period.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people have been caught travelling on the railway without a ticket in each year since 1997; how many were *(a)* prosecuted and *(b)* convicted; and if he will make a statement. [45990]

Derek Twigg: The Department does not hold this information as revenue protection is a matter for train operators.

Road Gritting

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding the Government have provided to local authorities for the gritting of roads in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [46326]

Ms Buck: Funding for routine highway and street lighting maintenance, including gritting, is provided to local authorities through the Revenue Support Grant, which is not ring-fenced to specific services.

Stonehenge

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if Ministers or officials in his Department have discussed with the National Trust proposals from consultants for a new northern corridor route for the proposed A303 Stonehenge road improvement. [47004]

Dr. Ladyman: The National Trust wrote to the Department on 22 December 2005 setting out their views on the A303 Stonehenge improvement scheme review, including a suggestion for a specific northern route option. Officials will be meeting the National Trust to discuss this and other issues.

Road Maintenance

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the cost of outstanding maintenance on roads for which his Department is responsible. [43614]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I have given him today [UIN 40579].

Safe and Efficient Drivers Scheme

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research and consultation his Department undertook before the launch of the Safe and Efficient Drivers Scheme. [47495]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* The Safe and Fuel Efficient Driving (SAFED) Scheme has been highly successful in the truck sector. The Department undertook research in 2005 to study the van sector, to adapt and develop the existing scheme to be appropriate for vans and to pilot the training course to determine how effective it would be. The results were published on our website on 25 January 2006. A key stakeholder advisory group was formed to advise and steer this pilot project.

There was no formal public consultation on the scheme, though the stakeholder advisory group were key to developing the scheme and views on the concept were sought from the Road Haulage Forum. While the Government routinely consults on regulatory proposals, it should be stressed that this is not new regulation. There is no requirement on van drivers to undertake this training.

Safety/Speed Cameras

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how the composition of the executive or boards of safety camera partnerships is determined. [47897]

Dr. Ladyman: Governance arrangements for safety camera partnerships are set out in the Handbook of Rules and Guidance for the National Safety Camera Programme for England and Wales, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House. All safety camera partnerships are required to have a steering group made up of senior representatives from each of the partners.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the *(a)* locations and *(b)* roads concerned where fixed cameras are (i) in place and (ii) will be in place by 31 December for the purpose of monitoring vehicles for offences other than speeding. [46676]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department holds this information only in respect of red light cameras within the national safety camera programme. This is contained in a table that has been placed in the Library of the House. The information is correct as at 31 December 2005.

Strategic Road Network

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether there is a backlog of maintenance to be undertaken on the strategic road network. [40579]

Dr. Ladyman: The strategic road network of trunk roads and motorways in England is maintained in a safe and serviceable condition on a whole life cost principle, identifying the appropriate maintenance treatment at the optimum intervention time. This ensures the best use of available resources and minimizes the impact on road users. There is currently no backlog of carriageway maintenance on the strategic network and consequently no estimate for outstanding works.

Sussex-London Rail Service

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the prospects for a fast rail service between the Sussex coast and London. [44809]

Derek Twigg: Rail services between the Sussex coast and London are the responsibility of Southern as the incumbent franchisee. Changes to services can be proposed by the franchisee subject to the requirements of the Franchise Agreement and Network Rail approval.

Some changes to services between London and the Sussex coast are proposed in the Brighton Mainline Route Utilisation Strategy (BML RUS). A decision and announcement about publication of the BML RUS is likely to be made shortly.

Traffic (Hammersmith and Fulham)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his projections are for traffic growth in Hammersmith and Fulham for each of the next 10 years. [45267]

Ms Buck: The Mayor has overall responsibility for transport in the capital (with the exception of trains). The Mayor is also responsible for providing a transport strategy which sets out proposals for improving transport in London and sets targets for traffic levels in London. The target for Hammersmith and Fulham is for traffic in 2011 to fall by 2 per cent. (relative to 2001 levels).

Further information on the Mayor's Transport Strategy can be found at http://www.london.gov.uk/approot/mayor/strategies/transport/index.jsp.

Train Operating Companies

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2913W, on C2C/One Rail, if he will provide the same breakdown for all train operating companies. [42734]

Derek Twigg: The following table shows the number of cancellations, and the reasons for them, for the 20 additional Train Operating Companies with which the Department has franchise agreements.

2005 train cancellations

		Train operating company				
Causation	*Summary*	*ATW*	*Central*	*Chiltern*	*FGW*	*FGW Link*
Depot-related	Shunting incident, train preparation	364	53	—	—	2
Operation	Planning error, service recovery plan, traded services specifically	4	425	41	16	—
Train crew	Lack of driver/Train manager	2,139	2,668	138	33	439
Fleet	Technical faults	4,593	6,109	542	295	537
Station	Retail related	650	133	164	—	—
External	Weather, fatality	406	478	—	25	619
Miscellaneous	TOC-on-Self	—	—	—	—	—
TOC-on-TOC	Effect of other operators	412	925	88	16	266
Infrastructure	Points Failures	382	—	—	10	—
Infrastructure	Poor Condition of Track/Broken Rail	197	—	—	4	—
Infrastructure	Miscellaneous	1,171	—	—	120	—
Infrastructure	Overhead Power Supply/Line	9	—	—	—	—
Infrastructure	Level Crossing Failure	—	—	—	—	—
Infrastructure	Signal Failure	106	—	—	12	—
Infrastructure	Animals on line	—	—	—	—	—
Production	Network Rail	—	—	—	5	—
Production	Train Planning	1	—	—	—	—
Engineering	Track Engineering Possessions	88	—	—	—	—
Operations	Network Rail-	—	—	856	—	—
Operations	Fatalities	94	—	—	58	—
Operations	Line Side Fires	4	—	—	1	—
Act of God	Weather	227	—	—	2	—
Infrastructure	Network Rail	51	5,560	398	46	727
LUL	Sharing of track with London Underground	—	—	109	—	—
Miscellaneous	7/7 Bombings	—	—	—	—	—
Total		10,898	16,351	2,336	643	2,590

		Train operating company				
Causation	*Summary*	*Gatwick*	*GNER*	*Island Line*	*MML*	*Northern*
Depot-related	Shunting incident, train preparation	—	5	—	41	404
Operation	Planning error, service recovery plan, traded services specifically	—	4	—	14	743
Train crew	Lack of driver/Train manager	12	6	3	36	484
Fleet	Technical faults	165	225	18	205	4,353
Station	Retail related	—	1	—	2	205
External	Weather, fatality	187	20	6	59	390
Miscellaneous	TOC-on-Self	—	—	—	—	—
TOC-on-TOC	Effect of other operators	47	15	—	69	788
Infrastructure	Points Failures	3	7	—	—	628
Infrastructure	Poor Condition of Track/Broken Rail	34	—	—	—	939
Infrastructure	Miscellaneous	102	11	—	—	479
Infrastructure	Overhead Power Supply/Line	—	68	—	—	337
Infrastructure	Level Crossing Failure	—	—	—	—	—
Infrastructure	Signal Failure	49	12	2	—	75
Infrastructure	Animals on line	—	—	—	—	—
Production	Network Rail	4	37	17	—	239
Production	Train Planning	—	—	—	—	21
Engineering	Track Engineering Possessions	2,552	5	—	—	244
Operations	Network Rail-	—	—	—	—	32
Operations	Fatalities	—	34	—	—	330
Operations	Line Side Fires	—	54	—	—	14

Causation	Summary	Train operating company: Gatwick	GNER	Island Line	MML	Northern
Act of God	Weather	—	31	17	—	2,179
Infrastructure	Network Rail	—	—	—	773	—
LUL	Sharing of track with London Underground	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	7/7 Bombings	—	86	—	—	—
Total		3,155	621	63	1,199	12,884

Causation	Summary	Train operating company: SET	Silverlink	Southern	SWT	Thameslink
Depot-related	Shunting incident, train preparation	—	70	182	34	155
Operation	Planning error, service recovery plan, traded services specifically	—	62	28	729	163
Train crew	Lack of driver/Train manager	2,243	753	459	808	311
Fleet	Technical faults	864	1,906	2,629	378	2,549
Station	Retail related	—	44	21	2	101
External	Weather, fatality	—	614	383	439	1,321
Miscellaneous	TOC-on-Self	3,186	—	102	491	—
TOC-on-TOC	Effect of other operators	—	354	88	66	148
Infrastructure	Points Failures	—	—	108	101	—
Infrastructure	Poor Condition of Track/Broken Rail	—	—	73	166	—
Infrastructure	Miscellaneous	—	—	228	786	—
Infrastructure	Overhead Power Supply/Line	—	—	95	—	—
Infrastructure	Level Crossing Failure	—	—	—	—	—
Infrastructure	Signal Failure	—	—	98	29	—
Infrastructure	Animals on line	—	—	—	—	—
Production	Network Rail	—	—	220	40	1,049
Production	Train Planning	—	—	147	91	—
Engineering	Track Engineering Possessions	—	—	84	70	249
Operations	Network Rail-	—	—	—	—	—
Operations	Fatalities	—	—	295	7	—
Operations	Line Side Fires	—	—	214	—	—
Act of God	Weather	—	—	242	—	—
Infrastructure	Network Rail	82	2,515	359	410	1,726
LUL	Sharing of track with London Underground	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	7/7 Bombings	—	—	—	—	—
Total		6,375	6,318	6,055	4,647	7,772

Causation	Summary	Train operating company: TPE	VWG	VXC[1]	WAGN	Wessex
Depot-related	Shunting incident, train preparation	29	11	20	14	142
Operation	Planning error, service recovery plan, traded services specifically	270	9	122	16	56
Train crew	Lack of driver/Train manager	559	33	75	113	192
Fleet	Technical faults	825	967	1,070	557	1,464
Station	Retail related	37	3	1	14	14
External	Weather, fatality	157		54	481	65
Miscellaneous	TOC-on-Self	—	—	—	—	—
TOC-on-TOC	Effect of other operators	517	162	—	112	257
Infrastructure	Points Failures	147	44	37	—	115
Infrastructure	Poor Condition of Track/Broken Rail	187	21	43	265	94
Infrastructure	Miscellaneous	254	141	7	82	63
Infrastructure	Overhead Power Supply/Line	51	—	32	347	—
Infrastructure	Level Crossing Failure	—	1	—	—	3
Infrastructure	Signal Failure	25	7	69	294	43
Infrastructure	Animals on line	—	16	—	—	10
Production	Network Rail	210	12	22	—	42
Production	Train Planning	24	13	33	—	43
Engineering	Track Engineering Possessions	18	44	25	—	58
Operations	Network Rail-	—	236	—	—	—
Operations	Fatalities	76	128	60	—	358
Operations	Line Side Fires	8	1	8	—	23
Act of God	Weather	169	50	114	—	44
Infrastructure	Network Rail	425	370	—	518	221
LUL	Sharing of track with London Underground	—	—	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	7/7 Bombings	—	—	—	—	—
Total		3,988	2,269	1,792	2,813	3,307

[1] Data for Virgin Cross Country is from 1 April to 11 December.

Note:
Data collated by individual TOCs against no set format.

Trams

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has for public investment in the *(a)* Sheffield Supertram, *(b)* Tyne and Wear Metro, *(c)* Manchester Metrolink and *(e)* West Midlands Metro. [39209]

Derek Twigg: The Department has received a bid from the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive for approval of Government funding for two proposed extensions to Sheffield Supertram. We are currently considering their proposals.

In July 2005, Nexus Passenger Transport Executive submitted their 20-year strategy for capital reinvestment

in the Tyne and Wear Metro. The Department is considering requests by Nexus for a contribution to development costs for the strategy.

In regard to Manchester Metrolink, I refer the hon. Member to the Secretary of State for Transport's Statement to the House of 16 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 152WSJ.

In 2000, the Department provisionally approved proposals promoted by Centre, the West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive, for two extensions to Midland Metro. In early 2006 the Department expects to receive an updated business case from the promoters for the scheme.

In reaching decisions on these schemes we will also be taking into account advice from the English regions as part of the regional funding allocation prioritisation process.

Transport Security

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from *(a)* the Metropolitan Police Authority, *(b)* the Metropolitan police, *(c)* the Greater London authority and *(d)* the Mayor of London, with regard to (i) his Department's review of policing at airports and (ii) his Department's review of the British Transport police; and what plans he has to consult interested parties on these representations before taking final decisions on each review. [46382]

Ms Buck: The review of policing at airports is an independent review led by Stephen Boys Smith, jointly supported by the Department for Transport and the Home Office. The review team has written to all interested parties inviting submissions. In some cases, meetings will be held between the review team and the interested party.

Following the Secretary of State's announcement of the BTP review, the Department's review team received representations from a number of organisations, including the Metropolitan Police Service and the London assembly. No representations were received from the Metropolitan Police Authority or the Mayor of London.

The Secretary of State is now considering the initial findings of the review and the appropriate next steps.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum Project (Peterborough)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to provide further funding for the work undertaken in Peterborough under the auspices of the Invest to Save Asylum and Migration Project once the initial allocation has been spent; and if he will make a statement. [46259]

Mr. McNulty: The Peterborough Asylum and Migration project is funded by the Treasury Invest to Save Budget, which provides initial financial backing to projects that demonstrate the capacity to achieve sustainability. The grant is limited for three years and no further allocation is planned after it expires. The Home Office works closely with the Asylum and Migration project to ensure that services currently delivered under the programme can in future be delivered by mainstream service providers as well the voluntary and community sector.

Bereket Yohannes

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the arrangements are for the investigation into the apparent suicide of Bereket Yohannes. [47094]

Mr. McNulty: As Mr. Yohannes died while in immigration detention, Stephen Shaw, the independent Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, has been asked to investigate the incident and this is ongoing.

The police are carrying out their own investigation and this is also ongoing.

Mr. Yohannes' death will also be subject to an inquest and the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will co-operate fully with the Coroner's Office over this.

Channings Wood Prison

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many foreign national prisoners there are at HMP Channings Wood; how many of these are awaiting deportation; how long those awaiting deportation have been waiting; and to which country they are to be deported. [46417]

Fiona Mactaggart: As at 26 January there were 30 foreign national prisoners at Channings Wood prison. One prisoner is awaiting deportation to Jamaica, who would otherwise have expected to be released from prison custody on 24 December 2005. The prisoner in question is awaiting relevant travel documents.

Consultants

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what mechanisms are in place to assess the effectiveness of consultant-led projects in his Department; what sanctions are available to penalise consultants who run unsuccessful projects; how many projects conducted by consultants were assessed as unsuccessful in each year since 2000; and what sanctions were imposed in each case. [29054]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office has published comprehensive internal guidance on actively managing contracts for the engagement of professional services. The guidance details that all Home Office contracts contain clear and explicit terms of reference for consultancies. It emphasises that trained and experienced contract managers are put in place to effect delivery by consultants of a cost effective service that meets contracted time scales, within budget and to laid down specifications. It requires a contract assessment report so that any important lessons and useful information about the performance of the contractor or individuals who provided the service are gained.

Home Office standard contract terms provide that no payments are made until the Department is satisfied with outputs and there is additionally opportunity to take corrective action. If the Department remains dissatisfied,

payment of received invoices can be withheld and if necessary the contract terminated. Additionally terms provide that the Department has sole entitlement to terminate the contract. The Department may also require the replacement, at no extra cost, of non-performing of consultants.

The Department operates the Office of Government Commerce's Gateway review process to provide assurance at critical stages of a project's lifecycle, whether led by departmental staff or consultants. Additionally best practice governance and quality assurance procedures are applied to ensure delivery of all projects to defined costs, outputs and time scales.

No records are held centrally of sanctions applied to consultants engaged on projects, and the information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Crime Prevention

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has commissioned on the effects on recidivism of the use of cautions for crimes of robbery. [46824]

Fiona Mactaggart: No research has been commissioned which directly addresses this issue.

Crime Statistics

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were (i) prosecuted for and (ii) convicted of (A) murder and (B) manslaughter in England and Wales in 2004. [39715]

Fiona Mactaggart: The available information from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of males and females proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for murder and manslaughter is contained in the table.

Court statistics for 2005 will be available in the autumn 2006.

Males and females proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for offences of murder and manslaughter[1], England and Wales 2004

Number

	Murder		*Manslaughter[2, 3]*	
	Proceeded against	*Found guilty*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Males	685	343	427	544
Females	74	18	41	46

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

[2] Includes: manslaughter, child destruction, infanticide, causing death by dangerous driving, diminished responsibility and causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs.

[3] Found guilty figures may include those prosecutions for murder that were reduced to manslaughter.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of people have received 100 per cent. of a compensation award pursuant to section 13 of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. [46415]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority advise that in 2004–05 there were 32,993 full awards and 2,418 reduced awards. All the reduced awards were reduced under paragraph 13E of the compensation scheme.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what effect a Criminal Injuries Compensation award has on the payment of benefits to a claimant. [46418]

Mr. Plaskitt: I have been asked to reply.

Current income-support and jobseeker's allowance rules offer generous treatment to awards of compensation made to victims of violent crime. Our general policy is to allow injured people to safeguard their long-term financial position without losing benefit entitlement.

The normal and most beneficial way for an injured person to handle a large payment of compensation is to place it in trust. The capital value of a trust is entirely disregarded, as are any payments from it, provided they are intended and used for items other than everyday living expenses, for example, the injured person's special needs. Even when used for everyday living expenses, payments are disregarded if they are no more than £20 per week.

Following a recent review of the rules, a full disregard will apply to income derived from monies held in trust, as a consequence of a personal injury, from October 2006. This will align the income support and jobseeker's allowance rules with those in state pension credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit.

In addition, a new grace period of 52 weeks will be introduced, during which any lump sum personal injury payment, can be automatically disregarded without needing to be placed in a trust fund at the outset.

Criminal Records Bureau

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications to the Criminal Records Bureau are outstanding; and how many applications were outstanding in *(a)* September 2005, *(b)* June 2005 and *(c)* January 2005. [45504]

Andy Burnham: Information is not available to provide an answer in the specific format requested. However, during the 12 month period up to 31 December 2005, the average time for completion of all Enhanced Disclosures is 31.5 days, excluding any time an application has to be returned to a customer.

On this basis, the average for the periods specified in the hon. Member's question are:

In January 2005 it was 28.4 working days;

In June 2005 it was 26.4 working days;

In September 2005 it was 31.1 working days;

As at 31 December 2005, the average time taken was 32.9 working days.

These calculations include any time an application has to be returned to a customer and is not an accurate indication of the Bureau's performance, because

Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) has no means of controlling when such information may be provided by the customer.

Departmental Savings

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what administrative savings have been made by his Department in each of the last eight years. [34945]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Value for money (VFM) improvements in administration contributes to the delivery of the Department's wider VFM targets. The 2004 Spending Review reclassified frontline operational costs for areas such as prison establishments and immigration case-working to Programme expenditure. This will enable a more effective focus in bearing down on headquarters and back-office overheads without damaging front-line delivery.

As set out in the Home Office Targets Autumn Performance Report 2005 (Cm 6707), during 2004–05 the Home Office and the Police Service achieved overall VFM gains worth £845 million per annum of which £554 million was cashable. Of these, Headquarters reform contributed £32 million, all of which was cashable, an important contributor being the a reduction in Home Office headquarters headcount.

DNA Profiles

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1111–2W, on DNA profiles, how many of the 24,000 DNA samples taken from children under 18 years who were never cautioned or charged were subsequently used successfully to prosecute a crime. [46987]

Andy Burnham: Information on the number of DNA profiles used successfully to prosecute a crime is not collected by the Home Office, but information is available on the number of such profiles which have been used to assist crime investigations. It has been established that to date 541 DNA profiles of the 24,168 DNA profiles taken from persons under 18 years who had not been charged or cautioned for an offence have subsequently been 'matched' to DNA recovered from unsolved crime scenes stored on the National DNA Database, providing the police with key intelligence leads on the possible identity of the offender and assisting crime investigation and detection.

Harmondsworth Detention Centre

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the procedures are for the delivery of private mail to detainees in Harmondsworth detention centre; and whether mail is read by centre staff. [47073]

Fiona Mactaggart: Post for detainees at Harmondsworth is received at the centre and the detainee's room number is noted on the top. It is then sorted into the relevant accommodation unit and distributed to the unit officer. Mail is opened by the detainees in front of the officer who ensures it contains nothing prohibited. Parcels are opened in the presence of the detainee in reception and any banned items are removed and placed in to sealed storage with the detainee present. A receipt is issued if items are retained.

The following applies to all removal centres, not only at Harmondsworth.

In accordance with Detention Centre Rule 27 (4), outgoing or incoming mail must not be opened, read or stopped unless there is reasonable cause to believe that its contents may endanger the security of the removal centre or the safety of others or are otherwise of a criminal nature or where it is not possible to determine the addressee or sender.

Where the centre considers it necessary to open outgoing or incoming mail (for the reasons referred to above) they must advise the relevant detainee of the reason for doing so and give the opportunity for him/her to be present when it is being opened.

The centre must keep a central record (i.e. not in individual case files) of every occasion where mail is opened, the reasons for doing so and whether the detainee was present.

Where parcels are received for detainees, these must be opened by the detainee in the presence of centre staff. Where the items therein are not ones which the detainee can keep in his/her personal possession, he/she should be advised of the reason for this and informed that they will be held with his/her property held by the centre. The detainee must be given a receipt for the property and a record must be kept.

Identity Cards

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent estimate he has made of the cost to *(a)* each Department and *(b)* each citizen of the introduction of the national identity card scheme. [43587]

Andy Burnham: The Home Office has developed its current best estimate of the cost of using the ID cards scheme to support the services which it oversees and these costs have been incorporated into the business case.

In deriving these estimates account has to be taken of current and planned levels of investment in similar or related technologies and the types of use required to support the particular services which the Home Office oversees. Not all services will require a high degree of integration between the ID cards scheme and other IT systems. For many, integration costs will be absorbed in the usual cycle of system upgrades and technology refresh. Therefore, these costs are not in our estimates and would be a matter for each department to consider based on their business case for using the scheme.

We cannot release the detailed estimated costs for integrating IT systems within the Home Office and other Government Departments at this stage as these elements may be acquired from the market. The estimates are therefore commercially sensitive and to release them may prejudice the procurement process and the Department's ability to obtain value for money from potential suppliers.

The current best estimates for the cost to the citizen were outlined in the regulatory impact assessment published on 25 May 2005. The current best estimate for the cost of a passport and ID card package is £93. In October 2005, my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary announced that a stand alone ID card for British citizens would cost £30.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations his Department has received from *(a)* Christian, *(b)* Hindu, *(c)* Muslim and *(d)* Sikh communities in the West Midlands region on the proposed identity cards scheme. [46878]

Andy Burnham: The identity cards programme team has received no representations from individuals or communities identifying themselves as either Christian, Hindu, Muslim or Sikh and living in the West Midlands region.

However, the special issues research conducted in October and November 2004, comprised a number of focus groups which included a group of Hindu females and a group of Sikh males from Birmingham. This issues raised from these particular groups was the concern that Sikh men would not have to remove their turbans in order to be enrolled on the ID card scheme. The group of Sikh men were also concerned that they might have to carry their ID card with them at all times. Both the Hindu female and Sikh male groups expressed views that the ID card was a positive idea as it would allow people to prove their identity and would assist if someone had a car accident for example. The Sikh male group also expressed a preference that staff working in the enrolment centres in areas of high ethnic minorities should be bi-lingual. The Hindu female group also expressed concerns that information on the Register might be 'sold' to private companies. The Identity Cards Bill which is currently before Parliament includes no such provision.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many full-time equivalents were employed to answer hon. Members' letters to the immigration and nationality directorate in each of the last five years. [46479]

Mr. McNulty: The figures on 1 April in each year for full-time equivalent posts within the immigration and nationality directorate (IND) engaged in handling Members' correspondence were as follows:

	Number
2005	276.9
2004	229.5
2003	170.0

These figures include both posts whose main role is drafting replies to Members' letters and those whose chief responsibilities relate to the administration of the correspondence handling process. They exclude, however, those posts in respect of which dealing with Members' correspondence represents only a minor part of the work. Because of organisational changes within IND it is not possible to provide comparable figures for 2002 and 2001.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of letters addressed to the MPs' correspondence section of the immigration and nationality directorate between 6 May and 30 November 2005 had been replied to by 1 January 2006. [46480]

Mr. McNulty: Of 16,140 Members' letters sent direct to the immigration and nationality directorate and received between 6 May and 30 November 2005, 13,455 (83 per cent.) were answered by 1 January this year.

IT Systems

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2027W, on IT systems, when he expects the remaining probation areas to be connected to the prison OASys IT system; and if he will make a statement. [47291]

Fiona Mactaggart: Our intention is that all 42 probation areas will be connected to the Prison Service OASys IT system by the end of this financial year.

London Bombings

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether UK officials investigating the 7 July 2005 bombings have visited *(a)* Bosnia-Herzegovina, *(b)* Kosovo, *(c)* Albania and *(d)* Serbia-Montenegro as part of their investigations. [46655]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* The events of 7 July remain the subject of an ongoing police investigation and it is not the Government's policy to comment on specific operational details in such cases.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* staff and *(b)* other resources have been allocated to each regional offender manager in the National Offender Management Service. [23270]

Fiona Mactaggart: Each Regional Offender Manager (ROM) is allowed to have up to eight members of staff, including the ROM. In recognition of their additional workload, the offices of the South East and Welsh ROMs have been allocated an additional post.

The budget given to each Regional Offender Manager in the financial year 2005–06 ranges between £456,314 and £654,506. These figures are dependent on profiles reflecting the differing needs and requirements of each region, and cover staff and office management costs.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the regional offender managers within the National Offender Management Service; and when each was appointed to the post. [44876]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is provided in the following table.

Name	Date	Location
Steve Murphy	1 April 2005	London
Sarah Payne	1 January 2005	South East
Kevin Lockyer	2 December 2004	South West
Trevor Williams	1 November 2004	East of England
Linda Jones	5 December 2004	East Midlands
Steve Goode	13 December 2004	West Midlands
Carol Bernard	1 December 2004	Wales
Paul Wilson	1 December 2004	Yorkshire and Humberside
Liz Hill	1 April 2005	North West
Mitch Egan	1 April 2005	North East

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the prison establishments falling within the areas covered by each regional offender manager. [44877]

Fiona Mactaggart: A list of both public and contracted out prisons in each of the nine regions and Wales is in the following.

North West:
- Altcourse
- Buckley Hall
- Forest Bank
- Garth
- Haverigg
- Hindley
- Kirkham
- Lancaster Castle
- Lancaster Farm
- Liverpool
- Manchester
- Preston
- Risley
- Styal
- Thorn Cross
- Wymott

North East:
- Acklington
- Castington
- Deerbolt
- Durham
- Frankland
- Holme House
- Kirklevington Grange
- Low Newton

Yorkshire and Humberside:
- Askham Grange
- Doncaster
- Everthorpe
- Full Sutton
- Hull
- Leeds
- Lindholme
- Moorland Closed
- Moorland Open
- New Hall
- Northallerton
- Wakefield
- Wealstun
- Wetherby
- Wolds

East Midlands:
- Ashwell
- Foston Hall
- Gartree
- Glen Parva
- Leicester
- Lincoln
- Lowdham Grange
- Morton Hall
- North Sea Camp
- Nottingham
- Onley
- Ranby
- Rye Hill
- Stocken
- Sudbury
- Wellingborough
- Whatton

East of England:
- Bedford
- Blundeston
- Bullwood Hall
- Chelmsford
- Edmunds Hill
- Highpoint
- Hollesley Bay
- Littlehey
- Norwich
- Peterborough
- The Mount
- Warren Hill
- Wayland
- Whitemoor

West Midlands:
- Birmingham
- Blakenhurst
- Brinsford
- Brockhill
- Dovegate
- Drake Hall
- Featherstone
- Hewell Grange
- Long Lartin
- Shrewsbury
- Stafford
- Stoke Health
- Swinfen Hall
- Werrington

South East:
- Albany
- Aylesbury
- Blantyre House
- Bronzefield
- Bullingdon
- Camp Hill
- Canterbury
- Coldingley

Cookham Wood
Downview
East Sutton Park
Elmley
Ford
Grendon
Highdown
Huntercombe
Kingston
Lewes
Maidstone
Parkhurst
Rochester
Send
Spring Hill
Standford Hill
Swaleside
Winchester
Woodhill

London:

Belmarsh
Brixton
Feltham
Holloway
Latchmere House
Pentonville
Wandsworth
Wormwood Scrubs

South West:

Bristol
Channings Wood
Dartmoor
Dorchester
Eastwood Park
Erlestoke
Exeter
Gloucester
Guys Marsh
Leyhill
Portland
Shepton Mallet
The Verne

Wales:

Cardiff
Parc
Swansea
Usk/Prescoed

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the first assessment of the effectiveness and value for money of regional offender managers is expected to be *(a)* made and *(b)* published. [44881]

Fiona Mactaggart: The effectiveness and value for money of the regional offender managers will be assessed against the target to deliver a five per cent. reduction in re-offending by adults and young offenders by 2007–08 compared to 2002–03, leading to a 10 per cent. reduction by the end of the decade. Statistics on reducing re-offending are published annually by the Home Office and report progress against the target on reducing re-offending.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether regional offender managers will commission prison places *(a)* from local governors, *(b)* from area managers and *(c)* across England and Wales. [44882]

Fiona Mactaggart: Regional Offender Managers will commission prison places through Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with the public sector Prison Service at a regional level. SLA's will specify the total number of spaces commissioned in a region and include a breakdown by establishment. For contracted prisons, contracts specify the number of places provided by individual providers. The SLA for the High Security Estate will be between the National Offender Manager and the Director General of Her Majesty's Prison Service.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of *(a)* male and *(b)* female prisoners in England and Wales have re-offended since the introduction of the National Offender Management Service. [46580]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is not available. To calculate the re-offending rate we need to consider criminal activity in the two year follow up period. The most recent figures are for the 2002 adult cohort and can be found on the Home Office's website (www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb2505.pdf).

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what formal training is provided for staff working in the National Offender Management Service prior to their contact with prisoners; and how much has been allocated for such training. [46581]

Fiona Mactaggart: Newly recruited prison officers participate in the eight-week prison officer entry level training programme. This year Her Majesty's Prison Service allocated £1,193,646 to provide 1,100 programme places through its central staff college. A further 1,100 places are provided through 12 establishment-based centres, but aggregate budget figures are not available and to collect them would incur disproportionate cost.

The national probation service commissions a probation officer qualification scheme that leads to the Diploma in Probation Studies. The training for the qualification is work based, therefore a trainee probation officer may spend time on placement in a prison at different stages of the two year course. There are currently 1,340 trainee probation officers in the programme and the sum allocated for the training in 2005–06 is £51.4 million.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the latest projection is of the number of staff that each regional offender manager will require for each of the next three years. [44944]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* National Offender Management Service (NOMS) is currently considering the future resource requirements

of regional offender mangers (ROMs) and until decisions have been made about these no further statistical prediction can be made.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the requirement for *(a)* prison places, *(b)* prison healthcare services, *(c)* prison workshop places, *(d)* prison programme places and *(e)* annual prison escorts for each regional offender manager; and what the outcomes of each of these assessments has been. [44945]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* One of the key objectives for the National Offender Management Service in the next year is to map out the need of offenders on a regional basis, using OASys and other assessment tools. This will enable regional offender managers to commission services on the basis of identified need rather than historic provision. For 2006–07, service level agreements will be based largely on existing service provision.

Offences Against the Person Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people found guilty of an offence under section 18 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 were sentenced to *(a)* five years' imprisonment, *(b)* four years' imprisonment, *(c)* three years' imprisonment, *(d)* two years'' imprisonment, *(e)* one year imprisonment, *(f)* six months' imprisonment, *(g)* community service and *(h)* a fine only in (i) Essex, (ii) the Metropolitan Police part of London, (iii) Hertfordshire and (iv) England and Wales, broken down by (A) sex and (B) age in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [37377]

Fiona Mactaggart: I will arrange for the information requested to be placed in the Library.

Police

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the daily cost is of holding a prisoner in a police cell in each police force area. [37756]

Mr. Charles Clarke: This information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Prisons

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of the Prison Service budget was spent on *(a)* educating adult prisoners and *(b)* prisoners in young offenders institutions in the last five years for which figures are available. [43580]

Fiona Mactaggart: Responsibility and funding for prisoner education transferred from the Prison Service to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in 2002–03.

From 2000–01 to 2002–03 inclusive, spending on education for all prisoners represented just over 2 per cent. of total Prison Service expenditure. Following the transfer and allocation of additional funding secured by DfES in SR2002, spending on education for all prisoners rose to 3 per cent. a year in 2003–04 and 2004–05.

The Prison Service education budget split for 2004–05 was 82 per cent. for prisoners in the adult estate and 18 per cent. for prisoners in young offenders institutions.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Measuring Quality of Prison Life audit was last conducted for each prison; what mechanisms there are for public access to these audits; what assessment he has made of the results; and if he will make a statement. [44344]

Fiona Mactaggart: The following table details when prisons were last audited under the Measuring the Quality of Prison Life (MQPL) survey. MQPL, the Weighted Scorecard, cost performance, compliance with Prison Service standards, findings from external inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons and the Independent Monitoring Board inform the quarterly assessment of performance submitted to Ministers through the National Offender Management Service. Survey results and reports may be obtained from the Home Office Open Government Unit.

Date	*Establishment*
22 November 2004	Acklington
5 January 2004	Albany
3 January 2005	Altcourse
9 February 2004	Ashwell
9 August 2004	Askham Grange
11 April 2005	Aylesbury
22 March 2004	Bedford
17 January 2005	Belmarsh
20 September 2004	Birmingham
11 October 2004	Blakenhurst
28 March 2005	Blantyre House
4 July 2005	Blundeston
19 December 2005	Brinsford
6 September 2004	Bristol
30 August 2004	Brixton
10 October 2005	Brockhill
30 August 2005	Bronzefield
7 March 2005	Bullingdon
1 March 2004	Bullwood Hall
14 March 2005	Camp Hill
13 October 2003	Canterbury
10 May 2005	Cardiff
15 August 2005	Castington
24 January 2005	Channings Wood
1 December 2003	Chelmsford
8 March 2004	Coldingley
26 January 2004	Cookham Wood
2 February 2004	Dartmoor
13 April 2004	Deerbolt
26 January 2004	Doncaster
29 September 2003	Dorchester
12 July 2004	Dovegate
9 December 2005	Downview
17 May 2004	Drake Hall
18 July 2005	Durham
25 July 2005	East Sutton Park
25 April 2005	Eastwood Park
26 July 2005	Edmunds Hill
8 November 2004	Elmley
13 June 2005	Erlestoke

Date	Establishment
27 July 2005	Everthorpe
18 April 2005	Exeter
22 November 2004	Featherstone
28 November 2005	Feltham
21 February 2005	Ford
28 March 2005	Forest Bank
16 February 2004	Foston Hall
21 March 2005	Frankland
22 March 2004	Full Sutton
24 January 2005	Garth
15 November 2004	Gartree
19 September 2005	Glen Parva
12 January 2004	Gloucester
5 April 2004	Grendon
17 October 2005	Guys Marsh
4 July 2005	Haverigg
10 October 2005	Hewell Grange
16 February 2004	Highdown
7 April 2003	Highpoint North
6 December 2004	Highpoint
7 March 2005	Hindley
13 October 2003	Hollesley Bay
12 July 2004	Holloway
14 November 2005	Hull
3 January 2005	Kingston
21 November 2005	Kirkham
15 March 2004	Kirklevington
16 May 2005	Lancaster
31 May 2004	Lancaster Farms
26 September 2005	Latchmere House
3 October 2005	Leeds
25 October 2004	Leicester
10 January 2005	Lewes
16 May 2005	Leyhill
8 November 2005	Lincoln
7 November 2005	Lindholme
10 May 2004	Littlehey
18 October 2004	Liverpool
14 February 2005	Long Lartin
1 June 2005	Low Newton
21 February 2005	Lowdham Grange
17 January 2005	Maidstone
30 August 2005	Manchester
20 October 2003	Moorland
26 September 2005	Morton Hall
28 February 2005	New Hall
7 February 2005	Northallerton
18 October 2004	Norwich
20 October 2003	Nottingham
5 September 2005	Onley
14 November 2005	Parc Adult
3 November 2003	Parkhurst
8 March 2004	Pentonville
3 May 2004	Portland
25 April 2005	Preston
9 August 2004	Ranby
14 March 2005	Reading
12 September 2005	Risley
1 November 2004	Rochester
26 September 2005	Rye Hill
8 December 2003	Shepton Mallet
17 October 2005	Shrewsbury
26 April 2004	Springhill
18 April 2005	Stafford
29 November 2004	Stanford Hill
15 August 2005	Stocken
23 February 2004	Stoke Heath
30 August 2005	Styal
8 November 2004	Sudbury
6 June 2005	Swaleside
25 July 2005	Swansea
8 August 2005	Swinfen Hall
7 June 2004	The Mount
15 August 2005	The Verne
13 December 2004	Thorn Cross
13 September 2004	Usk and Prescoed
6 June 2005	Wakefield
12 September 2005	Wandsworth
26 January 2004	Wayland
23 August 2004	Wealston
8 September 2003	Weare
4 July 2005	Wellingborough
11 October 2004	Whatton
23 May 2005	Whitemoor
15 November 2004	Winchester
28 July 2003	Wolds
10 October 2005	Woodhill
5 April 2004	Wormwood Scrubs
2 August 2005	Wymott

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to extend the personal officer scheme across the prison estate; and if he will make a statement. [44351]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prisons are encouraged to operate Personal officer schemes and most already do so.

The introduction of the offender management model, currently planned for April 2007 for offenders in custody, will result in changes in the way individual offenders are managed and in the role of the personal officer. All sentenced prisoners will then have an offender supervisor, normally a prison officer, who will help ensure they follow an individual sentence plan designed to reduce re-offending and prepare them for their return to the community.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will commission further research into the comparative operating costs of publicly and privately operated prisons; [45182]

(2) when the last review was made of the comparative costs and performance of privately and publicly operated prisons; and what the outcome of that review was. [45183]

Fiona Mactaggart: The last review of the comparative costs and performance of privately and publicly managed prisons was in respect of 1998–99. Since then the performance of the prisons in both sectors has been continuously monitored through key performance targets. There are no current plans to commission further research.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of the operation of the Office of Contracted Prisons was in each of the last eight years for which figures are available. [45184]

Fiona Mactaggart: The cost of the operation of the Office for Contracted Prisons for the years 2003–04 and 2004–05 is shown in the following table:

£000

	2003–04	2004–05
Pay	[1]407	[1]606
Non-pay	415	397
Total	[2]822	[2]1,003

[1] Additional pay costs were incurred during 2004–05 because of the recruitment of a full team of office support staff.

[2] Figures are for the operation of the Office for Contracted Prisons only: they do not include the costs of contracts or of controllers teams based in individual prisons.

Note:
Data cannot be provided for earlier years as the Office for Contracted Prisons was not created until April 2003. Before this date, the management of contracted prisons was the responsibility of individual Prison Service area managers: costs for the contracted prisons were included within individual Prison Service area budgets.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made towards achieving his Department's targets for *(a)* holding prisoners closer to home and *(b)* developing opportunities for jobs and housing when prisoners are released. [45209]

Fiona Mactaggart: There are currently no targets for the distance at which prisoners are held from their home address.

Employment, training and education (ETE) outcomes for prisoners released before April 2005 can be separated only at disproportionate cost. Education training and employment (ETE) outcomes also include those who attended Freshstart appointments at Jobcentre Plus. Freshstart is the initiative whereby prisoners who do not have a job or training place to go to on release are linked into employment, training and benefits advice and support immediately after release. The Accommodation and ETE targets for 2004–05 and the recorded outcomes are given in the following table.

Number of discharges 2004–05	Number with accommodation	Number with ETE	Target	Percentage target
Accommodation				
85,685	66,888	—	64,765	+3.2
ETE				
85,685	—	41,146	38,012	+7.6

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans his Department has for the building of new prisons in England and Wales. [45540]

Fiona Mactaggart: There are no plans at present to build any new prisons in England or Wales.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost per prison place was in each prison establishment in England and Wales for the financial year 2004–05. [45848]

Fiona Mactaggart: The cost per prison place for each establishment in the prison estate for 2004–05 is shown in the following table. Costs per place vary considerably across the estate, with costs for securing those prisoners deemed to be of highest risk (Category A) being at the highest end of the spectrum and the cost of a place in an open establishment being at the lowest.

Cost per prison place

Establishment	Sector	Cost per place (£)
Acklington	Public	16,816
Albany	Public	21,293
Altcourse	Contracted	50,848
Ashfield	Contracted	41,047
Ashwell	Public	19,084
Askham Grange	Public	24,032
Aylesbury	Public	30,877
Bedford	Public	36,648
Belmarsh	Public	44,265
Birmingham	Public	25,081
Blakenhurst	Public	26,506
Blakenhurst	Contracted	26,506
Blantyre House	Public	23,339
Blundeston	Public	26,715
Brinsford	Public	31,978
Bristol	Public	41,443
Brixton	Public	35,799

Cost per prison place

Establishment	Sector	Cost per place (£)
Brockhill	Public	43,086
Buckley Hall	Public	27,480
Bullingdon	Public	25,380
Bullwood Hall	Public	45,044
Camp Hill	Public	22,592
Canterbury	Public	35,858
Cardiff	Public	30,343
Castington	Public	35,125
Channings Wood	Public	21,289
Chelmsford	Public	34,824
Coldingley	Public	24,704
Cookham Wood	Public	38,952
Dartmoor	Public	21,973
Deerbolt	Public	27,288
Doncaster	Contracted	24,942
Dorchester	Public	47,607
Dovegate	Contracted	28,826
Dover	Public	27,250
Downview	Public	32,029
Drake Hall	Public	25,166
Durham	Public	35,035
East Sutton Park	Public	25,916
Eastwood Park	Public	33,145
Edmunds Hill	Public	26,566
Elmley	Public	21,978
Erlestoke	Public	19,414
Everthorpe	Public	21,924
Exeter	Public	37,862
Featherstone	Public	22,909
Feltham	Public	48,885
Ford	Public	15,074
Forest Bank	Contracted	27,359
Foston Hall	Public	31,682
Frankland	Public	44,259
Full Sutton	Public	43,062
Garth	Public	24,523
Gartree	Public	28,374
Glen Parva	Public	29,432
Gloucester	Public	41,169
Grendon	Public	24,924
Guys Marsh	Public	18,983

Cost per prison place

Establishment	*Sector*	*Cost per place (£)*
Haslar	Public	26,683
Haverigg	Public	21,108
Hewell Grange	Public	22,912
High Down	Public	29,351
Highpoint	Public	17,721
Hindley	Public	34,592
Hollesley Bay	Public	20,830
Holloway	Public	46,755
Holme House	Public	23,953
Hull	Public	27,446
Huntercombe	Public	40,502
Kingston	Public	29,336
Kirkham	Public	22,415
Kirklevington	Public	17,649
Lancaster	Public	44,900
Lancaster Farms	Public	34,755
Latchmere House	Public	17,029
Leeds	Public	31,376
Leicester	Public	47,248
Lewes	Public	26,821
Leyhill	Public	21,360
Lincoln	Public	30,449
Lindholme	Public	24,558
Littlehey	Public	18,481
Liverpool	Public	23,695
Long Lartin	Public	35,497
Low Newton	Public	27,905
Lowdham Grange	Contracted	25,677
Maidstone	Public	20,609
Manchester	Public	30,948
Moorland	Public	22,513
Motion Hall	Public	20,244
Mount	Public	20,255
New Hall	Public	41,834
North Sea Camp	Public	16,083
Northallerton	Public	39,767
Norwich	Public	28,455
Nottingham	Public	33,677
Onley	Public	23,146
Pare	Contracted	38,577
Parkhurst	Public	32,403
Pentonville	Public	31,002
Portland	Public	23,844
Preston	Public	38,382
Ranby	Public	23,318
Reading	Public	43,296
Risley	Public	19,728
Rochester	Public	24,129
Rye Hill	Contracted	24,003
Send	Public	26,941
Shepton Mallet	Public	32,894
Shrewsbury	Public	45,219
Stafford	Public	20,666
Standford Hill	Public	19,152
Stocken	Public	19,061
Stoke Heath	Public	31,552
Styal	Public	33,791
Sudbury	Public	15,414
Swaleside	Public	20,162
Swansea	Public	41,639
Swinfen Hall	Public	31,320
Thorn Cross	Public	27,855
Usk Prescoed	Public	26,366
Verne	Public	18,321
Wakefield	Public	30,913
Wandsworth	Public	30,801
Warren Hill	Public	44,340
Wayland	Public	17,944
Wealstun	Public	20,374
Weare	Public	20,547
Wellingborough	Public	21,152
Werrington	Public	47,004
Wetherby	Public	34,875
Whatton	Public	22,401
Whitemoor	Public	51,954
Winchester	Public	35,615
Wolds	Contracted	21,507
Woodhill	Public	41,213
Wormwood Scrubs	Public	24,809
Wymott	Public	20,311

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* male and *(b)* female remand prisoners were subsequently (i) acquitted and (ii) sentenced to a non-custodial penalty in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [45850]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* The information requested is provided in the following table.

Final court outcome for persons remanded in custody at some stage in magistrates court proceedings or at the Crown court in England and Wales, 2004

	Males	*Females*	*All persons*
Final court outcome			
Acquitted, etc	15,615	1,409	17,024
Convicted:			
Discharge	2,144	389	2,533
Fine	3,545	347	3,892
Community sentence	13,717	1,948	15,665
Fully suspended sentence	226	93	319
Immediate custody	40,491	3,197	43,687
Total	78,460	7,749	86,209

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes in cost he expects will be realised as a result of the performance test of the prisons on the Isle of Sheppey. [46051]

Fiona Mactaggart: The performance test at Sheppey was designed to encourage better quality and value for money in the supervision and care of offenders on the Isle of Sheppey. In its proposals, the Prison Service identified approximately £2 million of cost savings which will be reinvested to deliver improved quality. Hence, the proposals are cost neutral, but will deliver enhanced outcomes.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he *(a)* has taken and *(b)* plans to take to change the role of prison officers in relation to the promotion of education and learning within prisons; and if he will make a statement. [46180]

Fiona Mactaggart: Education for offenders in custody is provided by contractors. There are no plans to change the role of prison officers in relation to the promotion of offender education and learning within prisons.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have been re-categorised from category C to category D at Coldingley prison in each of the last six months. [46739]

Fiona Mactaggart: The table contains the relevant information for the last six months of 2005.

	Number
July	17
August	15
September	8
October	6
November	13
December	15

Probation Service

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of levels of staff absenteeism in the probation service in each region in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [44384]

Fiona Mactaggart: The level of staff sickness absence for each region of the national probation service (NPS) since 2001–02 is shown in the following table.

The national average so far this year stands at 12.2 days, a marginal improvement from 12.3 days achieved in each of the two preceding years.

The need for the NPS to improve its performance on sickness absence is acknowledged and is actively being addressed. The director of probation has asked all areas to produce a performance improvement plan that sets out clear actions to reduce their levels of absence.

National probation service: Average days' sickness absence per member of staff per year

Region	2001–02[1]	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06[2]
West Midlands	12.7	12.2	12.5	12.0	13.5
North East	11.3	11.4	11.8	12.7	12.0
East of England	11.3	10.7	11.6	11.0	11.1
North West	13.4	13.4	13.3	13.2	13.0
East Midlands	10.5	11.2	10.6	11.2	11.2
Yorks and Humberside	13.7	11.6	11.2	9.7	9.9
South East	12.0	11.9	11.2	11.9	12.5
South West	14.1	11.9	13.1	11.0	9.7
London	12.0	10.2	14.6	16.5	14.4
Wales	15.6	14.2	14.3	12.9	13.1
England and Wales	12.7	11.9	12.3	12.3	12.2

[1] July 2001-March 2002
[2] April-November 2005

Source:
Monthly sickness absence monitoring returns submitted by the 42 probation areas to the national probation directorate.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the proposed police boundary changes will affect the probation service in Wales. [45474]

Fiona Mactaggart: Until the future structure of policing in Wales has been decided, it is not possible to be clear about the implications for the probation service.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether further legislation will be necessary to introduce contestability into the provision of probation services. [46183]

Fiona Mactaggart: Local probation boards currently have an exclusive statutory duty to make arrangements for the provision of probation services. This enables them to enter into contracts with other organisations to deliver services on their behalf. But legislation is necessary to enable the Secretary of State to contract direct with a range of organisations to deliver probation services.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his proposals for restructuring the Probation Service allow *(a)* members of the public and *(b)* local organisations to be informed of applicants for contracts to provide probation services; and what powers there will be to make objections to applicants. [46499]

Fiona Mactaggart: There are no plans to publish the names of those tendering for a contract to provide probation services. Competitions will be organised in full compliance with the revised EU Procurement Directives; an objection to a bidder's participation in the competition would be considered in the light of the Directives which allow for the disqualification of a bidder under specified circumstances such as fraud.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his proposals for restructuring the Probation Service will give offenders rights to object to being supervised by a particular provider of probation services under contract. [46500]

Fiona Mactaggart: No. Offenders will not be able to object to being supervised by any particular provider of probation services.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many responses to the consultation paper "Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending" were received from individual members of *(a)* probation staff, *(b)* probation services and *(c)* probation boards; and how many were supportive of the proposal; [46501]

(2) if he will place in the Library the response he has received from the Magistrates' Association to the paper "Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending"; [46504]

(3) if he will place in the Library the response he has received from the Police Federation to the paper "Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending"; [46505]

(4) if he will place in the Library the response he has received from the members of the judiciary to the paper "Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending"; [46506]

(5) how many responses were received to the consultation paper, "Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending"; and how many of these responses were supportive of the Government's position. [46509]

Fiona Mactaggart: Around 750 responses to the consultation paper have been received from a range of individuals and organisations. These are being analysed at the moment. We will publish a summary of them, along with our response to the key issues raised, within three months of the closing date for the consultation (20 December 2005).

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he intends to take with regard to restructuring the Probation Service if employees refuse to accept the transfer of their employment from a probation board to a probation trust or private company. [46502]

Fiona Mactaggart: When probation trusts are established, most staff will transfer from probation boards to the new trusts on the same terms and conditions of employment. If, in due course, work transfers to an alternative provider, staff will generally transfer, with their pay, terms and conditions protected by TUPE and the recent extension of the Two Tier Workforce Agreement. Staff who do not wish to transfer will be free to terminate their contract of employment. The employment status of chief officers will change in the transition from boards to trusts: they will cease to be statutory office holders appointed by the Secretary of State and will instead be appointed and employed by the trust itself. If a chief is not appointed to the trust, he or she will be compensated accordingly.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether the introduction of the proposals to restructure the probation service has been *(a)* cancelled and *(b)* postponed; [46508]

(2) when legislation will be introduced to give him the power to commission probation services; [46510]

(3) what plans he has for the future of probation boards. [46511]

Fiona Mactaggart: Proposals for the restructuring of the probation service were set out in the Home Office consultation paper, "Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending", published on 20 October. Legislation will be introduced when parliamentary time allows.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what methodology was used to determine the extent to which proposals for the future of the Probation Service will reduce the adult reconviction rate as set out in paragraph 31 of the consultation paper, Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending; and over what period of time the expected reduction is expected to be achieved. [46513]

Fiona Mactaggart: The National Offender Management Service has a target to reduce re-offending by 5 per cent. by 2008 and by 10 per cent. by the end of the decade. The restructuring proposals are part of a broader programme of change, including the introduction of end-to-end offender management and improvements in IT systems, which will help to contribute to the achievement of that target. The consultation paper does not seek to quantify the extent to which the restructuring proposals alone will reduce re-offending. But experience elsewhere suggests that the introduction of competition in the delivery of services helps to drive up performance. Examples from the custodial sector are given in the partial regulatory impact assessment which was published alongside the consultation paper.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what methodology was used to produce the figures for cost savings contained in the Regulatory Impact Statement for the proposals for restructuring the probation service. [46514]

Fiona Mactaggart: The indicative cost savings contained in the partial Regulatory Impact Statement assumed cost savings within the range of 3 per cent. to 8.5 per cent. through contesting certain activities of the national probation service. This range was based on the experience of the savings delivered through the market and performance testing programme within the Prison Service. The savings profile assumed a 10 year programme of contestability with no more that 12 per cent. by value of probation business being contested in any one year. The projected cash savings were discounted using a standard 25 year discounted cash flow analysis.

Quick Check

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidelines his Department has issued on the use of the fingerprint testing machine quick check; and if he will make a statement. [43201]

Mr. McNulty: Written guidance in the form of policy and process on the use of quick-check is available on the Immigration Nationality Directorate (IND) website. Additionally, training (and continued access to expert advice) on the practical application of the machines is made available on request.

Reoffending

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of offenders *(a)* released early from prison and *(b)* who had completed their sentences reoffended within two years in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [44389]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data on the two year reoffending rate by proportion of sentence served is not collated centrally.

However, information on offenders recalled while under Home Detention Curfew and on those offenders recalled to custody following release on parole are published annually. The latest data are shown in Chapter 10 of Offender Management Caseload Statistics, a copy of which is placed in the Library.

Sex Offenders

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidelines for the issuing of licences to *(a)* sex offenders and *(b)* child sex offenders his Department publishes; and if he will make a statement. [45865]

Fiona Mactaggart: Offenders who are supervised in the community by the probation service following a custodial sentence are subject to a licence, which is issued by the governor of the releasing establishment.

The licence contains the standard conditions for supervision, together with any additional conditions deemed necessary for the purpose of protecting the public from further offending and assisting the offender's rehabilitation.

Additional conditions are inserted on the advice of the probation service and are designed to manage and reduce an offender's risk of re-offending.

The National Probation Service issued guidance on the use of licence conditions on 8 March 2005 under probation circular 16/2005 'Criminal Justice Act 2003—Early Release and Recall'. This guidance concerns all offenders on licence including those who have been convicted of sexual offences against adults or children.

Television Licence

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals were prosecuted for not paying the television licence fee in each year since 1996–97. [46353]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform is contained in the table and shows the number of people proceeded against at magistrates courts for offences under the Wireless Telegraphy Acts 1949 to 1967 and the Communications Act 2003 (mainly television licence evasion), 1996 to 2004.

Defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts for offences under the Wireless Telegraphy Acts 1949 to 1967 (mainly television licence evasion), England and Wales, 1996 to 2004[1]

	Number Proceeded against
1996	188,118
1997	92,749
1998	96,641
1999	68,790
2000	121,137
2001	96,484
2002	110,170
2003	93,915
2004[2]	115,643

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

[2] The TV licensing provisions of the Wireless Telegraphy Act 1949 were replaced by new provisions in the Communications Act 2003 which came into effect 1 April 2004.

Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Asylum Seekers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what rules apply to *(a)* asylum seekers and *(b)* illegal immigrants for (i) benefit claims and (ii) the repayment of overpayment of benefits; and if he will make a statement. [46186]

Mr. Plaskitt: DWP administered benefits are not payable to illegal immigrants; they have not been payable to asylum seekers arriving in Great Britain since April 2000. As such, the only overpayments that would arise would be through fraud and error. There are no different rules for such individuals when considering whether, and how, an overpayment should be recovered.

Benefits

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many of those receiving pension credit are also receiving council tax benefit in *(a)* West Lancashire and *(b)* England. [45015]

Mr. Plaskitt: As at May 2005, there were 4,300 pensioner households in the West Lancashire district council area, and 1,634,600 pensioner households in England, receiving both pension credit and council tax benefit.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will summarise the responses to the Housing Green Paper, "Quality and Choice: a decent Home for All" relating to proposed simplification of the Housing Benefit Non-Dependent Deduction regime. [38102]

Mr. Plaskitt: There were 495 respondents to the Housing Green Paper—"Quality & Choice; A decent Home for All" in April 2000, 103 of whom supported simplification or reform of non-dependent deductions. Five respondents disagreed with simplification.

The Government's Paper "The Way Forward for Housing", published in December 2000, stated that the Government did not intend to pursue further reform of non-dependent deductions. However, the Government have taken the opportunity to make changes to the scheme.

From October 2003, if the householder or their partner is aged 65 or more, and a non-dependant moves into their home, or an existing non-dependant's circumstances change to increase the deduction, then the start of the deduction or increase in deduction is delayed for 26 weeks. From April 2005, if the non-dependant is on pension credit, no deduction is made in respect of that non-dependant.

At present, there are no plans to simplify the provisions further for non-dependants in housing benefit, but they will remain under review.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the proportion of private sector tenants in receipt of housing benefit or local housing allowance who have elected to move to alternative private sector accommodation while continuing their claim in *(a)* Pathfinder and *(b)* non-Pathfinder areas since the Pathfinder pilots started. [40888]

Mr. Plaskitt: The impact of the local housing allowance on the propensity of private sector tenants on housing benefit to move will be monitored as part of the ongoing evaluation of the local housing allowance.

This will be reported in the forthcoming 15 month Claimant Report, due to be published this spring, and as part of the results from the final wave of the evaluation, due to be published at the end of the year.

Meg Hillier: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the impact of widening the housing benefit extended

payment scheme from April 2004 to include those in receipt of incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance; and if he will make a statement. [44777]

Mr. Plaskitt: Data on housing benefit extended payments for incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimants are not currently available.

Such data are estimated using the previous four quarters' returns. May 2005 is the first quarter that sufficient data were available to be analysed. That analysis is on-going; we expect figures to be available later this year.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost to public funds of paying the housing benefit of tenants transferred from council tenancies to registered social landlords since 1997. [45334]

Mr. Plaskitt: We have not made such an estimate. To determine such a figure would require detailed assumptions about the rents each authority might theoretically have charged had it retained the stock. However, the potential impact on housing benefit where stock is transferred to registered social landlords is considered as part of the overall value-for-money assessment of transfers.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1550W, on housing benefit, what additional information he would need to collect to estimate the cost. [47189]

Mr. Plaskitt: The main constraint in calculating accurately the cost requested is that there is no information about the individuals that would have been affected (gainers and floaters on) and the additional benefit they would have received had the disregards been changed from 1988 onwards. We do not have the necessary information to make the estimate; it would not be possible collect the necessary information retrospectively.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of people entitled to but not claiming *(a)* housing benefit and *(b)* council tax benefit in each year since 1997–98; what the annual cost saving was from this unclaimed benefit; and if he will make a statement. [41462]

Mr. Plaskitt: The estimated number of people entitled to but not claiming housing benefit and council tax benefit in each year since 1997–98 is in the table.

The estimated number of people entitled to but not claiming Housing benefit and council tax benefit each year since 1997–98

Thousand

	Housing benefit	*Council tax benefit*
1997–98	110:470	1,200:1,660
1998–99	130:430	1,250:1,750
1999–2000	200:530	1,280:1,860
2000–01	240:580	1,450:2,000
2001–02	390:680	1,760:2,340
2002–03	420:700	1,870:2,440

Forecasts of spending on benefits are based on estimates of those who will actually receive the benefit, not those who are entitled. This is in accordance with Government Accounting rules that require forecasts to be taut and realistic. Forecasts are generally based on trends in administrative data on people actually in receipt of benefits. This normally means take-up of benefits is implicitly assumed to remain at around current levels, although the anticipated impact of initiatives to increase take up will also be included. Forecasts do not make an explicit assumption about take-up.

Consequently, there is no saving, relative to spending plans, from take-up of benefits being lower than 100 per cent. If take-up of benefits was higher than is implicit in the forecasts, spending would be higher than planned.

However, the department does publish estimates of the amount of benefit unclaimed in each year. The estimated amount of benefit unclaimed for housing benefit and council tax benefit in each year since 1997–98 is in the table.

£ million

	Housing benefit	*Council tax benefit*
1997–98	140:700	400:600
1998–99	170:630	440:650
1999–2000	290:840	460:710
2000–01	360:960	590:860
2001–02	630:1,230	760:1,060
2002–03	760:1,400	880:1,200

Notes:

1. The figures are sourced from the Family Resources Survey.
2. The latest estimates of the number of entitled non-recipients, range, unclaimed, and take-up relate to 2002–03, and can be found in the DWP report entitled "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up in 2002–2003". Copies of the publication are available in the Library.
3. Estimates for 2003–04 will be published in early 2006.
4. Estimates are presented as ranges within which it can be assumed the true number lies. These ranges account for possible biases inherent in estimates from data that is less than perfect.
5. Comparing estimates over time is not straightforward. Our estimates allow for biases, which can change from year to year; but we cannot be sure of the extent or effects of changes. Therefore, any analysis of changes over time should be made with caution.

Call Centres (Relocation)

Mr. McFall: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the potential savings to be made by relocating his Department's call centres overseas; and if he will make a statement. [45712]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department has no intention of moving any of its jobs overseas and has made no such estimate.

Child Maintenance

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have *(a)* been sent to prison and *(b)* lost their driving licence for a period of time for refusing to comply with the Child Support Agency in each quarter since 1995–96; and if he will make a statement. [28420]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 16 November 2005]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 31 January 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people have *(a)* been sent to prison and *(b)* lost their driving licence for a period of time for refusing to comply with the Child Support Agency in each quarter since 1995–96; and if he will make a statement.

Committal to prison action:

Our records between 1995/96 and 1999 are unreliable and information pre-dating 2001/2002 does not specify whether the non-resident parent served a prison sentence. The records only show whether a warrant was issued. However, from March 1999 to October 2005 there have been 545 suspended prison sentences. I have noted below the number of prison sentences actually served.

2001/2002—0 sentences served

2002/2003—4 sentences served

2003/2004—8 sentences served

2004/2005—8 sentences served

2005/2006 (April -Nov)—8 sentences served

Removal of driving licences:

The power to withdraw driving licences was brought into effect on 2 April 2001 (under the Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000). From then until October 2005 there have been 60 suspended driving licence sentences. I have noted below the number of driving licences actually withdrawn.

2001/2002—0 driving licences removed

2002/2003—1 driving licence removed

2003/2004—1 driving licence removed

2004/2005—5 driving licences removed

005/2006—4 driving licences removed (April-Nov)

We use these ultimate sanctions as the final lever to achieve compliance rather than as a punitive measure for those non-resident parents who will not pay. This explains the difference between the number of warrants we obtain and the number of driving licences withdrawn or prison sentences actually served. The Agency can only request that courts consider these sanctions, however it is for the magistrates or sheriffs to make the decision.

The creation of the Enforcement Directorate has already significantly improved the Agency's enforcement performance and effectiveness with substantially improved outcomes at the more routine stages of enforcement for example bailiff action, third party debt orders and charging orders.

I hope this is helpful.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to reply to question 27502, on child maintenance, tabled by the hon. Member for Birkenhead on 10 November 2005. [42012]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* I refer my right hon. Friend to the reply I gave on 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1553W.

Child Poverty

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of children in relative low-income households have been living in poverty in each year since 1990–91. [41436]

Margaret Hodge: We recognise that poverty and social exclusion are not just about low income, or the goods and services that people can afford. We understand that people's opportunities and quality of life are also shaped by their education, their skills, by access to quality health services, by decent housing and by the security and quality of the areas in which they live.

However, for measurement purposes, the threshold of below 60 per cent. contemporary median (also known as relative) income is the most commonly used to define the number of children living in poverty. This is the same measure that is used to report trends in low income.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to change the rules which detect anomalies, inaccuracies and incomplete data in the Child Support Agency's new scheme; and if he will make a statement. [30045]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 1 February 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to change the rules which detect anomalies, inaccuracies and incomplete data in the Child Support Agency's new scheme; and if he will make a statement.

There are currently no plans to change the rules, which detect anomalies, inaccuracies and incomplete data in the Child Support Agency's new scheme.

To ensure that new scheme cases are supported by complete and accurate data the Agency operates a risk based management checking regime for new applications and the maintenance of both the New and Old Scheme live caseloads.

We have acknowledged that there are problems with our new computer system and work is ongoing to resolve these with system releases planned for early 2006 to deliver further improvements. The Agency is continuing to work closely with EDS to remedy the outstanding problems and plans future releases during 2006 and 2007 and build upon the improvements already made.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what account is taken by the Child Support Agency of Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service advice to the courts on access arrangement for the non-resident parent when making parent decisions on payments in any particular case; [38885]

(2) what recent discussions there have been between the Child Support Agency and the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service; [38991]

(3) what mechanisms are in place to ensure cooperation and information-sharing between the Child Support Agency and the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service. [38992]

Mr. Plaskitt: The amount of child maintenance can be affected by the number of nights the child spends with the non-resident parent. However, this calculation is based on what is actually happening. The Agency therefore relies on the information provided by both parents, rather than a third party such as CAFCASS.

We do value working in partnership with stakeholders, and although there are no formal contracts between the Child Support Agency and CAFCASS at present, the

Agency is committed to extending their relationship with stakeholders and will include CAFCASS in any future stakeholder communication.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in how many cases over the last five years the courts have made orders for compensation against the Child Support Agency. [44239]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 1 February 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, in how many cases over the last five years the courts have made orders for compensation against the Child Support Agency.

Although the Agency tracks and reports the overall level of compensation payments, we cannot distinguish between compensation paid under our extra-statutory scheme (which allows clients to seek compensation without the need to go to court) and payments made to litigants as a result of an order from a court. We are therefore unable to provide the precise information you have requested on payments made as a result of a court order for compensation against the Child Support Agency.

Over the last year, however, we have introduced a small litigation team to handle cases where the client is taking action against the Agency. This team is not aware of any cases where the courts have made orders for compensation against the Agency.

I am sorry I cannot be more helpful.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much information relating to Child Support Agency cases in the Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham has been lost since the introduction of the new IT system. [45265]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 1 February 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply form the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much information relating to Child Support Agency cases in the Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham has been lost since the introduction of the new IT system.

Neither the Agency nor the service supplier (EDS) are aware that any data has been lost from the new computer system (CS2) in any area of the country. Any information relating to child support cases that has been saved to the system is retained in the system.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Damages

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the 10 largest amounts of damages paid out by his Department in the last year for which figures are available, indicating in each case the nature of the claim. [27733]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department deals with cases involving personal injury, commercial and employment matters. In relation to commercial and personal injury matters, no cases have been lost in the last year causing the Department to pay damages. (Personal injury cases in relation to Jobcentre Plus are outsourced and the information about them is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost). In relation to employment matters, four cases were lost at the employment tribunal in 2004 which caused damages to be paid. They all relate to Jobcentre Plus and the details are as follows:

		£
April 2004	Unfair dismissal	60,000.00
August 2004	Constructive dismissal	37,850.86
November 2004	Constructive dismissal	21,372.19
June 2004	Public Interest Disclosure Act	9,000.00

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from buildings occupied by his Department in the past 12 months. [43444]

Mr. Plaskitt: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Guidance (Evidency/Documentary Access)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his policy is with regard to *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in his Department giving evidence to the (i) Scottish Parliament, (ii) National Assembly for Wales and (iii) Northern Ireland Assembly committees; and to what categories of document he gives (A) full access, (B) restricted access and (C) no access to the (1) Scottish Parliament, (2) National Assembly for Wales, (3) Northern Ireland Assembly and (4) House of Commons Select Committees. [37412]

Mrs. McGuire: Requests for the attendance of Ministers or officials to give evidence to the devolved legislatures will be considered on a case by case basis. This consideration will reflect: the principles set out in the Cabinet Office guidance Departmental Evidence and Response to Select Committees (July 2005); the policy outlined in the Department for Constitutional Affairs' Devolution Guidance Note 12 Attendance of UK Ministers and Officials at Committees of the devolved legislatures; and the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. The principles underlying the provision of information to House of Commons Select Committees are set out in Departmental Evidence and response to Select Committees, particularly sections 4B and 4C.

Departmental Special Advisers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the special advisers employed by his Department; and what their responsibilities are in each case. [41341]

Mrs. McGuire: The Special Advisers to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions are John Williams and John Woodcock. They work in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers.

Departmental Website

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost of maintaining his main

departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46311]

Mr. Timms: The production, management and maintenance of the DWP website www.dwp.gov.uk is carried out by the Department's in-house e-communications team. It is not possible to quantify internal costs for the site but contracted and quantifiable costs have been included.

The departmental site is hosted by our IT contractors. In most cases it is not possible to separate these costs from contracted costs.

The cost for maintaining www.dwp.gov.uk for the last year for which figures are available (financial year 2004–05) was £101,467.

The number of unique visitors to the site for each of the last 12 months is given in the following table.

Number

2005	*Unique visitors*
January	226,862
February	226,725
March	242,377
April	241,648
May	239,310
June	217,544
July	212,847
August	225,773
September	245,289
October	256,502
November	276,836
December	211,383

Fraudulent Activities (Collaborative Projects)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what collaborative projects his Department has undertaken with the Merseyside Police Authority to combat fraudulent activities; and if he will make a statement on the outcome of those projects.[44965]

Mr. Plaskitt: Investigators from the Department for Work and Pensions have worked with officers from the Merseyside Police Authority for a number of years in cases where they have had a common interest and where the Department has required police assistance.

An example of collaborative projects has included operation Bromsgrove, a multi-agency investigation into illegal workers some of whom were suspected of benefit fraud. The labour provider at the centre of the operation is currently facing prosecution. A number of people found to be illegally claiming benefits from the Department are currently being considered for benefit sanction.

Industrial Injuries Advisory Council

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what reports have been produced by the Industrial Injuries Advisory Council since 1 January 1997; and if he will make a statement. [41461]

Margaret Hodge: The Industrial Injuries Advisory Council has produced 14 reports since 1 January 1997, not including its annual reports. These are listed:

Command papers (presented to Parliament)

Diseases induced by ionising and non-ionising radiation—March 1999 (Cm 4280)

Conditions due to chemical agents—February 2002 (Cm 5395)

Occupational deafness—November 2002 (Cm 5672)

Conditions due to biological agents—November 2003 (Cm 5997)

Osteoarthritis of the hip—November 2003 (Cm 5977)

Hand arm vibration syndrome—July 2004 (Cm 6098)

Asbestos-related diseases—July 2004 (Cm 6553)

Vinyl chloride monomer-related diseases—November 2005 (Cm 6645)

Position papers

Review of the schedule of prescribed diseases—January 1997

Lung function assessment, Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit, Prescribed Disease D12 (Chronic bronchitis and emphysema in underground coalminers)—February 2000

The neurobehavioral effects of chronic exposure to solvents—December 2003

Stress at work—March 2004

Silica-related renal and connective tissue diseases—November 2005

Sporting injuries—November 2005

Copies of the Command Papers and Position Papers are available in the House of Commons Library.

Lone Parents (Employment)

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) whether the definition of employment used in measuring progress towards the target to help 70 per cent. of lone parents into employment by 2010 includes *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time employment; and if he will make a statement;[43817]

(2) what progress has been made to date towards meeting the target of helping 70 per cent. of lone parents into employment by 2010. [43818]

Margaret Hodge: The Government have set themselves the ambitious target of increasing the employment rate of lone parents to 70 per cent. by 2010. The target is measured using the labour force survey and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition of employment which includes both full and part-time employment.

Helping lone parents return to the labour market is the most effective way of ensuring their social inclusion and is the best route out of poverty for them and their children. Additionally, the increase in sustainable employment that results from this movement into work increases the productive potential of the economy.

We have already made significant progress in achieving this target. There are now over 1 million lone parents in work, 318,000 more than in 1997; the lone parent employment rate has increased by 11 percentage points since 1997, currently standing at 56.6 per cent. and the number of lone parents claiming income support has fallen by around a quarter since 1997.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many visits abroad Ministers in his Department have made in relation to policy on child care for working parents since 2001. [45192]

Margaret Hodge: Since 1999, the Government have published annually information relating to Cabinet Ministers' visits overseas costing more than £500. Copies of the published lists for the years 2001 to 31 March 2005 are available in the Libraries of the House. The detailed information the hon. Member has requested in respect of other Ministers is not collected centrally and to collect it would involve incurring disproportionate cost.

Ministerial travel is conducted in accordance with the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers.

New Deal

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Beverley and Holderness who attained employment through a new deal programme have since restarted on a new deal programme. [44314]

Margaret Hodge: Of the 2,160 people who have been helped into work through the new deal in the Beverley and Holderness constituency, 420 have since restarted on a new deal programme.

Some people will become unemployed again after leaving the new deal. This is inevitable in a dynamic labour market, but the evidence shows that new deal helps people stay in work longer than those in the general labour market. After finding a job through new deal individuals will also have added to their skills and experience, making it easier for them to find a job in the future.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham who attained sustained employment through a new deal programme in the last three years have since restarted on a new deal programme. [45263]

Margaret Hodge: In the three years to August 2005, 1,180 people gained sustained employment through new deal for young people, new deal 25 plus and new deal for lone parents in the constituency of Hammersmith and Fulham. In the three year period to November 2005, 140 people had restarted on a new deal programme in the constituency of Hammersmith and Fulham. Those restarting on a new deal programme may have joined a different new deal programme from the one they were on before.

A sustainability measure is not available for new deal 50 plus and new deal for partners. Information is not available at constituency level for new deal for disabled people.

Information is not collected at borough level.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of *(a)* men and *(b)* women, aged (i) 50 to 54, (ii) 55 to 59 and (iii) 60 to 64 years have taken part in (A) new deal 50-plus on a voluntary basis and (B) new deal 25-plus on a compulsory basis; and which options they took. [40482]

Margaret Hodge: New deal 25-plus is a mandatory programme designed to help long term unemployed people back into work. It is aimed at people aged 25 and over who have been claiming jobseeker's allowance for 18 out of the last 21 months. This includes those aged 50 and over who have not previously participated in new deal 25-plus.

Unemployed or economically inactive people aged 50 or over and who have been claiming benefits for 6 months or more can also volunteer to join the new deal 50-plus.

The available information is in the tables.

New deal 50-plus

	Male		*Female*	
Age group	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
50 to 54	20,320	56	16,090	44
55 to 59	14,350	69	6,800	31
60 to 64	2,520	97	90	3

Notes:
1. Information on participants on new deal 50-plus is only available from January 2004.
2. Figures are cumulative to August 2005.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10, and percentages are calculated on unrounded figures.

Source:
Information Directorate, DWP

New deal 25-plus

	Male		*Female*	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
People aged 50 to 54				
Compulsory starts	49,590	77	14,560	23
Of which started:				
The enhanced new deal 25-plus programme	20,600	74	7,060	26
Of which started:				
Employment option	540	79	140	21
Basic educational training/basic skills	550	76	180	24
Self-employment	450	82	100	18
Education/training opportunity	130	78	40	22
Work experience/placement	770	79	200	21
Intensive activity Period training	830	76	260	24
Other	30	71	10	29
People aged 55 to 60				
Compulsory starts	44,260	76	13,920	24

New deal 25-plus

	Male		Female	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Of which started				
The enhanced new deal 25-plus programme	18,150	73	6,880	27
Of which started				
Employment option	390	75	130	25
Basic educational training basic skills	340	76	110	24
Self-employment	300	85	50	15
Education training opportunity	80	82	20	18
Work experience placement	460	77	140	23
Intensive activity period training	450	80	110	20
Other	30	76	10	24
People aged 60 to 64				
Compulsory starts	2,650	97	90	3
Of which started				
The enhanced new deal 25-plus programme	1,520	98	30	2
Of which started				
Employment option	10	100	0	0
Basic educational training basic skills	0	100	0	0
Self-employment	10	100	0	0
Education training opportunity	0	—	0	—
Work experience placement	10	100	0	0
Intensive activity period training	20	100	0	0
Other	0	—	0	—

Notes
Consists of people who, when starting the programme, had been claiming jobseeker's allowance for 18 out of the previous 21 months, and who had not previously participated on new deal 25-plus whilst aged 50 and over.
Information on participants on the options stage of new deal 25-plus is available only for participants of the post-April 2001 enhanced programme.
Participation on the options stage of new deal 25-plus is voluntary for people aged 50 and over, unless they live in an area which is piloting mandatory participation in this stage for people aged 50 and over.
Starts to options relate to a person's first start to an option during an individual spell on new deal. A person may start more than one option during an individual spell on new deal 25-plus.
Figures are cumulative to August 2005.
Figures are rounded to the nearest 10, and percentages are calculated on unrounded figures.
Source
Information Directorate DWP

Post Office Network

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what public services which are provided by his Department are made available by the post office network. [46059]

Mr. Plaskitt: A number of services relating to the payment of benefits and pensions are made available through the post office network.

Customers who receive their payments by direct payment into a post office card account collect their money from post offices and many customers who have their payments made into a bank or building society account can also use the post office network to access their money.

Customers who cannot be paid by direct payment are paid by cheque. Through the Department's relationship with the Alliance and Leicester Commercial Bank Plc, cheque payments with a value of less than £450.00 can be cashed at post office branches. The Department also has a contract with Post Office Ltd to ensure that customers can continue to receive cheque payments in the event of disruption to normal delivery services.

Social Fund Community Care Grant Schemes

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to make an announcement on the level of funding available for the Social Fund Community Care Grant scheme in 2006–07. [47181]

Mr. Plaskitt: We will make an announcement, by way of a written statement to the House, towards the end of March on the level of funding available for the Social Fund Community Care Grant scheme in 2006–07.

TREASURY

Africa (Debt Repayments)

Ann McKechin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the net flow of resources between the United Kingdom and Africa was when the bilateral debt repayments from all African countries to the United Kingdom are subtracted from the United Kingdom aid budget to Africa excluding debt cancellation for *(a)* the 2005 calendar year and *(b)* financial year 2004–05; and what the expected figure is for 2005–06. [42086]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In fiscal year 2004–05 the UK's bilateral assistance to Africa amounted to £970 million. The UK also gave very considerable sums of money via

multilateral agencies, however the data are not disaggregated to show how much went to Africa. The estimated figure for the UK's bilateral assistance to Africa for fiscal year 2005–06 is £1 billion.

During fiscal year 2004–05, the UK received official bilateral debt payments from countries in Africa amounting to approximately £152.8 million. The UK also wrote off almost £351.6 million of African official bilateral debt in 2004–05. During fiscal year 2005–06, the UK expects to receive official bilateral debt payments from countries in Africa amounting to approximately £1,112.5 million. The UK expects to write off almost £1,143.3 million of African official bilateral debt in 2005–06.

Benzodiazepines

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many deaths in which benzodiazepines abuse was given as a *(a)* cause and *(b)* factor occurred in each of the last 10 years. [47324]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 1 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many deaths in which benzodiazepines' abuse was given as a *(a)* cause and *(b)* factor occurred in each of the last 10 years. I am replying in her absence. (47324)

Abuse of benzodiazepines is not separately identified as a cause of death using the International Classification of Diseases. The attached table shows the number of deaths where benzodiazepines were mentioned on the death certificate and the underlying cause was drug poisoning, for the ten years 1994 to 2003, the most recent year for which figures are available. These figures are produced from a special database which contains deaths where the underlying cause was drug poisoning. Figures readily available from death certification relate to deaths due to drug poisoning, not the total number that were attributable to drug use.

Number of deaths from drug-related poisoning[1] where benzodiazepines were mentioned on the death certificate, England and Wales, 1994–2003[2]

Calendar year	*Number of deaths*
1994	279
1995	253
1996	230
1997	248
1998	245
1999	240
2000	207
2001	222
2002	242
2003	211

[1] Cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes F11-F16, F18-F19, X40-X44, X60-X64, X85 and Y10-Y14.
[2] Data are for deaths occurring in each calendar year.
Source:
Table 2 of the annual report: " Deaths related to drug poisoning: England and Wales, 1999–2003 ", published in Health Statistics Quarterly 25 in February 2005.

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many occasions his Department consulted citizens' juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens' jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens' jury. [46238]

John Healey: This information is not held centrally in Treasury and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Civil Servants (Overseas Visits)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what costs were incurred by his Department as a result of sending civil servants on overseas visits in each of the last 10 years. [46278]

John Healey: I refer to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Southend, West (Mr. Amess) on 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2272W.

Colon Cancer Deaths

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many deaths occurred in the United Kingdom in 2005 as a consequence of colon cancer. [46188]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 1 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question concerning how many deaths occurred in the United Kingdom in 2005 as a consequence of colon cancer. I am replying in her absence. (46188)

The most recently available information is for deaths in 2004. There were 10,333 deaths where the underlying cause was malignant neoplasm of the colon[1] in the United Kingdom.[2]

Yours sincerely

[1] Cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) code C18.
[2] Data for England and Wales are for deaths occurring in the calendar year. Data for Scotland and Northern Ireland are for deaths registered in the calendar year.

Departmental Website

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost of maintaining his main departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46310]

John Healey: The cost of maintaining the main HM Treasury website for the financial year 2004–2005 was £123,133. The visitor numbers for each of the last 12 months are as follows:

Date	*Number of unique visits*
January 2005	91,710
February 2005	96,022
March 2005	141,507
April 2005	101,113
May 2005	100,699
June 2005	93,244
July 2005	79,419
August 2005	77,768

Date	Number of unique visits
September 2005	94,514
October 2005	105,491
November 2005	113,712
December 2005	120,005

The term unique visits, refers to the number of different visitors logged during this period. These figures do not include repeat visitors nor do they differentiate between different users coming from behind a shared firewall.

Departmental Staff

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many departmental employees have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46772]

John Healey: The information for HM Treasury is shown as follows:

	Number
2000	0
2001	1
2002	0
2003	1
2004	2
2005	1

Earnings

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and what percentage of *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* all (i) employees, (ii) full-time employees and (iii) part-time employees in (A) Scotland, (B) each of the unitary local authority areas in Scotland and (C) the United Kingdom had weekly gross earnings including overtime below (1) £285.71, (2) £214.50 and (3) £181.87 in the last period for which figures are available. [46142]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 1 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many and what percentage of *(a)* male, *(b)* female and *(c)* all (i) employees, (ii) full-time employees and (iii) part-time employees in (A) Scotland, (B) each of the unitary local authority areas in Scotland and (C) the United Kingdom had weekly gross earnings including overtime below (1) £285.71, (2) £214.50 and (3) £181.87 in the last period for which figures are available. I am replying in her absence. (46142)

Currently average earnings are estimated from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), and are provided for all employees, full time employees and part-time employees on adult rates whose pay for the survey period was not affected by absence. This is the standard definition used for ASHE. The ASHE does not collect data on the self-employed and people who do unpaid work.

I am placing in the House of Commons Library, tables showing proportions of gross weekly earnings for all employees, males and females in Scotland, unitary local authorities in Scotland and the UK.

The ASHE, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in the United Kingdom. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes.

Economic Activity (Milton Keynes)

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he is taking to increase the rate of economic activity in Milton Keynes. [47304]

John Healey: The Government have put in place policies that will raise the trend rate of growth for all English regions and local areas, including Milton Keynes. For instance, as one of the Government's four housing growth areas, Milton Keynes is benefiting from significant new investment in infrastructure and through further regeneration of brownfield sites.

GVA—gross value added—statistics show that between 1989, when comparable regional records began, to 2004, the South East enjoyed the highest increase in economic growth per head of all the English regions. It is also experiencing historically low unemployment levels. Unemployment has fallen in the region by 38,000 (17.7 per cent.) since 1997.

Electoral Administration

Mr. Devine: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in each ward in Livingston constituency are over 18 years; and how many of these are on the electoral register in each ward. [46136]

John Healey: This question is a devolved matter, in this case the responsibility of the Registrar General for Scotland.

Emigration

Grant Shapps: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people emigrated from the UK in each year from 2000, broken down by constituency in which they lived at the time of emigration. [47618]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 1 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about how many people emigrated from the UK in each year from 2000, broken down by constituency in which they lived at the time of emigration. I am replying in her absence. (47618)

Emigration estimates are not available at the level of Parliamentary constituency. They are based mainly on the International Passenger Survey (IPS), thus, sample size restricts the level for which reliable estimates can be produced. The lowest level of detail for which National Statistics emigration estimates are published is constituent country within the UK and Government Office Region in England. These data are available in the annual reference volume International Migration 2003, Series MN NO 30, available at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Productasp?vlnk = 507

Government Spending (Tax Revenue)

Mrs. Riordan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his policy is on using tax revenue sourced from particular taxes for particular areas of Government spending. [47131]

Mr. Des Browne: The primary aim of tax policy is to raise sufficient revenue for Government to pay for public services. In some cases, where the Government are raising revenue for a specific purpose, it is appropriate to reinforce the purpose of the tax measure by linking it to the spending which it finances.

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46767]

John Healey: The Treasury did not specifically celebrate Hanukkah or mark Yom Kippur in 2005.

The Treasury, however, has taken a range of positive steps to promote faith awareness in the Department including awareness raising articles in the staff magazine, the provision of a prayer room and flexibility in leave arrangements so that staff can celebrate religious holidays and observe religious obligations.

In addition, the Treasury Staff Code clearly details employees' obligations under the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003.

Manufacturing Productivity

John Bercow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the rate of growth of manufacturing productivity has been in each year since 1998. [46151]

John Healey: The annual growth rates since 1998 of manufacturing productivity on an output per job basis, the ONS' headline measure, is presented in the following table.

Percentage

	Annual productivity growth
1998	1.2
1999	4.4
2000	6.3
2001	3.5
2002	1.5
2003	4.5
2004	6.2
1998 to 2004	29.4

Ministry of Defence Budget (Tax Revenue)

Mrs. Riordan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of tax revenue was allocated to the Ministry of Defence budget in *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2005–06. [47130]

Mr. Des Browne: The Defence budget as a percentage of current receipts for the years in question is as follows:

	2003–04 (Outturn)	*2004–05 (Outturn)*	*2005–06 (Estimate)*
Current Receipts (Billion)	418.7	448.4	483.0
Defence near-cash budget (Billion)	25.8	27.0	28.15
Defence near-cash budget expressed as a percentage of Current Receipts	6.2	6.0	5.8

Figures for the Defence near cash budget do not include the net additional cost of military operations (e.g. in Iraq and Afghanistan), which are met separately from the Treasury reserve. The net additional cost of operations was £1.6 Billion in 2003–04 and £1.1 Billion in 2004–05.

Population Estimates

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Office for National Statistics has received on the accuracy of mid-year population estimates. [46964]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 1 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your question regarding what representations the a) Treasury and b) the Office for National Statistics has received on the accuracy of mid-year population estimates. I am replying in her absence. (46964)

A number of queries are received each year following the August publication of annual mid-year population estimates. These queries range from general points of clarification to questions regarding the accuracy of the estimates. The following is a list of authorities that have written in with concerns about the accuracy of their 2004 population estimates:

Greater London Authority
Cambridgeshire
Copeland
East Cambridgeshire
Forest Heath
Hampshire
Mid Bedfordshire
South Tyneside
Slough
Southend
Suffolk
Telford & Wrekin Council

In addition to these Local Authorities, queries concerning the accuracy of the estimates have also been received from:

Commission for Racial Equality
Art Beyond Belief (Slough)
Haymill Association of Resident & Tenants (Slough)
Kedderminster Tenants & Residents Association (Slough)
Slough Age Concern
Slough Business Community Partnership
Slough Citizen's Advice Bureau
Slough Council for Voluntary Service
Slough Supported Tenants Action Group
One member of the public (Slough)

Finally Mr Adam Afriyie MP asked two Parliamentary Questions in this area (ref: 38552 and 38558).

This includes correspondence dealt with by Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT). I am not aware of any additional correspondence with HMT that has not been passed on to ONS.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment the Office for National Statistics has made of the reasons other than population changes why mid-year population estimates differ from the 2001 national census. [46965]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 1 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your question about what assessment the Office for National Statistics has made of the reasons, other than population changes, why mid-year population estimates differ from the 2001 Census. I am replying in her absence. (46965)

As a result of changes in society, which include increased mobility and different living arrangements, it is becoming increasingly difficult to estimate the size of the population. Substantial work has been done on the difference between mid-year population estimates and the 2001 Census. This work is summarised in the final report of the 2004 Local Authority Population Studies, which can be found here: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/LAStudy_FullReport.pdf This document provides further links to other detailed reports.

Work undertaken includes:

An initial assessment of accuracy of the mid-year population estimates;

A revised allowance for under-enumeration in the 1991 Census;

The Longitudinal Study Adjustment for young men (and other minor changes); and

The Local Authority Population Studies.

These studies confirmed that the 2001 Census had worked well in most areas, but there were a few cases where it was not able to adjust sufficiently for exceptional circumstances. This work, together with revised international migration estimates, accounted for a large proportion of the initial 1.1 million difference between mid year estimates and the Census; reducing the difference to a little over 0.2 million.

Further information on population estimates can be found in the detailed methodology guide to 'Making a population estimate in England and Wales'. This is published here: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=575

ONS is now investing substantially in a project to Improve Migration and Population Statistics (IMPS). (More information on this project can be found here: www.statistics.gov.uk/IMPS). The key aims of this project are to reduce the size of the difference between population estimates and mid-year estimates for 2011 when the next Census is undertaken and to better understand any difference that does remain.

As part of this project we are currently undertaking work to quality assure the mid-year estimates against a range of administrative sources.

Tobacco

Mr. Hands: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much duty has been collected from tobacco products in each of the last five years. [46603]

John Healey: Excise duty receipts for tobacco products can be found in Table 3 the HM Revenue and Customs 'Tobacco Bulletin', which is available from HM Revenue and Customs website at:
http://www.uktradeinfo.com/index.cfm?task=bulltobac

HEALTH

Agency Staff (Lancashire)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of agency *(a)* nurses and *(b)* doctors in Lancashire Teaching NHS Trust has been in each year since 1997. [43162]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested and shown in the table is only available since 2003 when the Lancashire Teaching Hospitals National Health Service Trust was formed.

Lancashire teaching hospital NHS found trust

£000

	Medical	Nursing, Midwifery and health visiting
2002-03	1,035	1,268
2003-04	1,479	1,531
2004-05	1,226	1,080

Source:
Annual Financial Returns of NHS Trusts

Ambulance Services

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her plans are for the regionalisation of ambulance services in Bexhill and Battle; and if she will make a statement. [45794]

Caroline Flint: "Configuration of NHS Ambulance Trusts in England: Consultation Document" sets out the proposed new ambulance trusts on which we are currently consulting. This includes the proposal for a new trust, referred to in the document as South East A, which would cover the areas covered by the current Sussex, Kent and Surrey ambulance trusts, if the proposals are agreed. However, no decision has been made, or will be, until consultation has been concluded.

A copy of "Configuration of NHS Ambulance Trusts in England: Consultation Document" is available in the Library. I also refer the hon. Member to the ministerial statement on this consultation I made on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 151–53WS.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will announce the results of the public consultation into the regionalisation of the ambulance services in Sussex. [45791]

Caroline Flint: A 14-week consultation on the future configuration of ambulance services commenced on 14 December 2005, to run until 22 March 2006. No decision has been made, or will be, until consultation has been concluded. We will announce our decision once the consultation has concluded, after due consideration of responses received.

Aspartame

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what regulations her Department has issued in relation to aspartame; and if she will make a statement. [46261]

Caroline Flint: The Sweeteners in Food Regulations 1995, as amended, implement European Union legislation (Directive 94/35/EC) on sweeteners, including aspartame, which are permitted to be used in food.

Audiology (South-West Region)

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average waiting time was for each primary

care trust in the south west region for audiology-related treatment in the last period for which figures are available: [46575]

(2) how many patients are waiting for audiology-related treatment in each primary care trust in the south west region. [46576]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not held centrally.

BCG Inoculations

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons she has cancelled BCG inoculation programmes administered in schools. [44112]

Caroline Flint: The reasons for the change to the Bacille Calmette Guerin vaccination policy were given in the chief medical officer's letter to the profession dated 6 July 2005. A copy of this letter is available in the Library.

Child Obesity

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what national target she has set for halting the rise in obesity of children under 11 years in each year to 2010. [45528]

Caroline Flint: A public service agreement target specifically on obesity has been set in July 2004 "halting the year-on-year rise in obesity among children aged under 11 by 2010 in the context of a broader strategy to tackle obesity in the population as a whole". No year-on-year targets up to 2010 have been set.

Dentistry

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* dental nurses, *(b)* dental hygienists and *(c)* dental therapists were employed in West Lancashire in each year since 1997. [45090]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not available in the format requested. However, the table shows the data for dental therapists.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified dental therapists in the Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority area by organisation as at 30 September each specified year

Full-time equivalent

		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA		1	2	3	3	2	6	13	19
Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	REU	—	1	2	2	—	—	n/a	n/a
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale PCT	5G8	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	10
Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	RJU	n/a	n/a	—	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
Communicare NHS Trust	RME	—	—	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
Eden Valley PCT	5D5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	3	4	—
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	RXN	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	0	0
North Lakeland Healthcare NHS Trust	RLF	1	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Preston PCT	5HD	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	8	8

Headcount

		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA		1	3	4	5	3	8	20	25
Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust	REU	—	2	2	2	—	—	n/a	n/a
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale PCT	5G8	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	11
Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust	RJU	n/a	n/a	—	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
Communicare NHS Trust	RME	—	—	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
Eden Valley PCT	5D5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	4	5	—
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	RXN	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	1
North Lakeland Healthcare NHS Trust	RLF	1	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Preston PCT	5HD	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	13	13

'—' = zero
n/a = not applicable
Note:
Full-time equivalent figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.
Source:
Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Healthy Living Centre (Stroud)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will open a healthy living centre in Stroud constituency. [46045]

Caroline Flint: Healthy living centres (HLCs) are funded by the Big Lottery Fund (BLF) and by local partnerships. All the grants by BLF for HLCs were awarded by the end of 2002 and there are no plans for further awards.

Homeopathy

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines she has issued on the use of homeopathy. [44619]

Caroline Flint: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has produced some clinical guidelines that included reference to complementary and alternative therapies alongside more conventional approaches. NICE'S current assessment of smoking cessation interventions will also include consideration of complementary therapies, and departmental officials

will discuss with NICE how the clinical guidelines work programme could, where appropriate, include complementary therapies.

The Government also commissioned the Foundation for Integrated Health to produce 'Complementary Healthcare: a guide for patients', published in January 2005, which includes information on homeopathy.

Hospital Services

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of patients were *(a)* treated at and *(b)* admitted to (i) Barnet and (ii) Chase Farm hospitals with the 98 percent.-within-four hours target as of (A) 31 December 2004 and (B) 31 December 2005; and if she will make a statement. [45231]

Jane Kennedy: The data requested are not collected in the format requested.

The total time and wait for admission data for Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust for the quarters ending in the periods requested are shown in the table. The four hour target applies to the total time spent in accident and emergency (A and E)—this is the time from arrival to admission, transfer or discharge. There is no separate target for admissions.

A and E activity and performance, Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust, October to December (Q3) 2004-05 and 2005-06

	2004-05	*2005-06*
Percentage of patients who spent less than four hours in A and E	87.1	94.9
Percentage of patients placed in bed in a ward within four hours of a decision to admit	90.3	91.9

Source:
Department of Health dataset QMAE for 2004-05 data and Department of Health dataset SitReps for 2005-06 data (Quarter three).

Influenza Vaccine

Mr. Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many doses of influenza vaccine are available. [38665]

Caroline Flint: There are currently 200,000 doses of seasonal flu vaccine available from the Department's contingency stock.

Maternity Services

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the caesarean rate has been in each of the last five years at Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust. [45097]

Mr. Byrne: Deliveries by caesarean section[1] as a percentage of all deliveries at Southport and Ormskirk Hospital National Health Service Trust, are shown in the table.

[1] As recorded using procedure code.

	Percentage
1999–2000	18
2000–01	18
2001–02	21
2002–03	23
2003–04	23

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics, NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many midwives *(a)* as a headcount and *(b)* as full-time equivalents have been employed by Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust in each of the last five years; [45098]

(2) what the midwifery vacancy rate for Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust has been in each of the last five years. [45099]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Health and social care information centre vacancies survey, NHS three month qualified midwife vacancies for Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust, three month vacancy rates, numbers and staff in post

	3 month vacancy rate (percentage)	*3 month vacancy (number)*	*Staff in post (full-time equivalent)*	*Staff in post (headcount)*
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust RVY				
March 2000	0.0	0	—	—
September 1999	—	—	88	109
March 2001	0.0	0	—	—
September 2000	—	—	103	150
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust RVY				
March 2002	0.0	0	—	—
September 2001	—	—	94	127
March 2003	0.0	0	—	—
September 2002	—	—	90	113
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust RVY				
March 2004	0.0	0	—	—
September 2003	—	—	93	116
March 2005	0.0	0	—	—
September 2004	—	—	93	116

Notes:
Three month vacancy notes:
1. Three month vacancy information is as at 31 March each specified year.
2. Three month vacancies are vacancies which trusts are actively trying to fill, which had lasted for three months or more (full-time equivalents).
3. Three month vacancy rates are three month vacancies expressed as a percentage of three month vacancies plus staff in post.

4. Three month vacancy rates are calculated using staff in post from the Non-Medical Workforce Census September each specified year.
5. Percentages are rounded to one decimal place.

Staff in post notes:
1. Staff in post data are from the non-medical workforce census September each specified year

General notes:
1. Vacancy and staff in post numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number.
2. Calculating the vacancy rates using the above data may not equal the actual vacancy rates.
3. Due to rounding, totals may not equal the sum of component parts.

Source:
Health and social care information centre vacancies survey
Health and social care information centre non-medical workforce census.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many midwife-led birthing centres there are in Milton Keynes. [45431]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally by the Department.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the role of supervisors of midwives. [45733]

Mr. Byrne: The role of supervisors of midwives is one of public protection ensuring that the standard of midwifery practice in their locality is maintained, that midwives have the correct equipment and skills to perform their role and that the quality of their practice is monitored. In practice, the role is one of providing professional support for midwives in overcoming professional dilemmas and enabling them to perform their role in an environment conducive to positive outcomes.

NHS Structure

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will break down by parliamentary constituency all *(a)* strategic health authority areas, *(b)* primary care trusts and *(c)* NHS trusts. [42666]

Mr. Byrne: This information is available on the Department's website at:
www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/NHSFactsheets/fs/en.

A table listing this information has been placed in the Library.

Nurses (Hammersmith and Fulham)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* agency and *(b)* NHS nurses were employed by the NHS in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in the last year for which figures are available; and what the total cost was of each category of nurse in that year. [45958]

Jane Kennedy: This information is not collected in the format requested.

However, table 1 shows all national health service qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff, including practice nurses employed in Hammersmith and Fulham primary care trust (PCT) and Hammersmith hospitals NHS trust as at September 2004. Figures for the number of agency staff employed by the NHS are not collected centrally.

Table 2 shows the cost for each category of nurse for 2004–05 in Hammersmith and Fulham PCT and Hammersmith hospitals NHS trust.

Table 1: All NHS qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff, including practice nurses employed by Unrestricted Principals and equivalents (UPEs)[1], in each specified trust as at 30 September 2004

headcount

		Total qualified nursing staff	*of which: GP practice nurse*	*Bank staff*
Total specified organisations		2,447	45	341
Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	5H1	237	45	32
Hammersmith hospitals NHS trust	RQN	2,210	0	309

[1] UPEs include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs and PMS Salaried GPs

Source:
Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census
Health and Social Care Information Centre General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

Table 2: Costs for each category of nurse in Hammersmith hospitals NHS trust and Hammersmith and Fulham PCT, 2004–05

£000

	Nurse consultants	*Nurse managers*	*Qualified*	*Unqualified*	*Nursing, midwifery and health visiting*
Hammersmith hospitals NHS trust	134	2,175	67,669	3,276	4,586
Hammersmith and Fulham PCT	0	290	6350	1,042	686

Source:
Annual financial returns of primary care trusts

Organ Donation

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking *(a)* to encourage organ donation and *(b)* to raise the profile of the online organ donation register. [42026]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Nearly 13 million people have registered on the organ donor register (ODR), 22 per cent. of the United Kingdom population. The Department gives around £1 million yearly to the NHS blood and transport (NHSBT) to run the ODR and to

promote transplantation and also provides section 64 grants to a number of charities. Specific initiatives include funding through NHSBT to support hospital based initiatives. I recently wrote to all Members of Parliament to ask them to help raise awareness within their constituencies, and the Prime Minister also hosted a reception to celebrate the success of transplantation. Online registration initiatives include Oran-ise, an online game to encourage students to register, and nearly 50 web-based campaigns run by national health service organisations, further education establishments and professional organisations.

Poultry Inspections

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Meat Hygiene Services is taking to ensure that from 1 January its official veterinary surgeons assume line management supervision of poultry inspection assistants as required under the EU Hygiene Package. [44984]

Caroline Flint: There has been no change in the supervision requirements of plant inspection assistants, now food business operator establishment staff, following the implementation of the European Union hygiene regulations.

Official Veterinarians remain responsible for the technical supervision of these staff.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what test poultry inspection assistants in post before 1 January were required to pass before they were permitted to inspect poultry meat. [44991]

Caroline Flint: There was no legislative requirement to carry out a specific test prior to authorisation, however, an ongoing assessment was carried during the training period.

After receiving the required training for plant inspections assistants as set out in Regulation 11 of the Poultry Meat, Farmed Game Bird Meat and Rabbit Meat (Hygiene and Inspection) Regulations 1995, revoked 31 December 2005, and in the light of the guidance given in the Meat Hygiene Service operations manual, the Official Veterinary Surgeon assessed the competency, both theoretical and practical, of the plant inspection assistants.

Once the Official Veterinary Surgeon was satisfied that a candidate was competent, s/he would certify an application for authorisation.

Private Finance Initiative Schemes

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what sign offs are required before a guarantee can be provided by her Department for private finance initiative schemes for NHS foundation trusts; [43742]

(2) how much has been guaranteed by her Department for the University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust private finance initiative scheme; [43743]

(3) what the current status is of the proposed University Hospital Birmingham private finance initiative rebuild; and if she will make a statement. [43744]

Mr. Byrne: The trust's full business case (FBC) has been submitted to the Department for approval; the trust is currently clarifying a number of points which have been raised by the Department. Subject to approval by the Department, the FBC will be forwarded to HM Treasury for approval by officials and Ministers.

In common with other foundation trust private finance initiative (PFI) schemes with a capital value in excess of £10 million, the Secretary of State for Health, the PFI consortium and its funders will sign a deed of safeguard prior to financial close. The effect of the deed of safeguard is to make the Secretary of State liable should the trust be unable to meet its payments to the operator of the PFI scheme.

Radiographers

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many radiographers were employed in Southport and Ormskirk in each year since 1997; and whether there are any vacancies at present. [45030]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the tables.

National health service hospital and community health services: qualified radiography staff employed by specified organisations by area of workers at 30 September each specified year

Headcount

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total specified organisations	57	58	53	57	64	62	60	62
Qualified radiography (diagnostic) staff	57	58	53	56	64	62	60	62
Qualified radiography (therapuetic) staff	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Southport and Formby NHS Trust	31	35	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Qualified radiography (diagnostic) staff	31	35	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
West Lancashire NHS Trust	26	23	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Qualified radiography (diagnostic) staff	26	23	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust[1]	n/a	n/a	53	57	64	62	60	62
Qualified radiography (diagnostic) staff	n/a	n/a	53	56	64	62	60	(52
Qualified radiography (therapuetic) staff	n/a	n/a	—	1	—	—	—	—

— = zero
n/a = not applicable
[1] Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust was formed by the merger of Southport and Formby NHS Trust and West Lancashire NHS Trust in 1999.
Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census

Health and Social Care Information Centre Vacancies Survey March 2005—NHS three month qualified radiography vacancies at Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust—three month vacancy rates, numbers and staff in post

	Diagnostic radiography	*Therapeutic radiography*
March 2005		
Three month vacancy rate (percentage)	6.0	0
Three month vacancy number	3	0
September 2004		
(Staff in post) full-time equivalent	47	0
(Staff in post) headcount	62	0

Notes

Three month vacancy:

1. Three month vacancy information is as at 31 March 2004.
2. Three month vacancies are vacancies which trusts are actively trying to fill, which had lasted for three months or more (full-time equivalents).
3. Three month vacancy rates are three month vacancies expressed as a percentage of three month vacancies plus staff in post.
4. Three month vacancy rates are calculated using staff in post from the Non-Medical Workforce Census September 2004.
5. Percentages are rounded to one decimal place.

Staff in post:

1. Staff in post data are from the Non-Medical Workforce Census September 2004.

General:

1. Vacancy and staff in post numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number.
2. Calculating the vacancy rates using the above data may not equal the actual vacancy rates.
3. Due to rounding, totals may not equal the sum of component parts.

Source:

1. NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre Vacancies Survey 2005.
2. NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census 2004.

Residential Drug Rehabilitation Places

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residential drug rehabilitation places were available in England in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [44125]

Caroline Flint: We do not have an annual record of residential rehabilitation places for the last five years.

The National Treatment Agency (NTA) launched a residential directory on 8 August 2003, and an online bed vacancy directory BEDVACS started on 23 April 2004. There is no record of any information until 1 February 2005. On 1 February 2005, there were 118 English residential rehabilitation units with a total of 2,498 beds. Currently the directory lists 119 English residential rehabilitation units with a total of 2,530 beds.

Reverse Therapy

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has *(a)* commissioned, *(b)* funded and *(c)* evaluated into reverse therapy in relation to (i) myalgic encephalomyelitis and (ii) Gulf War illnesses; and if she will make a statement. [46256]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has not commissioned, funded or evaluated research into the use of reverse therapy in the treatment of myalgic encephalomyelitis or Gulf War syndrome.

Sheep Meat (Radioactive Contamination)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether restrictions in place to prevent contaminated sheep meat entering the human food chain in areas of the countryside affected by radioactive contamination following Chernobyl have been lifted. [45970]

Caroline Flint: Restrictions on the sale, movement and slaughter of sheep, arising from the Chernobyl nuclear accident, remain in place in limited areas of Cumbria and Scotland, plus parts of North Wales. The last restrictions in place in Northern Ireland were removed in April 2000. The following table shows the numbers of farms and estimated sheep numbers remaining under restriction, as of 1 January 2006.

	Farms	*Sheep*
England	9	6,600
Wales	355	176,000
Scotland	11	18,000
Total	375	200,600

Smoking

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what national targets she has set for reducing the percentage of pregnant women who smoke. [45526]

Caroline Flint: The 1998 White Paper, "Smoking Kills", sets a specific national target for smoking during pregnancy, "to reduce the percentage of women who smoke during pregnancy from 23 percent. to 15 percent. by the year 2010; with a fall to 18 percent. by the year 2005". The latest data used to monitor this target comes from the infant feeding survey, which takes place every five years. The results for 2000 show that, in England, 19 percent., of pregnant women smoked. Results for 2005 are due in 2007.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much smoking-related illnesses have cost the NHS in each of the last five years. [46602]

Caroline Flint: The information is not available in the form requested.

The latest data on the cost to the national health service of treating illness and disease caused by smoking is estimated to cost between £1.4 billion to £1.7 billion every year in terms of general practitioner visits, prescriptions, treatment and operations.

Surrey and Sussex NHS Healthcare Trust

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much per day the turnaround team at the Surrey and Sussex NHS healthcare trust will cost *(a)* the trust, *(b)* the strategic health authority and *(c)* central departmental funds. [46742]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 30 January 2006]*: The turnaround teams were announced by the Secretary of State in a written ministerial statement on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 36–37WS. The teams will comprise of experts with a mix of commercial and national health service turnaround skills.

The first stage of this is a baseline assessment, the aim of which is to ensure there is an agreed understanding of the local financial problem and that actions are in hand to address this.

The contract for the baseline assessment was awarded to consultants KPMG. Surrey and Sussex healthcare NHS trust's assessment was included in this assessment. The value of this contract is commercial in confidence.

Following the baseline assessment a tailored package of turnaround support will be agreed by the local NHS. This will be paid for by the local NHS. I do not hold details of these agreements.

Tuna (Mercury Levels)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of the level of mercury in *(a)* tinned tuna and *(b)* tinned yellowfin tuna. [45981]

Caroline Flint: A survey published by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in 2003 found that the mean level of mercury in canned tuna sold in the United Kingdom was 0.19 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg). All the samples were below the statutory limit for mercury in tuna of one mg/kg. The only sample of canned yellowfin in the survey had one of the lowest mercury levels found in canned tuna (0.05 mg/kg). The FSA advice is that pregnant women and women who intend to become pregnant should limit their consumption of tuna to no more than four medium size cans per week or two fresh tuna steaks.

Vulnerable Adults

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many individuals are on the protection of vulnerable adults list; [44898]

(2) how many referrals have been made to the protection of vulnerable adults list since it was established; and how many referrals have resulted in a name being added to the list. [45511]

Mr. Byrne: The legislation underpinning the operation of the protection of vulnerable adults (POVA) list is the Care Standards Act 2000, which sets out the criteria for referring people to the list and for deciding whether to include a person on the list. As at 31 December 2005, the latest date for which figures are available, there have been 3,448 referrals made to the POVA list, which was established on 26 July 2004.

Overall, there are 288 individuals confirmed as being unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults and they have been placed on the list. There are also 1,228 people provisionally listed who are subject to further investigations and cannot work in a regulated social care position in the interim.

Waiting Times

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* average and *(b)* longest waiting time was for an out-patient appointment at each of the hospitals run by Hammersmith hospitals NHS trust in the last year for which figures are available. [45948]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not hold the information in the format requested.

However, the table shows waiting times for first out-patient appointments following general practitioner written referrals, for Hammersmith hospitals national health service trust, for each quarter from December 2004 to September 2005.

Waiting times for first out-patient appointment following GP written referral, Hammersmith hospitals NHS trust

	Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks)					
Quarter	*0 to < 4*	*4 to < 13*	*13 to < 17*	*17 to < 21*	*21 plus*	*Median wait (weeks)*
December 2004	3,706	4,461	2,048	0	0	6.8
March 2005	3,493	4,461	2,433	0	0	7.4
June 2005	3,290	3,953	2,173	0	0	7.2
September 2005	4,021	4,939	2,127	3	0	6.8

Source:
Department of Health form QM08

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 2 February 2006

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Cathedrals (Maintenance and Restoration)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners how much was spent in 2004–05 on maintaining and restoring the fabric of cathedrals in England. [46115]

Sir Stuart Bell: A 2004–05 figure is not available. However, a 2004 survey suggested that the average annual amount spent on the repair and maintenance of cathedrals is £11 million.

Fairtrade

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what the Church Commissioners' policy is on purchasing fair trade products for its offices. [46119]

Sir Stuart Bell: The Commissioners have been purchasing Fairtrade products for at least six years.

The Commissioners have been purchasing Fairtrade products for at least six years.

Flying Bishops

Robert Key: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what percentage of the parishes in the provinces of *(a)* Canterbury and *(b)* York are in the pastoral care of flying bishops. [46319]

Sir Stuart Bell: At 31 March 2004, 1.5 per cent. of parishes in the Province of Canterbury, and 3.1 per cent. of parishes in the Province of York had petitioned for extended episcopal ministry and received this from the three Provincial Episcopal Visitors. The respective totals including those receiving episcopal ministry from other bishops as well were 2.1 per cent. and 3.3 per cent.

Further details are available in Appendix 7 of the recently published report from the House of Bishops' Women Bishops Group (GS 1605).

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Rural Payments Agency

12. **Peter Luff:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs What assessment she has made of the efficiency of the Rural Payments Agency. [47606]

Margaret Beckett: The Rural Payments Agency is modernising its systems and processes to deliver the single payment scheme (SPS). It is estimated that the cost of processing £1.6 billion of claims will be 5.4 pence in the pound. This compares favourably with the cost of administering the schemes SPS replaces which in 2004–05 was 5.7 pence in the pound.

Single Farm Payment Scheme

13. **Jeremy Wright:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs If she will make a statement on the implementation of the single farm payment scheme. [47607]

Margaret Beckett: The Under-Secretary, my hon. Friend the Member for South Dorset (Jim Knight) announced on 31 January that full payments under the single payment scheme will commence in February 2006. Staff are working exceedingly hard to ensure that this expectation is turned into a reality.

21. **Mr. Francois:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of single farm payments she expects to have been paid by the end of February 2006. [47616]

Margaret Beckett: The Under-Secretary, my hon. Friend the Member for South Dorset (Jim Knight) confirmed on 31 January that SPS payments will commence before the end of February, with the bulk of payments being made by the end of March.

Nuclear Waste

14. **Mr. David Chaytor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what her latest estimate is of the costs associated with the management of the stockpile of radioactive waste; and if she will make a statement. [47609]

Mr. Morley: The total cost of operating, cleaning up and decommissioning the UK's publicly owned civil nuclear sites, for which the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) has been given responsibility, is currently estimated at £56 billion. This figure includes the costs of interim management of waste arising from decommissioning and clean-up activity. The cost of any facility, or facilities that will be needed in light of CoRWM recommendation for the final long-term management higher activity wastes will be additional to this.

Habitats Directive

16. **Mr. Brazier:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to ensure that the UK's obligations under the habitats directive are met. [47611]

Mr. Bradshaw: A small number of legislative changes are in hand, to meet a recent European Court of Justice ruling,. But of course the UK has already done more than virtually any other EU member state in meeting the policy objectives behind the directive by protecting and enhancing our terrestrial and marine biodiversity.

Canoeing

17. **Mr. John Grogan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make a statement on the access of canoeists to rivers and waterways. [47612]

Mr. Morley: Canoeists currently have access to around 27 per cent. of our major areas of inland water, and research suggests that overall supply meets demand. But we are working with partners to develop more opportunities for access in the future.

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

18. **Sir Robert Smith:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the impact of the proposed closure of the Banchory station of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology on climate change research. [47613]

Mr. Morley: Staff at the Banchory station of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) carry out important monitoring and scientific research on the impacts of climate change on plants and animals. Links between biodiversity and climate change remain a priority for the new CEH. Future research work in this area will be carried out in even closer collaboration with universities, through a proposed new partnership funding initiative.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the likely impact on wildlife research of the National Environment Research Council's plans for the future organisation of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. [47293]

Mr. Morley: The Government are fully committed to maintaining the quality of environmental science in the UK and provides funding to the Natural Environment Research Council for this purpose. NERC is currently consulting widely with stakeholders on proposals on how best the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology can contribute on a sustainable basis to this. I am sure that NERC Council will consider all evidence and views on the potential impact of the proposals, including any impact on wildlife research. The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology will continue to deliver its contractual commitments to the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs arid other Government Department and agencies.

Warm Front Scheme

19. **Dr. Kumar:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the operation of the warm homes scheme in Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland. [47614]

Mr. Morley: The Warm Front Scheme has already provided assistance to 3,573 homes in Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland through a range of insulation and heating measures and energy efficiency advice. We continue to work with Eaga Partnership, the scheme manager, to ensure the effective delivery of the scheme across the country.

Climate Change

20. **Mark Lazarowicz:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress she has made with the review of the UK climate change programme. [47615]

Mr. Morley: We are aiming to publish the revised UK climate change programme as soon as possible this year.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with Cabinet colleagues on progress towards meeting climate change targets. [47610]

Margaret Beckett: I have regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues on our progress towards meeting both our international and domestic climate change targets as part of the climate change review process, through our involvement in the Sustainable Energy Policy Network and the EE Committee.

Animal Welfare

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will implement the recommendation contained in paragraph 200 in the Farm Animal Welfare Council's report "Welfare of farmed animals at slaughter or killing", published in 2003. [47603]

Mr. Bradshaw: No.

Beef

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact on the cattle market of a delay in lifting the ban on the export of British beef. [44042]

Mr. Bradshaw: I can confirm that, in 2005, Defra commissioned a report from the Meat and Livestock Commission assessing any risks and the market impact of the lifting of the over-30-month rule.

My officials and I are also closely monitoring the UK market situation as well as the overall EU beef market, since the full re-introduction of post-August 1996 cattle to the food chain on 23 January. In the unlikely event of any substantial and sustained fall in the market price we have the option of pressing the EU Commission's Beef Management Committee for a temporary exceptional market support measure.

Current indications are that the full re-introduction of over-30-month beef from cattle born after 1 August 1996 has passed largely without incident. The impact on market prices will become clearer once they have been collected and published after the first full week of trading.

Bird Keepers

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what information her Department holds on the *(a)* number of bird keepers in the UK and *(b)* percentage of birds of wild origin they keep. [46298]

Jim Knight: The Department holds information on the number and locations of larger poultry businesses. In addition the Great Britain Poultry Register was established in December 2005 to gather more information about particular species of birds held on commercial premises with 50 or more birds. Owners with less than 50 birds are also encouraged to register on a voluntary basis.

However, we do not hold information on other bird keepers or the number and percentage of wild birds kept in the UK.

Bovine TB

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons her Department has refused Mrs. Kremers of New Park Farm, Ogwell, Devon the option of paying for a second TB test for an animal that tested positive to the initial tuberculin skin test; and by what means Mrs. Kremers can appeal against this decision. [47587]

Mr. Bradshaw: The current skin test for bovine tuberculosis (TB) is an effective test. It is the accepted standard laid down in both national and international legislation for determining the existence of disease in a cattle herd.

The Tuberculosis (England and Wales) Order 1984 requires cattle failing the tuberculin test, and those considered to have been direct contacts exposed to TB, to be compulsorily slaughtered. There is no provision for a second TB test nor is there a mechanism for appeals.

CAP Entitlements (Trading)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether trading of common agricultural policy entitlements is allowable in advance of payments being made by the Rural Payments Agency. [46042]

Jim Knight: Trading can only take place once entitlements have been established. The Rural Payments Agency has launched a pre-registration system for those claimants who intend to trade entitlements once they have received their entitlement notification.

Countryside Stewardship Scheme

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what the total level of funding for the countryside stewardship scheme was in the 2004 agreement year; [46968]

(2) how many live agreements providing public access there were in *(a)* the 2004 agreement year and *(b)* from the scheme's inception to November 2005; [46969]

(3) how many hectares were in live agreements under the countryside stewardship scheme which provided public access *(a)* in the agreement year 2004 and *(b)* from the scheme's inception to November 2005; [46972]

(4) how much funding was provided for live agreements providing public access under the countryside stewardship scheme *(a)* in the agreement year 2004 and *(b)* from the scheme's inception to November 2005. [46974]

Jim Knight: I cannot provide the information requested within a reasonable time. I will write to the right hon. Member to provide a detailed answer to his questions when we have the information and will place a copy in the Library of the House and on the DEFRA website.

Departmental Website

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost of maintaining her main departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46276]

Jim Knight: For our main website, www.defra.gov.uk direct operating costs—staff costs for the central team with lead responsibility for updating and maintaining websites—are estimated to be around £352,000 for the current financial year. Additional costs arise from the activities of staff in business units across the Department, contributing to the content of websites but the cost for this cannot be readily calculated . Website hosting services—as well as a range of IT applications—are provided as part of DEFRA's overall IT service provision and the costs cannot be disaggregated.

The number of visitors per month to the website during 2005 was as follows:

	Number
January	230,000
February	230,000
March	270,000
April	270,000
May	260,000
June	240,000
July	230,000
August	250,000
September	260,000
October	320,000
November	320,000
December	270,000

Emissions Trading

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the progress of the national allocation plan for the second phase of the EU emissions trading scheme. [48016]

Mr. Morley: A national allocation plan (NAP) with a final installation level-allocation for Phase II of the EU ETS (2008 to 2012) must be submitted to the European Commission by 31 December 2006. The European Commission recently published its revised guidance for Phase II of the EU ETS, and we are now assessing the impacts of this guidance on the development of our NAP. A draft policy NAP is due to be published this spring.

External Consultants

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department has paid since 2004 to external consultants who had previously been employed by the Department in any capacity within the previous five years. [41205]

Jim Knight: External consultants are not employed by the Department but provide consultancy services under contracts for services. The Department does not hold records centrally of how much it has paid since 2004 to external consultants who had previously been employed by the Department in any capacity within the previous five years, and the information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Fuel Poverty

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what role her Department is playing in the Government's commitment to eradicate fuel poverty. [47108]

Mr. Morley: Defra plays a leading role in taking forward the Government's commitment to tackle fuel poverty. This is reflected in our PSA target, wording of which is shared with DTI, which endorses the commitment to eradicate fuel poverty, as far as reasonably practicable, in vulnerable households in England by 2010.

Defra is responsible for the Warm Front Scheme, which is the key tool for tackling fuel poverty in the private sector in England. Since its launch in June 2000 it has assisted more than 1 million households with a range of insulation and heating measures and energy efficiency advice. The new phase of the scheme, launched in June 2005, is better equipped to target and assist those most in need in a sustainable way.

Funding for Warm Front was enhanced by the announcement in the pre-Budget report 2005 of an additional £250 million for Warm Front in the period 2005–08.

The Department works closely with colleagues across Government who have an interest in this area including the Departments of Trade and Industry, Work and Pensions and Health, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Treasury as well as the Devolved Administrations. This ensures that all areas which impact on our ability to tackle fuel poverty—energy efficiency, income and fuel cost—can be fully considered and appropriate action taken.

IBM, Guildford

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2376W, on departmental transport, if her Department will make a representation to IBM to instruct its employees not to park in residential roads near the site on the Epsom road, Merrow, Guildford. [46054]

Jim Knight: Official representations have been made to IBM to gain their co-operation in asking their employees not to park in surrounding roads.

DEFRA are carrying out daily patrols in the local roads to try to identify vehicles which belong to IBM employees. Drivers or their line managers are then contacted and asked to move their vehicles even though these may be parked legally.

Marine Environment

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with Cabinet colleagues on the protection of the marine environment. [47174]

Mr. Bradshaw: Both I and my officials have had extensive discussions with various colleagues in other Government Departments (and also with the devolved administrations) on a range of domestic and international issues concerning the protection of the marine environment, not least in preparing the Government's proposals for the Marine Bill.

Protected Species

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received about the species included in the list in Schedule 9 of the Countryside and Wildlife Act 1981. [46687]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 30 January 2005]:* The Government have undertaken a review of Part I of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as it applies to England and Wales, and sought comments on retaining Schedule 9 in its current form and making it the subject of an early review. The responses we have received as part of this review are overwhelmingly in support of the retention of Schedule 9, with some suggested additions for both Part I (animals) and Part II (plants). We will be issuing a consultation document later this year which will proposed amendments to Schedule 9, informed by these responses.

Single Farm Payment

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether farmers in Lancashire will receive the single farm payment on the original timetable. [45491]

Jim Knight: As I announced on 31 January, the Rural Payments Agency will start making full payments under the single payment scheme in February with the bulk of payments being made in March. This is in line with announcements made in January 2005, and well within the regulatory payment window, which runs from 1 December 2005 to 30 June 2006.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on what dates the UK Government received funds for the Single Farm Payment from the EU. [47981]

Jim Knight: Common Agricultural Policy funding is reimbursed by the European Commission two months after the end of the month in which the payments to claimants are made. No funds for the Single Payment Scheme have therefore been received.

Water Supplies

Laura Moffatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to ensure safe and sufficient water supplies in the south-east. [47594]

Mr. Morley: Water companies have statutory duties with regard to water supply and have produced drought and water resource plans in liaison with the Environment Agency. Under the Water Act 2003, these plans are now being made statutory. We have asked the Environment Agency to monitor and report on the developing drought in the south-east.

Woodland

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she

has to use native woodland creation to tackle (*a*) habitat fragmentation, (*b*) flooding and (*c*) climate change. [47168]

Jim Knight: Our statement of policy for England's ancient and native woodlands "Keepers of Time" which we published last year sets out a number of strategic objectives which include the creation of new native woodland to extend, link arid complement existing woodland and other habitats. It also sets the objective of increasing the recognition and use of 'environmental services' which native woodland can provide, for example flood alleviation and pollution mitigation.

The England forestry strategy review and the review of the UK climate change programme are looking at how existing policies are performing and the range of polices that might be put in place in the future.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much woodland has been created in each year since 1995; and how much of this is broadleaved. [47171]

Jim Knight: The area of new woodland creation in England comes principally from the area of Forestry Commission grant aided planting and new woodland planting on the public forest estate. In addition a relatively small area is planted without grant aid and this is assumed to be entirely broadleaved. The total area created with and without incentives is given in the following table.

	Total new woodland creation thousands of hectares	*Broadleaved woodland thousands of hectares*	*Broadleaved woodland as percentage of all new planting*
1995–96	4.7	4.3	91
1996–97	4.7	4.2	88
1997–98	4.4	3.8	87
1998–99	5.1	4.4	85
1999–2000	5.9	5.2	87
2000–01	5.9	5.2	89
2001–02	5.4	4.7	87
2002–03	5.9	5.4	91
2003–04	4.6	4.4	96
2004–05	5.3	5.1	96

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to increase woodland cover in England. [47172]

Jim Knight: Our target is to create 30,000 hectares of new woodland over the seven-year period, 2000–06, of the England rural development programme. In the period 1 January 2000–31 December 2005, 28,262 hectares of new woodland has been planted.

The successor to the current programme is being developed and a public consultation document will be published soon. New woodland creation is expected to remain a feature of the programme but at this stage we do not have a target area.

The revised England forestry strategy and the revision of the UK biodiversity action plan native woodland creation target are both expected to be published later this year and will provide more details of our plans for woodland cover in England.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to encourage farmers to plant trees. [47166]

Jim Knight: Incentives to promote the planting of trees in England are part of the Forestry Commission's English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) which combines and replaces incentives for the establishment of new woodland that were available under the Commission's Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS) and Defra's Farm Woodland Premium Scheme (FWPS). Defra's Environmental Stewardship Scheme will build on past achievements by providing incentives for small-scale tree planting.

In addition to these England-wide schemes there are various regional and local initiatives aimed at increasing tree cover; notably the National Forest in the Midlands and the 12 Community Forest partnerships based close to urban areas.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of England is covered by ancient woodland; and what steps she has taken to halt its decline. [47169]

Jim Knight: In June last year I launched "Keepers of Time: a statement policy for England's ancient and native woodland", which at around 340,000 hectares makes up just under 3 per cent. of our land area.

Our vision is that ancient woodlands, veteran trees and other native woodlands are adequately protected, sustainably managed in a wider landscape context, and are providing a wide range of social, environmental and economic benefits to society.

The Action Plan for 2005–07, which accompanied the policy statement, set out a broad range of actions aimed at achieving our strategic objectives, which includes halting the decline.

PRIME MINISTER

Hospitality (Expenditure)

David Simpson: To ask the Prime Minister how much he has spent on hospitality in each year since he became Prime Minister; and what proportion was spent on alcohol. [46489]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my noble Friend Lord Bassam of Brighton to the noble Lord Hanningfield on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, column WA261.

For 2002–03 I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1087W.

For 2001–02 I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 27 January 2003, *Official Report*, column 564W.

For figures up to the period of 2001–02, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) on 28 February 2002, *Official Report*, columns 1444–48W.

Office Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Prime Minister how many staff were employed in his Office in each year since he became Prime Minister. [46487]

The Prime Minister: For the number of staff on the No. 10 payroll for the period up to 1 April 2003 I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for South Suffolk (Mr. Yeo) on 30 June 2003, *Official Report*, column 56W.

For the number of staff on the No. 10 payroll for the remaining period up to 1 April 2005 I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Belfast, East (Mr. Robinson) on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 163- 64W.

Official Travel

David Simpson: To ask the Prime Minister how much he has spent on air travel in each year since he became Prime Minister. [46488]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Hemel Hempstead (Mike Penning) on 21 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1661W.

David Simpson: To ask the Prime Minister what the total cost was of his official travel in each year since he became Prime Minister. [46490]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) on 21 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1660- 61W.

David Simpson: To ask the Prime Minister what the total cost was of his overnight accommodation during official travel in each year since he became Prime Minister. [46491]

The Prime Minister: The information requested cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate costs.

However in respect of overseas travel, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. Copies of these lists are available in the Library of the House. Information on the number of officials accompanying Ministers on overseas visits is included in the list. All Ministers travel arrangements are in accordance with the arrangements for official travel set out in Chapter 10 of the ministerial code, and the accompanying guidance document, "Travel by Ministers". Information for the year 2005-06 will be published as soon as it is ready after the end of the financial year.

Royal Audiences

Harry Cohen: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what matters he has raised at audiences with HM The Queen in the course of the present Parliament; [46727]

(2) how matters to be raised by him at audiences with HM the Queen are selected. [46728]

The Prime Minister: Discussions with Her Majesty the Queen are not disclosed.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

2012 Business Summit

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the *(a)* companies, *(b)* trade bodies, *(c)* regional development agencies, *(d)* trades unions and *(e)* local authorities represented at the 2012 Business Summit held in London on 24 January. [46571]

Tessa Jowell: Given that many of the organisations represented at the 2012 Business Summit do not fit easily into the categories included in the question, the following is a complete alphabetical list of all attending organisations.

3M United Kingdom plc
Accenture
ADT Fire and Security plc
Advantage West Midlands
Alfred McAlpine
AMEC Design and Project Services
Amey Ventures Limited
AMICUS
Anschutz Entertainment Group
Arts & Business
Arup
ASLEF
Association of Colleges London Region
Association of Consultancy and Engineering
Association of Police and Public Security Suppliers
Atkins
ATOS Origin
Australian Trade Commission
Aviva plc
BAA plc
Balfour Beatty plc
Barclays Bank plc
Barratt Thames Gateway
Bechtel Limited
Bell Pottinger Public Affairs
Bennetts Associates
Berwin Leighton Paisner
Biffa Waste Services
British Olympic Association
British Airways
British Chambers of Commerce
British Consultants and Obstruction Bureau
British Library
British Security Industry Association
Brunswick Group LLP
BT
Building Design Partnership
Buro Happold
Business Redbridge
Cable and Wireless UK
Cadbury Schweppes
Camelot Group plc
Canary Wharf Group
Capita Symonds

Carillion Transport
Chartered Institute of Marketing
CITB-Construction Skills
City of Westminster College
Civil Engineering Contractors' Association
Cleanevent UK
Commission for Racial Equality
COMMUNITY
Compass Group
Confederation of British Industry
Conran Holdings
Constructing Excellence
Construction Clients' Group
Construction Confederation
Construction Equipment Association
Construction Industry Council
Construction Products Association
Contemporary Group
Corporation of London
Corus
Cory Environmental
Costain plc
CPT UK Ltd.
David Lloyd Leisure/Whitbread
David Wilson Homes
Davies Tanner
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Department for Education and Skills
Department for Trade and Industry
Department for Work and Pensions
Diageo
Docklands Business Club
Drivers Jonas
E.ON UK
Ealing, Hammersmith & West London College
East London Business Alliance
East of England Development Agency
East Potential
EC Harris LLP
EDF Energy
Employers' Forum on Disability
English Institute of Sport
Equal Opportunities Commission
Ernst and Young LLP
ESAB Group
Exel
FD Tamesis
Federation of Master Builders
Fortis Bank
Forum of Private Business
Foster Yeoman
Franklin + Andrews
Freshminds
German-British Chamber of Industry & Commerce
Goodmarriott & Hursthouse Ltd.
Government Office for London
Government Office for the South West
Greater London Authority
Greenwich Leisure Ltd.
Group 4 Securicor
Hanson PLC
Health and Safety Executive
Herbert Smith LLP
HM Treasury
HSBC Bank plc
HSP Group
IBM (UK) Limited
Instant Offices Group
Interim Olympic Delivery Authority
Invest Northern Ireland
JCB
Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates
KPMG
Laing O'Rourke
Lane4
Learning and Skills Council
Leaside Regeneration Ltd
Lewisham College
Linklaters
Lodestar
London & Continental Stations & Property Ltd.
London Borough of Hackney
London Borough of Islington
London Borough of Newham
London Chamber of Commerce and Industry
London City Airport
London Communications Agency
London Development Agency
London First
London Organising Committee for the Olympic Cannes
London Sustainability Exchange
LP Architects
Mace Limited
Marks and Spencer plc
Martineau Johnson
Medius
Mitsubishi Corporation
Morgan Walker Solicitors LLP
Mott MacDonald
Mowlem plc
Multiplex
National Audit Office
National Grid
National Specialist Contractors Council
Network Rail
Northwest Regional Development Agency
Office of Government Commerce
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
OGC Buying Solutions
Olympic Board Secretariat
ONE North East
Oracle Corporation UK Ltd.
Ordnance Survey
Parsons Brinckerhoff Ltd.
Partnerships UK
Peabody Trust

Pinsent Masons
PIPT Ltd
PMP
Portland Port Group
Professional Lighting and Sound Association
Prospects Services Ltd
Qinetiq
Radio Taxis Group Ltd
Reeve Hepburn
Renewable Energy Association
River and Rowing Museum
Royal Bank of Scotland Group
Royal Institute of British Architects
Rural Cultural Forum
Sainsbury's
Scottish and Southern Energy
Shell
Sir Robert McAlpine
Skanska Integrated Projects
Skills Festival Company
Sodexho
Somerset House Trust
South East England Development Agency
South London Business
South West Regional Development Agency
Specialist Engineering Contractors Group
Sponsorship Consulting Limited
Sport England
Sports Impact Ltd
SportsAid
SportScotland
Sportspulse
Strategic Forum for Construction
Sustainable Development Commission
Taylor Woodrow Construction
Thales UK
Thames Gateway Learning and Skills Council
Thames Gateway London Partnership
Thames Valley University
Thames Water
THB Clowes
Think London
Thistle Hotels Ltd
Tourism Tourism
Trade and Invest Wales
Trades Union Congress
Transport and General Workers' Union
Turner and Townsend Construction and Management
UCATT
UK Trade & Investment
United Utilities Contract Solutions
University of East London
VISA Europe
Visit London
VisitBritain
Wates Construction
Willmott Dixon Construction
Wm Morrison Supermarkets plc
Wolseley UK
WPIP
Wragge & Co LLP
WWF-UK

Casinos

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether guidance has been produced on alcohol *(a)* served and *(b)* consumed on the gaming floor area of new casinos licensed under the Gambling Act 2005. [46726]

Mr. Caborn: No such guidance has yet been produced in relation to the new casinos permitted by the Gambling Act 2005. The Gambling Commission has published guidance in relation to alcohol on the gaming floor of casinos licensed under the 1968 Act, and the regulation of alcohol provision in the new casinos will be developed from this model.

If it becomes clear that alcohol is becoming a problem in either existing casinos or those new casinos permitted by the 2005 Act, there are powers under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005 to stop it being served.

Cricket

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money was allocated to cricket through *(a)* the Sports Council, *(b)* the national lottery and *(c)* other Government funding in each of the last five years. [46815]

Mr. Caborn: Funding for cricket is allocated through Sport England. The table sets out the funding allocated in each of the last five years.

Table 1: Funding for cricket 2001–02 to 2005–06

	English cricket board award	*Lottery*	*Community club development programme*
2001–02	522,000	7,519,883	—
2002–03	224,000	15,381,677	—
2003–04	120,833	10,400,024	[2]9,400,000
2004–05	618,750	2,530,717	—
2005–06	[1]611,000	508,684	—
Totals	2,096,583	36,340,985	9,400,000

[1] ECB funding for 2005–06 from 1 April to 30 September 2005
[2] CCDP funding for period 2003–04 to 2005–06

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixtures and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of (i) her Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body and (B) executive agency, (C) other public body for which her Department is responsible in each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40069]

Mr. Lammy: Expenditure by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on fixtures and fittings was £477,000 in 2002–03, £475,000 in 2003–04 and £335,000 in 2004–05; with planned expenditure of £100,000 in 2005–06.

The term "general office expenses" is neither used as part of the Department's accounting procedures, nor those of the Royal Parks Agency.

Annual expenditure by the Department on office equipment, including computers, was £938,000 in 2002–03, £958,000 in 2003–04, £1,100,000 in 2004–05; with planned expenditure of £350,000 in 2005–06.

The Royal Parks Agency's accounts do not identify separately figures for fixtures and fittings and attempts to provide these would be at disproportionate cost.

Annual expenditure by the Royal Parks Agency on office equipment, including computers, was £11,000 in both 2002–03 and 2003–04, £23,000 in 2004–05, with planned expenditure of £23,000 in 2005–06.

Information requested in respect of the non departmental public bodies could be obtained at disproportionate cost.

English National Opera

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what guidance she has issued to English National Opera on severance payments for senior executives. [47836]

Mr. Lammy: I have issued no guidance to English National Opera on severance payments for senior executives.

Football

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she is taking to continue to promote an anti-racist message through football in *(a)* Swindon and *(b)* England. [47555]

Mr. Caborn: Swindon Town Football Club gives its full backing to the national anti-racism campaigns, Kick It Out and Show Racism The Red Card. The club promotes the campaigns on match days and they liaise with the local authority and local schools to convey the anti-racism message.

My Department continues to support these anti-racism campaigns such as Kick It Out and Show Racism the Red Card through funding for the Football Foundation which will receive £45 million in Government money between 2004 and 2007. We are also working closely with the Commission for Racial Equality who are developing race equality action plans with the Football Association, the Premier League, the Football League, the Professional Footballers Association and the Football Foundation.

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of Swindon's Football in the Community scheme. [47554]

Mr. Caborn: DCMS has made no official assessment of Swindon's Football in the Community scheme but is delighted that professional clubs continue to work in their local areas to promote football and provide opportunities for a wide range of people.

Olympics 2012

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the statement at her Department's Olympic summit on 24 January, if she will provide a breakdown by main budget heading of the £3.3 billion cost of infrastructure. [46159]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* The figure of £3 billion that I mentioned on 24 January comprises £2 billion for the Olympic venues and infrastructure to be met from the Public Sector Funding Package. The other £1 billion is to meet the costs of infrastructure works already planned and budgeted as part of the general regeneration of the lower Lea valley.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many events there will be at the London 2012 Olympics; and which of these events will be open to women competitors. [46661]

Tessa Jowell: There are planned to be 26 sports in the programme for the 2012 Olympic games and all, except the boxing competition, will be open to women competitors. There are planned to be 19 sports in the programme for the 2012 Paralympic games, all of which will be open to women competitors.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when the liaison bodies established between her Department and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in relation to arrangements for the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic games have met; and if she will make a statement. [46986]

Mr. Caborn: The Olympic delivery group, the Olympic projects review group and the Olympic board steering group meet regularly at approximately two-week intervals.

The inter-departmental steering group and the network of Olympic co-ordinators will meet on a quarterly basis.

Paralympics

James Brokenshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department is taking to *(a)* promote awareness of the Paralympic Games and *(b)* maximise the potential opportunities for people with disabilities taking part in sport as a consequence of the Paralympic Games; and if she will make a statement. [47038]

Mr. Caborn: We are committed to working with others to maximise media coverage and exposure of the Paralympic Games and to promoting the Games nationwide. In 2012, the Olympic stakeholders will implement an innovative promotional programme for the Paralympic Games that generates excitement among a wide range of audiences. Among those specifically targeted will be schools, community groups, sports clubs and special interest groups.

The Paralympic Games in 2012 will motivate more people with disabilities in the UK to take part in sport. We will work with Sport England to sustain this legacy after 2012, in line with our commitment to increase sports participation for disabled people. This will include greater access to modern facilities and greater awareness and interest in healthier lifestyles. There will also be support, training, new career opportunities for coaches and volunteers, and visibility for sports that are not currently widely played in the UK.

Public Libraries

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the *(a)* recent and *(b)* likely closure of public libraries. [47795]

Mr. Lammy: We are monitoring the situation closely and I have written to all leaders of the 149 library authorities in England to remind them of their statutory obligations. Primarily, the operation of library services are a matter for determination by the elected representatives of the parent authorities. However, public libraries are valuable community assets and local decision makers should think carefully about what might be lost through closures.

RNIB Talking Books

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many local authorities subsidised the cost of Royal National Institute for the Blind Talking Books on the most recent date for which figures are available. [47578]

Mr. Lammy: The Government do not hold this information centrally; however, according to the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), 131 English local authorities subscribe to the RNIB talking books scheme.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

China/Ethiopia/Burma

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the humanitarian situation in *(a)* China, *(b)* Ethiopia and *(c)* Burma. [47041]

Hilary Benn: There is no humanitarian emergency in China. The country has made dramatic progress in reducing absolute poverty over the last 25 years, with over 450 million people lifted out of poverty. There are, however, still 135 million people below the poverty line and progress towards some of the Millennium Development Goals is slower than expected. The DFID programme focuses on increasing access to basic education, water and sanitation and basic health services, and on tackling HIV and AIDS and Tuberculosis.

In Ethiopia, 2.6 million people in, especially in the Somali, Afar and Oromia regions, have been badly affected by the drought and will need humanitarian assistance in 2006. The Government of Ethiopia and UN agencies issued an appeal on 23 January 2006, with particular emphasis on non-food needs such as health, nutrition, water, sanitation and livestock. We are considering our response. We will also continue to support the Government of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Nets Programme which provides assistance to those communities and households most vulnerable to crop failure by enabling them to invest in assets like clothes and livestock, or to build roads or protect water supplies.

Burma is one of the poorest countries in Asia. It is not on track to achieve any of the Millennium Development Goals. There is little reliable data but we know that many of Burma's 50 million people face poverty and vulnerability. We provide £500,000 a year humanitarian assistance through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to support displaced people in Eastern Burma.

Kenya

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the outcomes were of the discussions on increased private sector investment and growth in Kenya held on his recent visit there. [47040]

Hilary Benn: I did not have any formal discussions regarding private sector development on my recent visit to Kenya. However, I did hold discussions on governance and corruption. We will continue to push on these issues to create a better climate for investment. More widely, DFID has been engaged for a number of years on private sector development in Kenya and, with our assistance, the Government of Kenya is soon to publish a Private Sector Development Strategy and a Financial Sector Strategy, and is implementing a Strategy for the Revitalisation of Agriculture.

Natural Disasters

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether vulnerability to natural disasters is considered as one of the criteria in the development of aid programmes; and if he will make a statement. [47095]

Mr. Thomas: Vulnerability is a factor which DFID takes into account in allocating aid to particular countries. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), approximately half of the world's least developed countries face high levels of natural disaster risk and the impact on poor people is increasing. It is important that developing countries ensure that their planning includes efforts to minimise the impact of risk and respond more effectively when disasters occur. DFID has produced a new policy outlining our approach to disaster risk reduction which will be published shortly.

DFID is funding significant disaster risk reduction programmes in countries susceptible to disasters. For example, we are providing over £60 million to support disaster preparedness in Orissa, India. In Bangladesh, with the UNDP, we are supporting the development of the government's Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme which is helping to improve legislation, programming and co-ordination across government ministries on disaster risk reduction.

DFID is also providing support for the international disaster risk reduction system. We are one of the leading donors to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, contributing around £1 million per year and we are providing £3.75 million to support the Pan American Health Organisations' work in the Caribbean to reduce the vulnerability of the health sector to disasters. Our support to the disaster risk reduction work of the Red Cross and international non-governmental organisations totals over £16 million.

Palestinian Authority

Mr. Joyce: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what aid and assistance the UK is giving to the Palestinian Authority. [47446]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development's (DFID) programme of assistance to the Palestinians aims to enhance the prospects for peace, make Palestinian governance and institutions more effective and accountable, and encourage more co-ordinated delivery of humanitarian and development assistance. In 2005–06 our programme has included:

Support to the Palestinian Negotiations Support Unit;

Technical advice on public administration and civil service reform;

Humanitarian assistance to Palestinian Refugees through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency; and

Budget support to the Palestinian Authority (PA) through the World Bank Reform Trust Fund.

This is in addition to assistance provided through the UK Government's Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP).

Given the current political uncertainty in the occupied Palestinian territories we are reviewing how we can best support the peace process and economic development.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he will reply to question number 42471 tabled by the hon. Member for Cotswold. [46368]

Hilary Benn: I refer the hon. Member for Cotswold to the response I gave on 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 13–14W.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

0870 Numbers

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 8 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 291W, on 0870 numbers, what contractual arrangements his Department has for the provision of non-profit making 0870 lines. [37643]

Alun Michael: Cable and Wireless provide the 0870 lines deployed directly by the Department of Trade and Industry. Under current arrangements the threshold for revenue to return to the Department is set at 359,999 call minutes per year for each 0870 line. The low volume of calls on the 0870 lines means that these thresholds have not been reached.

These services can be terminated with three months notice. Other 0870 lines are supplied by BT and managed by sub-contractors through two DTI funded contracts providing support for UK bidders into the EU's sixth Framework Programme for RTD. These BT lines attracted set up charges of up to £250 per number and continue to attract rental charges of £200 per annum, which is absorbed into the overall cost of the contracts. Calls to these numbers are charged at national rate, so are not revenue earning for either DTI or our contractors. The two contracts are due to run until the end of 2006.

Administrative Costs

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the administrative costs were of each agency for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as (*a*) identifiable and (*b*) non-identifiable. [39854]

Alan Johnson: Administrative costs (net) for the Department's Agencies for 2004–05 are:

	£000s
Small Business Service (SBS)	18,036
Employment Tribunals Service (ETS)	27,593
Insolvency Service (INSS)	71
National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML)	(108)

The figures for SBS and ETS are taken from their annual reports and resource accounts (HC 371 and HC 180 respectively). The figures for INSS and NWML are taken from the provisional departmental administration costs outturns disclosed in the most recent "Public Expenditure" White Paper (CMD 6639) as their net administration costs are not readily identifiable from their resource accounts.

For the purposes of the country and regional analysis exercise, from which data is disclosed in chapter 8 of the annual public expenditure statistical analyses, the costs of the Employment Tribunals Service are regarded as identifiable, those of the Insolvency Service, and National Weights and Measures Laboratory as non-identifiable.

Christmas Cards

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will estimate the cost to his Department of sending Christmas cards in 2005. [45919]

Alan Johnson: In 2005, my Department ran an internal competition for children of DTI employees to design the official corporate Christmas card. This resulted in only minimal costs for artwork to clean up and scan the winning design.

Total costs for printing 4,500 cards was therefore £1,575.

Specific costs for postage are not accessible (these cards are posted along with regular DTI mail). However, based on second class postage and the amount of cards printed:

21p per letter x 4,500 cards printed: £945

Overall costs are therefore estimated at £2,520.

All expenditure incurred was made in accordance with departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, as set out in Government Accounting.

Consultants/Specialists

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much the Department spent on (*a*) marketing consultants and (*b*) employment and recruitment specialists in each year since 1997. [41909]

Alan Johnson: The information on these categories of expenditure for 2003–04 (actual), 2004–05 (actual) and 2005–06 (spend to date), is as follows.

	£
Marketing consultants	
2003–04	14,742,791
2004–05	12,311,497
2005–06	7,792,880
Employment recruitment consultants	
2003–04	1,087,321
2004–05	1,239,444
2005–06	432,935

Information for years pre 2003–04 is not readily available on a centralised basis and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Correspondence

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, of 26 October 2005 on behalf of Lesley Clarke. [38119]

Alan Johnson: I apologise to my right hon. Friend for the delay in responding. The issues raised cover the responsibilities of two other departments and officials are collating a response with contributions from those departments. I hope to respond in the near future.

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State will respond to the letter from the hon. Member for West Worcestershire of 9 November 2005. [41976]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The letter from the hon. Member has been delayed by an administrative error, for which I apologise. A response will be sent shortly.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he will answer the letter to him dated 13 December 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mrs J. Lyth. [45407]

Alan Johnson: I apologise for the delay in responding to this letter. I intend to reply in the next few days.

Departmental Conferences

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* guidelines and *(b)* criteria are used in his Department for the production and purchase of branded materials for distribution at conferences held in the Department. [45663]

Alan Johnson: My Department produces publicity materials in accordance with its branding rules. These set out how DTI's communications should appear visually.

The production and purchase of branded materials are usually considered on a case-by-case basis—depending on the purpose and objectives of a conference. It should be noted that DTI complies with conventions on government communications, which include ensuring that they are conducted in an economic and appropriate way and that the costs are justifiable as expenditure of public funds.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make it his policy to collect figures for the cost of branded goods commissioned for use by his Department; and if he will record these costs in his Department's annual accounts. [45664]

Alan Johnson: Within the DTI, financial expenditure is the devolved responsibility of individual directorates. Our policies surrounding the recording of expenditure and publishing in our annual reports conforms to Government accounting requirements.

I have not made it policy to collect figures on items as specific as branded goods as these are generally an ad-hoc expense that is incurred for activities such as large exhibitions/conferences, not for standard DTI business. It should be noted that the DTI complies with conventions on Government communications which include ensuring that they are conducted in an economic and appropriate way and that the costs are justifiable as expenditure of public funds.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps are taken by his Department to support staff with mental ill-health. [36268]

Alan Johnson: The DTI provides medical and other advice, through their Occupational Health Service and through disability management advisers and specialist assessors where appropriate, to identify the appropriate support for employees with medical conditions, including mental ill-health.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43487]

Alan Johnson: The information is as follows:

	Disciplinary actions commenced	*Formal sanctions applied*
2001	20	20
2002	19	16
2003	61	53
2004	81	70
2005	93	76

The Department has procedures in place to deal with misconduct and poor behaviour. These are developed in consultation with the trade unions and are available to all staff, either on the Department's intranet or in hard copy.

Energy Supplies

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on how many occasions he has met officials of the National Union of Mineworkers and British local producers to discuss the future of energy supplies in the UK in the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [47008]

Malcolm Wicks: Since becoming Minister for Energy I have once met officials of the National Union of Mineworkers. I have had three other meetings with UK coal producers and other mining union representatives.

Identity Fraud

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what training his Department has provided for *(a)* front desk and *(b)* administrative staff in relation to identity fraud. [41284]

Alan Johnson: The Department contracts with a service provider for front desk and guarding services. It is a requirement of the contract for the service provider to ensure that their staff are fully trained to carry out their role. The training incorporates all those skills needed to provide counter measures against unauthorised access or threat to the departmental assets.

Other staff are trained to carry out a number of checks as part of the normal departmental recruitment procedures. These checks aim to positively establish identity and obtain background information on the subject by taking up references.

Marine Bill

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the written answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1767W, on the Marine Bill, what meetings his Department held with *(a)* other Government Departments, *(b)* industry representatives and *(c)* other stakeholders; and when the meetings took place. [47530]

Malcolm Wicks: The possibility of a Marine Bill has been under consideration for some time and has arisen in discussion at numerous meetings at which DTI has been represented, particularly in connection with offshore energy. It has been discussed at regular meetings of groups which bring together the marine renewables industry and offshore oil and gas industries with other stakeholders including fishing interests, shipping and ports groups and environmental non-governmental organisations. DTI officials are also members of Defra's inter-departmental Marine Bill steering group.

Office Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each of the English regions and (4) Northern Ireland owned in *(x)* 2003-04 and *(y)* 2004-05. [40107]

Alan Johnson: In 2000 the Department of Trade and Industry transferred ownership of its core IT infrastructure as part of a long-term private finance initiative (PFI) agreement to a consortium led by Fujitsu. The use of IT equipment such as PCs, laptops, servers, scanners and printers is now, in the main, provided as a service through the PFI partner, Fujitsu. The use of photocopiers is also provided mainly through supplier leasing arrangements. Details of fax machines owned by the Department are shown in the following table. The chief executives of the Department's Agencies have been asked to write to the hon. Member in respect of their equipment holdings.

Department of Trade and Industry: fax machines

Number

	2003-04	*2004-05*
East Midlands	3	3
Eastern	4	4
London	214	183
North East	12	12
North West	2	2
Scotland	10	10
South East	3	3
South West	4	4
Wales	6	6
West Midlands	4	4
Yorkshire and Humberside	8	8
Total	270	239

Letter from John Taylor, dated 2 February 2006:

The data about quantities and locations of Acas office equipment requested in this written Parliamentary Question are set out in the attached tables.

ACAS equipment by location, 2003-04

Region	*Fax*	*Laptop*	*PC*	*Photocopier*	*Printer*	*Scanner*	*Server*
Scotland	14	12	75	3	39	0	1
Wales	10	12	43	2	29	0	3
East	20	14	43	3	28	0	1
East Midlands	12	12	68	3	50	0	9
London	109	349	537	11	313	5	33
North East	11	33	42	3	22	0	1
North West	39	29	110	4	59	0	2
South East	58	27	114	2	80	1	5
South West	14	12	63	2	31	1	2
West Midlands	27	43	52	4	40	0	1
Yorkshire and Humberside	22	34	47	3	45	0	2
Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	336	577	1,194	40	736	7	60

ACAS equipment by location, 2004-05

Region	*Fax*	*Laptop*	*PC*	*Photocopier*	*Printer*	*Scanner*	*Server*
Scotland	14	17	67	3	42	0	1
Wales	11	17	41	3	29	0	2
East	18	40	45	3	32	0	2
East Midlands	11	13	64	3	35	0	2
London	118	263	704	11	280	9	52
North East	10	31	40	3	22	0	1
North West	44	44	129	3	67	0	3
South East	65	34	125	2	107	0	4
South West	12	8	59	2	28	1	1
West Midlands	30	46	47	4	43	0	0

ACAS equipment by location, 2004-05

Region	Fax	Laptop	PC	Photocopier	Printer	Scanner	Server
Yorkshire and Humberside	22	39	59	3	45	0	2
Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	355	554	1,380	40	730	10	70

Letter from Tim Moss, dated 2 February 2006:

I am responding to your recently tabled Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

The number of pieces of equipment in each area is as follows:

	2004-05			*2003-04*		
	Scotland	*Wales*	*London*	*Scotland*	*Wales*	*London*
(*a*) Personal computers	62	1,216	11	62	899	11
(*b*) Laptops	0	52	0	0	37	0
(*c*) Servers	2	154	0	2	149	0
(*d*) Printers	7	334	4	7	292	4
(*e*) Scanners	1	14	0	1	11	0
(*f*) Photocopiers	1	28	1	1	28	1
(*g*) Fax machines	1	38	1	1	33	1
(*h*) Multi-function (copier, printer, fax)	0	7	0	0	2	0

We do not have an office in Northern Ireland and consequently no equipment.

Letter from Desmond Flynn, dated 2 February 2006:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (2005/2566) asking about our holdings of personal computers and associated equipment and office photocopiers and faxes in 2003-4 and 2004-5, broken down by region.

I enclose a table showing the information requested.

The Insolvency Service: computer equipment and office machinery holdings

	Personal Computers	*Laptops*	*Servers*	*Printers*	*Scanners*	*Copiers*	*Fax machines*
2003-04							
East Midlands	95	0	9	13	0	5	3
Eastern	164	0	15	19	0	12	9
London	425	70	18	50	4	10	18
North East	119	0	9	13	0	6	5
North West	198	1	12	22	0	10	8
Scotland	11	0	0	2	0	3	2
South East	208	1	15	23	0	9	11
South West	197	1	18	26	2	11	11
Wales	62	0	6	8	0	4	2
West Midlands	290	25	27	40	2	10	14
Yorkshire and Humberside	63	0	6	8	0	4	2
Total	1,832	98	135	224	8	84	85
2004-05							
East Midlands	105	4	6	16	0	5	3
Eastern	177	8	10	23	0	13	9
London	469	76	22	85	6	10	18
North East	136	9	6	16	0	6	3
North West	208	21	8	33	0	10	8
Scotland	11	1	0	2	0	3	2
South East	229	10	10	28	0	10	11
South West	220	9	12	34	2	11	11
Wales	67	4	4	13	0	3	2
West Midlands	383	36	26	46	4	11	16
Yorkshire and Humberside	76	9	4	9	0	4	2
Total	2,081	187	108	305	12	86	87

Letter from Jeanne Spinks, dated 2 February 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, how many (*a*) personal computers, (*b*) laptops, (*c*) servers, (*d*) printers, (*e*) scanners, (*f*) photocopiers and (*g*) fax machines (i) his Department, (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each of the English regions and (4) Northern Ireland owned in (x) 2003-04 and (*y*) 2004-05.

The figures are as follows.

	2003-04			2004-05		
	Scotland	Wales	England	Scotland	Wales	England
(a) PCs	3	4	62	3	4	61
(b) Laptops	3	1	47	3	1	47
(c) Servers	3	0	14	3	0	13
(d) Printers	26	24	315	26	22	313
(e) Scanners	0	0	6	0	0	6
(f) Photocopiers	0	0	8	0	0	8
(g) Fax Machines	4	1	47	4	1	46

Letter from Dr Jeff Llewellyn, dated 2 February 2006:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question regarding how many (a) personal computers, (b) laptops, (c) servers, (d) printers, (e) scanners, (f) photocopiers and (g) fax machines (i) his Department, (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each of the English regions and (4) Northern Ireland owned in (x) 2003-04 and (y) 2004-05.

The IT equipment in use in NWML for the years 2003-04 and 2004-05 is shown in the table below:

	2003-04	2004-05
Personal Computers	75	86
Laptops	13	17
Servers	8	14
Printers	18	[1]11
Scanners	3	4
Photocopiers	[1]0	[1]0
Fax Machines	3	3

[1] Three leased

This is a hardware list that includes laboratory equipment. It does not include network infrastructure, peripherals or software.

Letter from Ron Marchant, dated 2 February 2006:

I am responding to this parliamentary question, tabled on 20 December 2005, regarding what equipment the Patent Office owned in 2003-04 and 2004-05.

	31 December	
	2003	2004
Personal Computers	1,650	1,761
Laptops	194	217
Servers	78	89
Printers	1,333	1,418
Scanners	80	75
Photocopiers[1]	41	41
Faxes	52	36

[1] Photocopiers were leased rather than owned.

Pipeline (Milford Haven)

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will place in the Library the map of stage 1 of the liquid gas pipeline from (a) Milford Haven to Tirley and (b) Milford Haven to Felindre. [47552]

Malcolm Wicks: A copy of the map showing the route of the natural gas pipeline from Milford Haven to Aberdulais will be placed in the Libraries of the House. No application has yet been made for a pipeline from Felindre to Tilrey.

Public Relations Companies

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the public relations companies that have had contracts with (a) his Department, (b) each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and (c) independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by his Department and other such organisations since May 1997. [39093]

Alan Johnson: The following companies have been awarded public relations contracts from the DTI since 2002:

Harrison Cowley
Fishburn Hedges
GCI
Countrywide
Prowse

This information has been sought through the Central Office of Information. To collate information prior to this would exceed disproportionate costs.

Expenditure by non-departmental public bodies, executive agencies and independent statutory bodies is not held centrally, therefore to collate would exceed disproportionate costs.

Sizewell B (Waste Heat)

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with British Energy to explore the technical and economic possibilities of distributing the waste heat from Sizewell B power plant via a heat grid. [46569]

Malcolm Wicks: None.

Postgraduates

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Department is taking to (a) retain and (b) attract postgraduates in the UK work force; and what estimate he has made of the number of people with postgraduate qualifications relevant to business and industry that leave the UK to work abroad each year. [43077]

Alan Johnson: We have introduced several initiatives—we have raised Research Council-funded PhD stipends; improved professional training in PhDs; increased the average Research Council postdoctoral salary; improved training for postdoctoral researchers and introduced 1,000 new academic fellowships. A recent research report by the Higher Education Policy

Institute stated that the UK gained 40 per cent. more staff than it lost over an eight-year period, from highly cited academics to post doctoral staff.

My Department does not have any specific estimates of numbers leaving the UK to work abroad. I understand the Higher Education Statistics Agency collects data on destinations of postgraduates.

TRANSPORT

Anti-terrorism Legislation (Railway Enthusiasts)

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance he has given to the British Transport Police on the application of anti-terrorism legislation to the activities of railway enthusiasts who choose to photograph trains and stations. [42286]

Derek Twigg: The Department has not issued any such guidance to the British Transport Police (BTP). Railway enthusiasts are frequently present on the rail infrastructure, are knowledgeable about railway operations and know what is or is not usual. They are in a good position to report any suspicious activity to the police and BTP actively encourage them, like any other user of rail services and stations, to do so.

BTP officers would not normally use powers under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000 to stop and search rail enthusiasts. However, in certain circumstances, photographing and videoing of railway infrastructure could be one possible indication of hostile surveillance and officers may judge it necessary to question, and possibly search, an individual. In this context, rail enthusiasts are not treated any differently from any other individual.

Cycling

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was spent on cycling safety in each of the last 20 years. [48012]

Dr. Ladyman: Most spending on cycle safety in England is undertaken by local highway authorities. This includes capital spending on infrastructure schemes such as cycle lanes, which may have traffic management as well as safety benefits. It also includes revenue spending on cycle training, other educational initiatives and local cycle safety publicity. Since 2001–02, capital spending by English authorities outside London has been recorded through the local transport plan system, but this was not recorded centrally for earlier years. Revenue spending on road safety comes from local authorities' own resources and is not recorded centrally.

The Department for Transport also produces cycle safety publicity and resources at national level. Figures for annual spending are only available as far back as 2002–03. Our road safety challenge grant scheme, which has been running since 2002–03, has funded a number of projects that are wholly or partly to improve cycle safety. Figures for spending on cycle safety projects under previous grant schemes are not available. The Department also includes projects on cycle safety in its road safety research programme, though figures are available only from 1999–2000.

The Department has also from time to time funded various schemes to promote cycling, including infrastructure, facilities and training, which will have included safety benefits. From 2005–06, this role has been taken on by Cycling England, which now receives £5 million per year from the Department, to spend on a range of infrastructure, training and publicity measures.

Available figures are shown in the following table. These may include amounts sent on cycling infrastructure and facilities that was not entirely safety-related and amounts spent on road safety publicity and education that was not entirely cycling related. These figures do not include spending on infrastructure, facilities, education and publicity that had wider road safety benefits for all road users, including cyclists. No figures are available for earlier years.

£ million

	LA capital spending on cycle infrastructure (England outside London)	*LA capital spending on cycle infrastructure (London)*	*LA revenue spending on cycle training, education and publicity*	*DfT spending on grants for cycle safety schemes and on cycle safety publicity*	*DfT spending on cycle safety research*	*DfT spending on cycle promotion, with some safety benefits (Cycling England from 2005–06)*
1996–97	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	2.00
1997–98	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
1998–99	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
1999–2000	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	0.06	[1]
2000–01	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	0.00	[1]
2001–02	29.58	£50 million over 5 years (no breakdown available)	[1]	[1]	0.02	[1]
2002–03	39.90		[1]	0.06	0.06	2.18
2003–04	32.13		[1]	0.18	0.00	2.19
2004–05	38.89		[1]	0.07	0.05	10.12
2005–06	35.39		[1]	0.27	0.06	5.00

[1] unknown

Buses

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which local authorities have introduced reduced bus fare schemes for people under 16 years since 1997. [47039]

Ms Buck: There was no change in the coverage of reduced bus fare schemes between 1997 and 2001. In a number of cases, newly-created unitary authorities introduced reduced bus fare schemes similar to those that existed before the authority was created. No information is available for years since 2001. Free local

bus travel for people under the age of 16 was introduced in London in September 2005, for travel on Transport for London's bus network. This replaced a flat fare scheme.

Marine Oil Pollution

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps have been taken to prevent ships at sea spilling oil since the Sea Empress oil spill; and what further steps he plans to take. [47173]

Dr. Ladyman: The UK Government have played a key role, internationally, regionally and nationally, in developing many measures to prevent, or mitigate the consequences of, oil spills from ships during the 10 years since the Sea Empress oil spill in February 1996. The most significant measures are as follows:

In 1994, recognising the value of tugs in preventing groundings and other incidents, the UK introduced Emergency Towing Vessels (ETVs) on a trial basis. Initially ETVs were stationed at Dover and Stornoway for the winter months only. After further review, the number of ETVs was increased to four—stationed at Dover, Stornoway, the Fair Isle Channel, and in the South West approaches—and since October 2001 all four ETVs have been on station all year round.

The UK participated fully in the adoption in 1996 of the Hazardous and Noxious Substances Convention which will provide compensation cover similar to the international oil pollution compensation regime but for other oils and chemicals, and also for explosion, death or injury from such products.

In 1997 the UK co-ordinated an EU member states' initiative at the IMO to have the whole of the North Sea, and all waters around the UK and Ireland, declared a special area for the purposes of protecting those waters from operational discharges of oil from shipping.

The UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency has a dedicated Enforcement Unit. In 1997, legislation was passed to enable magistrates to impose a fine of up to £250,000 on either the master or the ship-owner for an oil pollution offence; this is the highest fine for any offence in a magistrates court.

In 2000, following a wide-ranging review, the UK published a revised "National Contingency Plan for Marine Pollution from Shipping and Offshore Installations", setting out how the relevant agencies and authorities in the UK will respond to such incidents. The UK has also created the role of the Secretary of State's Representative for Maritime Salvage and Intervention (SOSREP). On behalf of the Secretary of State, SOSREP has the power to oversee, control and—if necessary—intervene in salvage operations within UK waters involving vessels or fixed platforms where there is a significant risk of pollution. To reduce the risk of pollution of our seas and coasts, SOSREP can direct vessels which are in difficulties to a suitable place of refuge. The powers of direction invested in SOSREP are extensive, and are called into play when he believes that the public interest is not being adequately protected. The SOSREP role has proved very successful, as well as being an international first for the UK.

In 2000 the UK initiated action at the IMO to increase the limit of compensation under the 1992 CLC/Fund regime by a further 50 per cent. to £177 million, with effect from 1 November 2003.

In 2001, along with six other states, the UK pressed for a world-wide initiative to create a Supplementary Fund to the 1992 CLC/Fund to provide further substantial compensation for the most serious oil spills.

The UK was one of the countries, which developed the Bunkers Convention 2001, which establishes a liability regime for pollution from ships' fuel oils.

The UK played a leading role in the EU and the IMO to secure international agreement to accelerate the phasing out of single hull oil tankers. Double hulls can provide additional protection against spillage in the event of collisions and groundings.

The UK played an active part in the work leading to the development of the EC Vessel traffic monitoring and information system Directive, which covers reporting requirements on ships with dangerous cargoes, the installation of Voyage Data Recorders on ships, the installation of Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) on ships and the establishment of shore-based stations to receive AIS5 information; exchange of vessel traffic information; places of refuge; and measures for shore authorities to take in bad weather conditions. The UK implemented the Directive in national law in 2005.

The UK played a leading role in the IMO in achieving the designation of the Western European Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA), which includes a substantial proportion of the UK's seas and coasts. The PSSA came into effect on 1 July 2005. The protective measure for the PSSA is a mandatory reporting system. The reporting system applies to all tankers of more than 600 deadweight tonnes (dwt) carrying heavy grades of oil.

As regards further steps:

The Merchant Shipping (Pollution) Bill is currently going through Parliament which will enable the UK to ratify and implement the Supplementary Fund Protocol to the Fund Convention, thereby increasing the amount of compensation available for any one incident to some £621 million.

In addition, work on vessel routeing and traffic management measures has progressed to take account of wider developments in UK policy on the sustainable use of the marine environment, such as the growth in offshore renewable energy, the Government's commitment to introducing a Marine Bill, developments in thinking on marine spatial planning and advances in e-navigation technology. As part of this process, considerable work has gone into the identification of Marine Environmental High Risk Areas and an announcement will be made shortly.

Multi-modal Studies

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the schemes which arose as an outcome of multi-modal studies which have been awarded investment by his Department, broken down by *(a)* road construction and *(b)* public transport schemes and what (i) the amount awarded and (ii) the location of each scheme was in each case. [42712]

Dr. Ladyman: The Multi-Modal Studies were strategic transport studies which developed recommendations for implementation over the short, medium and longer term up to 2031. Many of the schemes recommended required further detailed development and appraisal work before being ready for implementation. In our responses to the Multi-Modal Studies we set out the way in which we wished to see the study recommendations taken forward by the relevant delivery agencies.

The schemes recommended by the Multi-Modal Studies which have reached the stage of programme entry or equivalent with agreed funding allocations are listed in the following tables. A number of other schemes are continuing to be prepared for a decision on programme entry by the respective delivery agencies.

Highways agency trunk road schemes (targeted programme of improvements)

Multi-modal study	*HA TPI scheme*	*Location*	*Latest budget cost (£ million)*
Cambridge to Huntingdon	A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton Improvement	Cambridgeshire	490
Access to Hastings	A21 Tonbridge to Pembury	Kent	65
London to South Midlands	M1 Junction 6a to 10 Widening	Hertfordshire	289
London to South Midlands	M1 Junction 10 to 13 widening	Bedfordshire	382
A1 North of Newcastle	A1 Morpeth to Felton Dualling	Northumberland	84
A1 North of Newcastle	A1 Adderstone to Belford Dualling	Northumberland	14
Tyneside Area	A1/A19/A1068 Seaton Burn Junction Improvement	Tyneside	29
Tyneside Area	A19/A184 Testos Grade Separated Junction	Tyneside	21
London to South Midlands	A505 Dunstable Northern Bypass (A5 to M1 Link)	Bedfordshire	48
London to South Midlands	A421 Bedford to M1 Junction 13	Bedfordshire	171
London to South West and South Wales	A30 Garland Cross to Chiverton Cross	Cornwall	125
London to South West and South Wales	A30 Temple to Higher Carblake Improvement	Cornwall	41
North/South Movements in the East Midlands	M1 Junction 21 to 30 widening	Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire	1,915
Orbit (M25) - London Orbital Transport Solutions	M25 Junction 1B to 3 widening	Kent	66
Orbit (M25) - London Orbital Transport Solutions	M25 Junction 5 to 7 widening	Surrey and Kent	214
Orbit (M25) - London Orbital Transport Solutions	M25 Junction 16 to 23 widening	Hertfordshire and Berkshire	496
Orbit (M25) - London Orbital Transport Solutions	M25 Junction 23 to 27 widening	Hertfordshire and Essex	419
Orbit (M25) - London Orbital Transport Solutions	M25 Junction 27 to 30 widening	Essex	402
A453 (M1 Junction 24 to Nottingham)	A453 Widening (M1 Junction 24 to A52 Nottingham)	Nottinghamshire	90
London to Ipswich	M25 Junction 28/A12 Brook Street Interchange	Essex	8
South Coast	M27 Junction 11 to 12 Climbing Lanes	Hampshire	27
South Coast	M27 Junction 3 to 4 Widening	Hampshire	52
South Coast	A27 Southerham to Beddingham Improvement	East Sussex	19
South and West Yorkshire MMS	M1 Junction 30 to Junction 31 Widening	Yorkshire	136
South and West Yorkshire MMS	M1 Junction 31 to 32 Widening	Yorkshire	20
South and West Yorkshire MMS	M1 Junction 32 to 34S Widening	Yorkshire	139
South and West Yorkshire MMS	M1 Junction 34N to 37 Widening	Yorkshire	246
South and West Yorkshire MMS	M1 Junction 37 to 39 Widening	Yorkshire	224
South and West Yorkshire MMS	M1 Junction 39 to 42 Widening	Yorkshire	202
South and West Yorkshire MMS	M1 Junction 31 to 32 Northbound Collector/Distributor	Yorkshire	29
South and West Yorkshire MMS	M62 Junction 25 to 27 Widening	Yorkshire	215
South and West Yorkshire MMS	M62 Junction 27 to 28 Widening	Yorkshire	83

Local transport major schemes (roads and public transport)

Multi-modal study	*Scheme*	*Location*	*Estimated cost (£ million)*
South Coast	Bexhill to Hastings Link Road	East Sussex	48.5
South East Manchester	A34 Alderley Edge Bypass	Cheshire	37.9
South East Manchester	South East Manchester Quality Bus Corridor	Greater Manchester	23
M60 Junction 18 to 12	JETTS Quality Bus Corridor	Greater Manchester	26.3
West Midlands Area	Red Routes (Metropolitan Area Wide)	West Midlands	28
Cambridge to Huntingdon	Cambridge Guided Busway	Cambridgeshire	65
South and West Yorkshire	A628 Cudworth Bypass	Barnsley	17.2
South and West Yorkshire	A57 M1 Junction 31 to Todwick Crossroads	Rotherham	6.3
Other local transport plan supplementary bids			
Cambridge to Huntingdon	Traffic Calming of Villages close to proximity of A14	Cambridgeshire (various Villages)	[1]4
Access to Hastings, South Coast, Orbit (M25) and Thames Valley Studies	Local Transport Initiatives (these were smaller schemes from the outcome from the four Multi-Modal Studies undertaken in the South East region)	South East	3.7
London to Ipswich	Chelmsford Park and Ride Note: Park and Ride was recommended by the MMS in general terms	Chelsmford, Essex	[1]1.5
Norwich to Peterborough	Kings Lynn Bus Station Refurbishment and Improved integration with the railway station; creation of a high quality multi-modal interchange facility at Thetford Railway station, improved bus stop infrastructure in Downham market and pedestrian and cycling signing in market towns	Norfolk (Kings Lynn, Thetford, Downham Market and various Norfolk Market Towns)	[1]1.395
A453 MMS	Clifton/Silverdale Integrated Transport Measures	Nottingham	0.850

[1] Supplementary LTP bid.

Rail

Service and capacity improvements that have been implemented on the rail network have contributed to the delivery of a number of rail improvements recommended by the Multi Modal Studies. These include:

Study	*Rail recommendations*
West Midlands to North West Conurbation (MIDMAN) and London to South Midlands	West Coast Project
London to South Midlands	Construction of 12 car platforms on West Coast south of Northampton -with introduction of longer trains as demand require
London to South Midlands	More carrying capacity on Midland Mainline through new franchise and Route Utilisation Outputs
South Coast	Introduction of new Ashford—Brighton service from December
London to South West and South Wales	Capacity and bottleneck relief schemes at locations such as Probus Burngullow, Filton Junction
Thames Valley and London to South West and South Wales	Introduction of new timetables on Greater Western enhancing capacity, with further enhancements as a result of the new franchise

Safety Camera Partnerships

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport to which elected bodies the Safety Camera Partnerships are accountable in two-tier local government areas. [47896]

Dr. Ladyman: Safety Camera Partnerships are comprised of representatives from local authorities, the police, the Highways Agency and the magistrates courts and optional representatives from the Crown Prosecution Service, national health service trusts and the health authority.

Safety Camera Partnerships are not however a legal entity, and they complement, not replace, existing local authority and police statutory responsibilities in respect of road safety. Safety Camera Partnerships are not therefore directly accountable to any elected bodies. However each member of the partnership does remain locally accountable to its parent body.

Schools (Road Safety)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department has allocated funding to local authorities for road safety initiatives outside schools since May 2002. [44670]

Ms Buck: The Department is funding a number of local authority initiatives which will improve road safety for children, including the "Kerbcraft" child pedestrian training programme and "travelling to school" project which we support jointly with DfES. Mainstream funding for all transport improvements, including road safety schemes, is allocated to local authorities through the Local Transport Plan system.

Senior Citizen Rail Travel

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent representations he has received in support of free senior citizen rail travel; and what his response was. [44213]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport ensures that all train operators participate in the Senior Railcard scheme which gives discounts on train travel for people over 60. Additional concessions for senior citizens may be proposed and funded by local authorities, such as the Greater London Freedom pass scheme funded by the Greater London Authority. The Department has received no recent representations proposing free travel for senior citizens.

Thameslink 2000

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the timetable is for taking decisions on the selection of stations to be improved through platform extensions on the Midland branch of the Thameslink 2000 line. [46908]

Derek Twigg: The various applications which Network Rail have made in respect of the Thameslink 2000 project include their proposals to extend a number of platforms at stations along the Midland branch of the proposed Thameslink route to accommodate trains of 12 car length.

The public inquiry into the Thameslink 2000 project was re-opened between 6 September and 7 December 2005, following the submission of fresh applications by Network Rail to address deficiencies in the scheme identified by the original inquiry.

The inspector is currently preparing his report on the re-opened inquiry for submission to the Secretary of State for Transport and the Deputy Prime Minister, who are jointly and severally responsible for determining the various consent applications required to implement the project. We expect to receive the inspector's report in March.

We will consider on a case by case basis the merits of extending the platforms to accommodate trains of 12 car length at other stations along the Midland branch that were not included in the submitted applications.

Tram Systems

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the tram systems *(a)* operating and *(b)* being developed. [48122]

Derek Twigg: The following light rail systems are currently operating:

Tyne and Wear Metro
Docklands Light Railway (DLR)
Manchester Metrolink
Sheffield Supertram
Midland Metro

Croydon Tramlink

Nottingham Express Transit (NET)

Blackpool Corporation Tramway

I refer the hon. Member to my answer on 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1992–1993W, concerning those which are being developed.

Transport (Scotland)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what responsibilities he has for the provision of transport in Scotland. [44667]

Mr. Darling: I continue to have responsibility for the following reserved matters in the field of transport in Scotland:

transport security

transport safety and regulation, including the regulation of air transport and shipping, marine and air safety

the provision and regulation of railway services including rail safety

rail heritage

marine, air and rail accident prevention and investigation

most aspects of road traffic regulation, including driver and vehicle licensing and testing, road signing, vehicle standards, general speed limits

some aspects of road safety

technical standards relating to the transport of disabled persons

In the case of railways, the provision of services is a reserved matter but the Scottish Ministers exercise certain devolved executive functions.

The UK Government continues to lead on EU and international negotiations since international relations are reserved.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefits

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what criteria an individual from another EU country must meet to be entitled to *(a)* jobseeker's allowance and *(b)* housing benefit. [45323]

Mr. Plaskitt: In order to receive income-related benefits a claimant must both have a right to reside in, and be habitually resident in the Common Travel Area. The benefits affected by the Habitual Residence Test are: income support; jobseeker's allowance (income based); pension credit; housing benefit; and council tax benefit. The Common Travel Area comprises the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

The Habitual Residence Test applies to all claimants, including British citizens, who have lived in this country for two years or less. Claimants who do not satisfy the Habitual Residence Test are classed as people from abroad and are not eligible for these benefits.

Some groups of people who have the right to reside in UK are automatically treated as habitually resident in the UK. These include European Economic Area nationals who are classed as workers under European Community law.

Housing Benefit

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the cost of abolishing the two highest rates of non-dependent deduction on housing benefit. [38103]

Mr. Plaskitt: The estimated cost of abolishing the highest two rates for non-dependant deductions is approximately £10 million a year.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the cost of raising the standard rate of housing benefit and council tax benefit earned income disregards from £5 per week to £10 per week. [38104]

Mr. Plaskitt: The estimated cost of raising the standard rate of earnings disregard in housing benefit and council tax benefit from £5 to £10 is £20 million a year.

Lone Parents

Mr. Rooney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents whose youngest child is aged between 11 and 16 years are caring for a child who is sick or disabled. [48300]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available in the format requested. Figures are only available for those receiving income support.

As at August 2005, there were 15,000 lone parents in receipt of income support, whose youngest child was aged between 11 and 16 years, and whose benefit included a disabled child premium.

Women Pensioners

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women in the City of Newcastle were aged over 60 years in *(a)* 1995, *(b)* 2000 and *(c)* 2005; and how many women were receiving (i) a full basic state pension, (ii) a part basic state pension of 50 per cent. of the full pension and (iii) a part basic state pension of less than 50 per cent. of the full pension in each year. [38293]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 19 December 2005]:* Information that is available is in the following table.

	2000	*2005 (see note 6)*
Women aged over 60 years in City of Newcastle	31,200	30,500
Number of women receiving a full basic state pension in City of Newcastle	17,600	15,500
Number of women receiving more than 50 per cent. but less than 99 per cent. of the full basic state pension in City of Newcastle	11,800	11,500
Number of women receiving less than 50 per cent. of the full basic state pension in City of Newcastle	1,500	800

Notes:

1. Detailed geographical information on the state pension is not available for 1995.
2. Data is taken from 5 per cent. extract of PSCS as at 31 March 2000 and 2005, therefore figures are subject to a degree of sampling variation. They are also adjusted to be consistent with the overall February caseload from the WPLS.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

4. A full basic state pension as at 31 March 2005 was £79.60.

5. A full basic state pension as at 31 March 2000 was £66.75.

6. The latest available population figures from ONS are mid year 2004.

7. The figures supplied are based on entitlements to all categories of state pension. A full basic state pension is paid to those who fully satisfy the contribution conditions either in their own right or where applicable, on the basis of their late or former spouse's contributions.

Source:

State Pension data: Information Directorate 5 per cent. sample.

Mid year population estimates: ONS, Population Estimates Unit

CABINET OFFICE

Civil Servants

Kate Hoey: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what plans the Government have to increase the London allowance of civil servants; and if he will make a statement. [46414]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Departments and agencies have delegated authority to determine pay arrangements for their own staff outside the senior civil service that are tailored to meet their business needs. It is therefore a matter for individual departments and agencies to determine what levels of pay, including any London allowances, are appropriate to recruit, retain and motivate their own staff, taking into account particular labour market pressures. Departments and agencies may also decide, on the basis of business need, to pay higher rates of pay or allowances to members of their senior civil service working within the M25.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what costs were incurred by his Department as a result of sending civil servants on overseas visits in each of the last 10 years. [46290]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The information provided could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

All official travel in the Department is undertaken strictly in accordance with the rules contained in the Cabinet Office management code.

Departmental Expenditure

Martin Horwood: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much the Cabinet Office and its agencies have spent on *(a)* the design and production of new logos and *(b)* employing external (i) public relations and (ii) graphic design agencies in each year since 2000, broken down by project. [33200]

Mr. Jim Murphy *[pursuant to the reply, 12 December 2005, Official Report, c. 1682W]:* I regret that the data relating to the expenditure on public relations by the Better Regulation Task Force provided in lines 10 to 13 of the table of the previous response was incorrect.

The correct information should read as follows.

	Amount (£)
2004–05	
Public Relations support for the Better Regulation Taskforce (BRTF)	58,900.00
2005–06	
Public Relations support for the Better Regulation Taskforce (BRTF)	58,153.67

Government Communications

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what progress has been made on the implementation of the Phillis review recommendations on restructuring Government communications. [47195]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Good progress has been made and all the Phillis review recommendations on restructuring have been implemented.

The first permanent secretary, Government communication, Howell James, took up post in July 2004 and is head of profession for all Government communicators. He is supported by a small, strategic team within the Cabinet Office which concentrates on cross-Government co-ordination, strategic communication, standards and professional development.

At Number 10, as Phillis recommended, the Prime Minister is supported by two key appointments; a director of communications, a special adviser without executive powers, and an official spokesman, a senior civil servant who reports to the permanent secretary.

In January 2005 a new network, the Government Communications Network (GCN) was set up to replace the Government Information and Communication Service. In line with Phillis' recommendations the GCN includes all those who work in communication across Government whatever their area of expertise, for example press, marketing, internal communications, and new media.

As Phillis recommended the permanent secretary also provides advice to Departments on communication structures and promotes the exchange of communication best-practice across Government.

The Government News Network, which handles regional communications on behalf of a number of Government customers, has moved to the Central Office of Information to enable delivery of a more strategic and co-ordinated communications function in the regions.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much was spent on the Central Office of Information in each year since 1996–97; and how much the estimated spend is for 2005–06. [47196]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Central Office of Information running costs for each year since 1996–97 are shown in the following table.

	Running costs (£ million)
1996–97	25.9
1997–98	15.2
1998–99	16.0
1999–2000	17.9

	Running costs (£ million)
2000–01	20.8
2001–02	23.5
2002–03	25.5
2003–04	22.9
2004–05	25.8

The figure for 1996–97 includes £8.5 million of costs resulting from the implementation of the COI quinquennial review. Excluding these one-off costs, running costs in the year represented 13.8 per cent. of turnover. For 2004–05, running costs represented 7.8 per cent. of turnover.

Final figures for 2005–06 are not yet available, but they will include the additional costs for the Government News Network. The results for the current year will be published in mid-July 2006.

IT Failures

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what computerisation or IT failures have occurred in projects managed by the Cabinet Office in each year since 1997; what the contracted cost of the project was in each case; and what estimate he has made of the direct and indirect costs of failure in each case. [14369]

Mr. Jim Murphy *[pursuant to the reply, 5 October 2005, Official Report, c. 773W]:* I regret the figure quoted in relation to the original contract value of the contract with ITNET of £84 million in the final paragraph was incorrect.

The final paragraph should read as follows:

"The second IT failure was with the data centre and hosting management service to be provided by ITNET whose contract was terminated in 2004. The original contract value was £83 million. A total of £5 million was paid up to the point of termination of the contract."

Public Appointments (Political Impartiality)

Jim Dowd: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what measures are in place to ensure the political impartiality of chief executives of non-departmental public bodies. [47153]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Cabinet Office guidance for non departmental public bodies requires public bodies to adopt a code of conduct for their staff which should include the requirement for staff to conduct themselves with impartiality, integrity and honesty.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

BBC World Service

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when his Department plans to review the BBC World Service's allocation of grant in aid. [47294]

Mr. Straw: Grant in aid for BBC World Service forms part of the overall settlement allocated to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office by HM Treasury. The current financial settlement runs until April 2008. As with all elements of Government spending, the funding of BBC World Service will be reviewed in 2006–07 as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

Convention against Torture

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) whether it is the Government's policy to receive intelligence information from Governments who *(a)* have not (i) signed and (ii) ratified the UN Convention against Torture, *(b)* have signed the Convention but maintain reservations, *(c)* have not signed the Optional Protocol on monitoring and *(d)* employ definitions of torture in practice narrower than the terms of the UN Convention; [48240]

(2) whether it is the Government's policy to make an assessment of the risk that intelligence received by the security services from other countries was obtained by torture. [48293]

Dr. Howells: The Government's position on torture is clear. The UK condemns unreservedly the use of torture. We work hard with our international partners to eradicate this abhorrent practice.

It is not the Government's policy to comment on intelligence matters.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and if he will make a statement. [47542]

Ian Pearson: Pockets of instability persist in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In Ituri and the Kivus, the security situation remains fragile. Elements of the DRC army have fought each other, and civilians continue to suffer abuses by armed groups.

Despite the UN peacekeeping mission (MONUC)'s operations to disarm Ituri militias and to disrupt the activities of foreign armed groups, these militia groups continue to persecute civilians. In UN Security Council Resolution 1653, the international community condemned the activities of these groups, and pledged its support for MONUC's robust approach to protecting civilians and tackling these militia. We continue to urge regional Governments to work together to disarm these groups.

EU Gendarmerie Force

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the duties are of the EU Gendarmerie Force. [47913]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The European Gendarmerie Force is a multinational force from five countries (France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, and the Netherlands). It is a force which is available to a number of organisations, including the EU, NATO, the UN or ad hoc coalitions. It is not an EU body. Its duties will be decided by the participating nations.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the estimated annual cost is of the EU Gendarmerie Force launched at Vicenza on 19 January. [47914]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We do not know of any estimated annual cost of the European Gendarmerie Force. Costs would be a matter for the participating nations.

EU Travel Bans

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* UK nationals and *(b)* individuals with listed UK addresses are subject to EU travel bans. [46783]

Dr. Howells: The EU has imposed travel bans with respect to Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burma, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

These are enforced by checking the names and dates of birth of visa applicants against a consolidated 'warnings list', which includes all the data from the travel ban lists. Positive matches are referred for further investigation. Although none of the targeted individuals are listed as having British addresses or nationality, the information contained on the list itself is not sufficient to say that none do.

Extraordinary Rendition

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Governments of *(a)* Poland and *(b)* Romania on the practice of extraordinary rendition; and if he will make a statement. [48294]

Dr. Howells: Reports of extraordinary rendition were raised at the European Union General Affairs and External Relations Council on 21 November 2005, which was attended by Polish and Romanian Ministers. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary undertook, as presidency of the EU, to write to the US Secretary of State about these reports. Dr. Rice responded with a detailed statement on 5 December 2005. The issue was also discussed at a dinner of EU and NATO Foreign Ministers on 7 December 2005 in Brussels, which was attended by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary.

Human Rights

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he supports the proposal to establish a European Union agency to monitor the observance of human rights in Europe; and if he will make a statement. [48295]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: As agreed at the European Council of December 2003, the proposed European Fundamental Rights Agency will extend the mandate of the existing European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia. It will provide assistance and expertise in human rights issues to EU institutions and member states when they are implementing Community law. The Government are in favour of an agency with a well-defined remit and work objectives that do not duplicate the work of existing bodies, particularly the Council of Europe.

Kazakhstan

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Kazakhstan following international monitors' criticism of the presidential elections held in December 2005. [47295]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The UK issued an EU Presidency statement on 5 December supporting the preliminary report of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) International Observation Mission on the 4 December elections. While noting that there had been some improvements in the administration of the elections in the pre-election period and that voting on the day was conducted in a generally calm and peaceful atmosphere, the report concluded that the elections had failed to meet a number of OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic elections. The UK offered the EU's support to Kazakhstan in fulfilling its international commitments in this regard. A further EU statement was issued under the UK's Presidency on 15 December which reiterated these points and looked forward to the final ODIHR report and the opportunity to study its recommendations. It noted Foreign Minister Tokaev's statement on 5 December in which he expressed readiness to continue cooperation with ODIHR.

In a letter to President Nazarbayev of 23 December, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister urged Kazakhstan to address concerns raised about areas in which it has not yet fully met the standards of the OSCE. He noted that the UK stood ready to support Kazakhstan in undertaking future reform in order to meet these standards. Senior officials in London have delivered similar messages on a regular basis to the Kazakh ambassador in London. Our new ambassador, Paul Brummell, also talked over these issues at his first meeting with Foreign Minister Tokaev on 9 January. We will continue to discuss both bilaterally and with our EU partners, the relevant issues as appropriate in our contacts at all levels with the Kazakh authorities.

Libya

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the human rights situation in Libya; and if he will make a statement. [47991]

Dr. Howells: The Government remains concerned about the human rights situation in Libya. The Government welcomes recent developments such as: the opening of a dialogue between the Libyan authorities and groups like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch; the progress made in the joint programme, financed by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Global Opportunities Fund, between the Libyan Ministry of Justice and the International Centre for Prison Studies on prison management; the abolition of the Revolutionary Courts; and the current debate in the Basic People's Congresses on the possible abolition or further restriction of the death penalty.

The Government will continue to work with the Libyan authorities to encourage them to continue to move towards internationally accepted standards on human rights and the rule of law.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent evidence he has received that the Libyan security services are practising torture on prisoners. [47992]

Dr. Howells: The Government are aware of claims that the Libyan security services have practised torture on prisoners. The Government condemns the use of torture and works with international partners to eradicate this abhorrent practice.

The Government will continue to work with the Libyan authorities, as they have in the area of prison management, to encourage them to continue to move towards internationally accepted standards on human rights and the rule of law.

Palestinian Authority

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his Department has had about possible changes to the UK's relationship with the Palestinian Authority after the Palestinian elections; and if he will make a statement. [46316]

Dr. Howells: The UK is clear that democracy means accepting the results of elections, provided they are free and fair. The Palestinian Legislative Council elections are not an exception to this principle. We look forward to Palestinian Authority President Abu Mazen appointing a Government committed to his policy of one gun, one authority, and to the vision set out in the Roadmap of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

Hamas now has a choice to make between the path of democracy and the path of violence. The onus is on Hamas to change, in particular their approach to Israel and their approach to violence. We are watching developments closely.

Rafik Hariri

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the United Nations investigation into the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri; and if he will make a statement. [47543]

Dr. Howells: The Government welcomes the important contribution that the United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIIC) has made, since it was mandated by the adoption of UN Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1595 of 7 April 2005, towards bringing those responsible for the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Hariri to justice.

The UN Secretary-General's report of 19 October 2005 highlighted that Syria's level of co-operation with the UNIIIC had been unacceptable. UNSCR 1636, unanimously adopted on 31 October 2005, underlined the seriousness with which the international community viewed Syria's non-co-operation. As a result of our continuing concerns about the lack of Syrian co-operation, we co-sponsored UNSCR 1644, adopted on 15 December 2005, which underscores Syria's obligation to co-operate fully and unconditionally with the UNIIIC.

We welcome the recent appointment of Serge Brammertz to succeed Detlev Mehlis at the head of the UN investigation, and we look forward to discussing his next report with Security Council Partners.

UK Agencies

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the UK agencies whose powers are circumscribed by similar agencies operating at EU level. [48271]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: It would incur disproportionate cost to determine accurately and comprehensively what levels of cooperation exist between the 18 European Community and over 100 UK agencies and which, if any, of the latters' powers are circumscribed by the former.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Behaviour and Truancy Partnerships

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when the roll out of secondary school behaviour and truancy partnerships in Gravesham will begin. [43281]

Jacqui Smith: All secondary schools in Gravesham should be working in partnership to improve behaviour and tackle persistent truancy by September 2007. Schools in Gravesham already work closely together, and local authority officers are due to meet secondary heads and primary representatives in February 2006 to discuss further development of the partnership.

Boarding Schools

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to increase the number of boarding school places in the maintained sector. [47125]

Jacqui Smith: The new target capital funding arrangements for the first time enabled maintained boarding schools to bid for funding to undertake building projects to increase boarding places; make essential improvements; or undertake significant remedial or enhancement work to boarding accommodation. Three projects were approved which will result in an extra 40 boarding places.

In addition, under the expansion of successful and popular secondary schools programme, we have received applications from two boarding schools. Subject to local decisions, these applications could result in an additional 182 boarding places in the next five to seven years.

Carers

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent research her Department has carried out to estimate *(a)* the number of school age young carers and *(b)* the average number of hours per week that such carers spend on their caring roles. [44306]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 20 January 2006]*: The Department has not carried out research to estimate these figures. Data on young carers is available from the 2001 Census of Population.

The Census established that there were about 150,000 children and young people under 18 in England and Wales who provided some form of care for family members. A full breakdown of the age and numbers of young carers by the number of hours a week when they provided care can be found in the following table.

Age and number of young carers in England and Wales, by hours caring per week (2001 Census)

	1–19 hours	*20–49 hours*	*50+ hours*	*Total number*	*Total (percentage)*
0–4	0	0	0	0	0
5–7	4,161	512	792	5,465	4
8–9	6,361	610	863	7,834	5
10–11	13,272	1,180	1,360	16,267	11
12–14	39,983	3,429	2,982	46,394	31
15	18,265	1,865	1,272	21,402	14
16–17	43,179	5,717	3,684	52,580	35
All	125,676	13,313	10,953	149,942	100
All (percentage)	84	9	7	100	

Source
Becker (2004)

The table shows that 84 per cent. of young carers spend between one and 19 hours in their caring role and 7 per cent. spend over 50 hours caring per week. Some of these young carers are as young as 5–7 years old.

Further information on this topic can be found in Young Carers in the UK: The 2004 Report published by Carers UK. This is the third survey of young carers who are being supported by specialist young carers' projects in the UK http://www.carersuk.org/Policyandpractice/Research/YounQcarersReport2004.pdf. A merged reply to three written parliamentary questions (44305, 44307 and 44132) given on 20 January 2006 contains further information on the issue of young carers.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in her Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43496]

Maria Eagle: A sanction can include any or all of the following (although the list is not exhaustive): verbal warning; written warning; a bar on promotion; the withholding of pay increases and/or bonus payments; suspension from duty with loss of pay; downgrading or dismissal. The following table shows data for the last five years:

	Disciplinary actions	*Sanctions applied*
2001	35	26
2002	11	11
2003	7	7
2004	7	7
2005	11	7

Communication Aid Project

Roger Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to ensure continuing support for recipients of communication equipment under the Communication Aid Project. [47912]

Maria Eagle: Since it went live in April 2002, the Communication Aids Project has assisted some 4,000 children of school age experiencing significant difficulty in communicating with those around them. The present tranche of funding comes to an end in March 2006 and officials are exploring with the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency how the momentum generated by the project might be maintained.

Contact Orders

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children have been killed during contact visits after contact orders were granted to parents who were known to be violent in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [44662]

Maria Eagle: The Government do not collect statistics on how many children have been killed during contact visits after contact orders were granted to parents who were known to be violent.

The Government's guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (1999) sets out that in any case where a child dies and abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in the child's death, the case should be examined through a local serious case review. The Government commission national reports which draw out the lessons to be learned from these reviews.

We plan to strengthen systems for reviewing child deaths by giving the new local safeguarding children boards a function of collecting and analysing information about each child death. This is with a view to identifying any case giving rise to the need for a serious case review, any matters of concern affecting the safety and welfare of children in the local area, and any wider public health or safety concerns arising from a

particular death or from a pattern of deaths in that area. We plan to trial these arrangements between 2006 and 2008.

Corby Community College

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on Corby Community college in Northamptonshire and the measures the school is taking to raise its standards. [47378]

Jacqui Smith: It is the intention that Corby Community college in Northamptonshire will be replaced by Corby academy. The project, which is reaching the end of a detailed feasibility study will provide 1250 11–18 places. It is sponsored by Brooke Weston City Technology college, the Garfield Weston Foundation, and a local developer, Corby Developments Ltd. All pupils attending Corby Community college will have a right to a place at the academy, which offers the opportunity to take improvements at the College to a new level.

Correspondence

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will respond to the letters of 31 October and 25 November 2005 from the hon. Member for West Derbyshire, on teachers' ineligibility for child care vouchers. [45776]

Jacqui Smith: I replied to the right hon. Member's letter on 27 January.

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will respond to the letters of 5 October and 25 November 2005 from the right hon. Member for West Derbyshire, on the effect of school admissions policies on rural schools. [45777]

Jacqui Smith: I replied to the right hon. Member's letter on 27 January.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will reply to the letter of 26 October 2005 from the hon. Member for St Albans concerning Mrs. Helen Bramall. [46332]

Jacqui Smith: I replied to the hon. Member's letter on 27 January.

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by her Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41361]

Maria Eagle: The following table provides a breakdown of the vehicle fleet owned by the Department for Education and Skills by model, number, type, and fuel efficiency. No vehicles are leased by the Department.

Model	*Numbers*	*Type of fuel*	*Efficiency*
Vauxhall Astra	12	Unleaded petrol/LPG	35.2
Vauxhall Vectra	3	Diesel	44.5
Vauxhall Zafira	3	Diesel	39.2
Ford Focus	5	Diesel	44.8
Ford Fiesta	1	Diesel	53.1
Ford Galaxy	3	Diesel	34.2
Volvo S80	2	Unleaded petrol	21.9

Drop-out Rates

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the 10 university subjects with the highest drop out rate. [39931]

Bill Rammell: The information is not held centrally.

Non-continuation rates are calculated on an institutional basis and the figures for 2002/03 entrants are available from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) publication 'Performance Indicators in HE' at:

http://www.hesa.ac.uk/pi/0304/continuation.htm.

Education Maintenance Allowances

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people were *(a)* eligible for and *(b)* took up education maintenance allowances in (i) Barnsley and (ii) Doncaster in the last year for which figures are available. [42116]

Maria Eagle: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, who operate Education Maintenance Allowances for the DfES and hold the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the council's Chief Executive, has written to my hon. Friend with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 23 January 2006:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question that asked "how many people were *(a)* eligible for and *(b)* took up education maintenance allowances in (i) Barnsley and (ii) Doncaster in the last year for which figures are available?"

During the academic year 2004/05, 1,821 young people in Barnsley Local Education Authority and 2,707 young people in Doncaster Local Education Authority received one or more EMA payments.

During the academic year 2004/05, EMA was available to all 16 years olds nationally and to 17 and 18 years olds in former pilot areas (young people who are 19 are entitled to receive EMA in certain circumstances). Both Barnsley and Doncaster Local Education Authorities were former pilot areas.

In preparation for the roll-out, projections of the number of young people eligible for EMA were only made for 16 years olds. The projections are formed by applying income distributions (derived from the Family Resources Survey) and expected numbers in full-time further education to the estimated population of 16 years olds. When applied to individual localities the figures may be subject to some variation but they provide a useful estimate. The following table displays the data for Barnsley and Doncaster.

Take-Up of EMA by 16-years-olds in 2004/05

LEA	*Projected number eligible*	*Actual Take-Up*	*Percentage Take-Up*
Barnsley	1,250	1,062	84.96
Doncaster	1,770	1,451	81.98

This compares against a national take-up of 82% (calculated as the total number of 16 years olds who received EMA against the projected number eligible to receive payment).

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question. If you would like further details please contact Chris Bradley at the LSC National Office on 0114 207 4512 or Christopher Bradley@lsc.gov.uk

Education Statistics (Wandsworth)

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been awarded to Wandsworth council to provide for new school buildings at each school in Tooting constituency since 1997; and what the sum awarded was in each case. [47752]

Jacqui Smith: Capital allocations made to the London borough of Wandsworth and schools in its area since 1997 are set out in the following table:

	£ million
1996-97	1.2
1997-98	0.9
1998-99	1.9
1999-2000	3.6
2000-01	8.0
2001-02	7.8
2002-03	13.7
2003-04	11.7
2004-05	10.4
2005-06	10.5

We expect local authorities and schools to take decisions locally on allocating funds between new buildings, improvements and repairs in accordance with priorities set out in their local asset management plan. Accordingly, records of these categories of capital expenditures are not held centrally.

Records of capital allocations are not maintained at constituency level.

Capital allocations to local authorities and schools are higher than ever before. In 2005–06 they are £5.5 billion and they are planned to increase to £6.3 billion in 2007–08, an increase from £683 million in 1996–97.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average number of hours per week of physical education undertaken in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools in Wandsworth was in 2004–05. [47753]

Jacqui Smith: Data from the annual PE, School Sport and Club Links survey is not collected in the format requested. The 2004–05 survey found that overall, 69 per cent. of 5-to-16 year olds in the 11,400 schools taking part in the survey were spending at least two hours in a typical week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum. This figure is 64 per cent. for primary schools and 75 per cent. for secondary schools.

In 2004–05 the results for the Southfields School Sport Partnership which covers the Wandsworth area, found that overall, 72 per cent. of pupils were participating in at least two hours of high-quality PE and out-of-hours school sport in a typical week. At the time of the survey there were 60 schools in the partnership.

Exam Results

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2203W, on exam results, how many and what proportion of entrants to undergraduate courses leading to qualified teacher status attained *(a)* at least (i) 360, (ii) 300, (iii) 240, (iv) 180, (v) 120 and *(b)* fewer than 120 points at A level in each year since 2002–03. [40436]

Bill Rammell: The latest available information is given in the table.

'A' level points attainment for English domiciled entrants to English HE institutions who have one or more 'A' level qualifications on entry and who are aiming for the qualification of first degree with QTS[1]

	2002/03		2003/04		2004/05	
'A' level points attained	*Entrants*	*Percentage*	*Entrants*	*Percentage*	*Entrants*	*Percentage*
360+	215	5	215	4	300	5
300+	670	16	770	16	950	17
240+	1,600	37	1,790	37	2,190	38
180+	2,740	64	3,040	63	3,655	64
120+	3,628	84	4,010	83	4,740	83
<120	685	16	845	17	960	17
Total known	4,315	100	4,855	100	5,700	100

[1] Figures are for students identified as studying for first degree with QTS and who have either GCE 'A' level or VCE 'A' level qualifications. The average score given is the average tariff points score based upon all 'A' level qualifications (not just the best three).

Note:
Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5 and are on a snapshot basis as at 1 December.

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.

Fresh Start Programme

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will revise the eligibility criteria for the Fresh Start programme to include secondary schools that achieve less than a 25 per cent. rate of pupils gaining at least five A* to C GCSEs including English and mathematics. [47344]

Jacqui Smith: All applications for a school to join the Fresh Start programme are considered on their merits, having regard to the issues facing the school. In reaching decisions we look carefully at all the factors which make a school a cause for concern, including very low attainment and poor performance in the core curriculum.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools were reopened under the Fresh Start programme in each year since 1997. [47345]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is set out in the following table. The first Fresh Start school opened in September 1998.

Academic year	*Number of Fresh Start schools opened*
1998-99	3
1999-2000	13
2000-01	10
2001-02	3
2002-03	4
2003-04	4
2004-05	9
2005-06	4

Further Education

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will rank further education colleges in England by the correlation between funding per full-time equivalent student and all year qualification success rate. [45385]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 24 January 2006]*: Qualification success rates for each college are available from the LSC website (http://benchmarkingdata.lsc.gov.uk/year8/index.cfm by downloading the file "Institution level success rates: Excel file qualification aim data").

Funding data are also available for each college on the LSC website (http://www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Documents/SubjectListing/SectorData/CollegeAccounts/default.htm).

We do not benchmark colleges by full-time equivalent student numbers, but in the light of the Foster report we are considering the development of a value for money measure which will be used to benchmark college efficiency.

General Teaching Council

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the annual renewal fee for registration with the General Teaching Council was in each year since 2000. [48135]

Jacqui Smith: Teachers were required to pay an annual registration fee to the General Teaching Council for England for the first time in 2002–03. The fee was initially set at £23 and was increased to £28 in 2003–04 and to £30 in 2004–05. The fee level was retained at £30 in 2005–06.

Headship Qualifications

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to ensure reciprocal recognition of Welsh, Scottish and Northern Irish headship qualifications. [47241]

Jacqui Smith: Arrangements are already in place to ensure that holders of the Welsh NPQH, the Scottish Standard for Headship, and the PQH in Northern Ireland are considered to hold a qualification that is equivalent to NPQH.

Following the introduction of the mandatory requirement in April 2004, applicants from the other home countries who want to apply for a first-time headship post in England need to present evidence that they hold or are working towards the qualifications that apply in their own countries.

Serving head teachers working in the other home countries who wish to apply for a headship post in England are exempt from the mandatory requirement in the same way that serving head teachers in England would be.

Identity Fraud

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what training the Department has provided for *(a)* front desk and *(b)* administrative staff in relation to identity fraud. [41282]

Maria Eagle: The Department does provide training for front desk staff (receptionists and security guards) dealing with the public face to face. The induction training includes validating whether a person is who they say they are and whether they are allowed on site in their own right or whether they need to be escorted. After the induction, appointee must sign a declaration that they understand what they have been taught, that they know where the assignment instructions are kept should they need to refer to them and that they know who to contact for further guidance.

In respect of administration staff, dealing with verifying identity is part of the Department's work in administering vetting cases and, in HR, when recruiting new members of staff. The Department's Special Investigations Unit also provides fraud awareness training to divisions on request.

Independent Committee on Examination Standards

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 426W, on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, when the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority will be in a position to reconstitute the Independent Committee on Examination Standards; [46530]

(2) what plans she has to abolish the Independent Committee on Examination Standards. [46899]

Jacqui Smith: The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) intends to have the reconstituted Independent Committee on Examination Standards in place to begin a new programme of work by the autumn. The management of the Independent Committee on Examination Standards is the responsibility of the QCA, as regulator for examination standards in England.

Inter-ministerial Meetings (Scottish Executive)

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many inter-ministerial meetings her Department has held with the Scottish Executive since May 1999; and what the *(a)* Scottish Executive Department concerned, *(b)* subject and *(c)* date was in each case. [39804]

Maria Eagle: Ministers have regular dialogues with Ministerial colleagues in the Scottish Executive, discussing a wide range of issues of mutual interest. It is not our practice to disclose details of such meetings.

Local Education Authorities (Structure)

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which local education authorities have *(a)* moved from two tier to three tier, *(b)* moved from three tier to two tier, *(c)* reviewed their three tier structure and decided to keep it (i) entirely and (ii) in part, *(d)* reviewed their two tier structure and decided to keep it (i) entirely and (ii) in part and *(e)* operate a mixed two tier and three tier structure. [48241]

Jacqui Smith: As at January 2005 there were 24 local authorities (LA) in England that had a total of 367 middle schools, 235 of which were for children aged 9 to 13. The table lists the 24 local authorities and details of numbers of schools for each.

Maintained primary, middle and secondary schools: number of schools January 2005: local authorities with middle schools

		Maintained primary, middle and secondary schools			
		Number of primary and secondary schools	*Number of middle schools*[1]	*of which: middle schools 9–13*[1]	*Total number of schools*
820	Bedfordshire	163	40	40	203
873	Cambridgeshire	232	1	1	233
835	Dorset	158	16	16	174
310	Harrow	47	19	0	66
919	Hertfordshire	492	6	6	498
921	Isle of Wight	51	16	16	67
886	Kent	575	3	3	578
382	Kirklees	177	7	5	184
855	Leicestershire	270	10	0	280
826	Milton Keynes	82	17	0	99
391	Newcastle upon Tyne	83	6	4	89
926	Norfolk	388	49	0	437
392	North Tyneside	67	4	4	71
815	North Yorkshire	374	2	0	376
928	Northamptonshire	310	2	2	312
929	Northumberland	156	44	44	200
836	Poole	29	9	1	38
933	Somerset	254	9	9	263
860	Staffordshire	363	14	14	377
935	Suffolk	292	40	40	332
938	West Sussex	268	14	0	282
865	Wiltshire	245	3	2	248
868	Windsor and Maidenhead	55	4	4	59
885	Worcestershire	217	32	24	249

[1] School types derived from returns made by schools to the Department in the Annual Schools' Census. (Information is not yet available from January 2006 Annual Schools Census)

Source:
Annual Schools' Census

We are not routinely informed of LAs' plans for reorganisation until they decide to proceed and publish statutory notice but we do know that a number of LAs are looking at their middle school systems in the context of falling rolls and surplus places.

The following LAs have obtained approval for reorganisation schemes to remove some of their middle schools for implementation from 2005 onwards:

Devon

Dorset

Northumberland

Norfolk

Milton Keynes and

Worcestershire.

We have no information to suggest that any LAs are considering moving from a two tier to three tier structure. We do not routinely collect information about reviews of education provision conducted by LAs in relation to two and three tier structures.

The organisation of school provision is a local matter. LAs have overall responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient schools to meet local needs and final decisions on proposals to change the pattern of provision would normally be made by the local School Organisation Committee (SOC) or schools adjudicator.

Mature Students

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the 10 most popular subjects taken up by mature students in the most recent period for which figures are available. [39877]

Bill Rammell: The latest available information is given in the table.

The 10 most popular subjects for mature[1] enrolments, at English HE institutions, 2004/05

JACS subject	*Enrolments*
Total mature enrolments, all subjects	1,212,365
of which:	
Nursing	140,755
Combined[2]	101,150

The 10 most popular subjects for mature[1] enrolments, at English HE institutions, 2004/05

JACS subject	Enrolments
Business studies	66,080
Academic studies in education	58,815
Training teachers	45,775
Social work	39,705
Management studies	39,085
Computer science	39,000
Others in subjects allied to medicine[3]	32,825
Psychology	32,700

[1] 'Mature' enrolments are those aged 21 years or over on undergraduate courses or 25 years or over on postgraduate courses.

[2] Around 70 per cent. of these are students at the Open University who code a large number of their courses as 'Combined' in their HESA return.

[3] Includes 'Environmental health', 'Occupational health', 'Occupational therapy' and 'Counselling'.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.

Figures are on a HESA standard registration population basis and are rounded to the nearest 5.

Subjects are classified using the Joint Academic Coding scheme (JACS).

New School Providers

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the delivery of education to a specified number of pupils will be a pre-requisite of the authorisation of a new school provider. [46437]

Jacqui Smith: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 87W, which explained that decisions about the provision of new schools will be taken by local authorities, in their modernised role as the commissioners of education in their areas, or by the schools adjudicator. Local authorities and the schools adjudicator will consider all proposals for new schools on their individual merits.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether her Department will impose limits on the number of new school providers in any given local authority area. [46454]

Jacqui Smith: No. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 87W, which explained that decisions about the provision of new schools will be taken by local authorities, in their modernised role as the commissioners of education in their areas, or by the schools adjudicator.

Postgraduate Courses

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what proportion of entrants to postgraduate courses in 2004-05 had already obtained *(a)* an honours degree and *(b)* an ordinary degree; and how many and what proportion had attained (i) first, (ii) upper-second, (iii) lower-second and (iv) third class honours. [40527]

Bill Rammell: The available information is given in the tables. Details of degree classifications on entry to postgraduate courses are available for entrants to postgraduate certificate of education courses only.

Highest qualification on entry for UK domiciled entrants to postgraduate[1] courses at English HE institutions, 2004/05

Level of highest qualification on entry	Entrants	Percentage (of known)
Postgraduate qualifications	31,045	22
Graduate level qualifications	89,870	65
Other HE qualifications	11,175	8
Below HE qualifications (inc prior experience)	6,950	5
Total known	139,035	100
Not Known	9,695	n/a
Total	148,730	n/a

n/a = Not applicable.

[1] Includes doctorates, masters, PGCE, postgraduate diplomas and certificates and postgraduate professional qualifications.

Note:

Figures are on a HESA standard registration population basis and are rounded to the nearest 5.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.

Figures for the degree classification of entrants to postgraduate certificate of education courses are shown in the following table:

Degree classification for UK domiciled entrants to PGCE courses at English HE institutions 2004/05

Degree classification	Entrants	Percentage (of known)
1st	1,965	8
Upper 2nd	12,180	50
Lower 2nd	8,260	34
3rd	860	4
Below a 3rd (honours)	85	0
Pass	280	1
Ordinary degree	415	2
General degree	300	1
Total Known	24,340	100
Not Known	1,720	n/a
Not applicable	520	n/a
Total	26,575	n/a

n/a = Not applicable.

Note:

Figures are on a HESA standard registration population basis and are rounded to the nearest 5.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average A-level attainment has been of entrants to postgraduate courses leading to qualified teacher status in each year since 1995. [40526]

Bill Rammell: The information requested is not held centrally.

Pupil Performance

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made towards replacement of the pupil achievement tracker and the performance and assessment reports with RAISEonline; and if she will make a statement. [47061]

Jacqui Smith: RAISEonline is being developed jointly by my Department and Ofsted.

An initial pilot of RAISEonline took place in December 2005 with 250 users. An extended pilot of the full system involving 2000 users will take place in May 2006. The full system is expected to be implemented in July 2006, as planned.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent on producing the revised version of the 2005 unvalidated Secondary Performance and Assessment reports; and if she will make a statement. [47063]

Jacqui Smith: These are matters for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, Maurice Smith, has written to my hon. Friend and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Maurice Smith, dated 30 January 2006:

Your recent parliamentary question has been referred to me, as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of schools, for reply.

You asked how much was spent on producing the revised version of the 2005 unvalidated Secondary Performance and Assessment reports.

In response, the "New Style" PANDA based on 2005 unvalidated data released on 23 December 2005 contained an error. The analysis in table 3.4.14 excluded A* grades from the calculations. The error required one line of programming code to be corrected. Following the correction the production of the revised documents required IT processing time which incurred no additional cost. The only additional cost was for a letter sent to all secondary schools informing them of the error and the remedial action being taken. This additional letter cost £1,500.

A copy of this reply has been sent to Jacqui Smith and will be placed in the Library of both Houses.

School Improvement Services

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department is taking to assist local authorities with School Improvement Services rated unsatisfactory by Ofsted. [47433]

Jacqui Smith: Where the Secretary of State is satisfied that a local authority is failing to perform its duties to the minimum standards required, the Secretary of State has the power to intervene. Forms of intervention and engagement are decided in the light of independent evidence and tailored to the specific needs of the local authority. The authority will receive co-ordinated support and advice from officials in the Government Office, DfES advisers and from senior officers of the Primary and Secondary National Strategies. Action taken to improve local authority services following an Ofsted unsatisfactory rating has included establishing partnership arrangements with a high performing local authority and directing the outsourcing of the strategic management of services. Similar action will be taken in future in the light of evidence from the new Joint Area Review undertaken by Ofsted and other inspectorates. From this April, Directors for Children and Learners (DCLs), based in the Government Offices, will provide tailored support and challenge for every local authority in their region. This will be based around annual priorities meetings, at which DCLs, local authorities and their partners discuss local priorities in the context of national priorities and the action being taken to address areas of weakness and concern.

Schools Funding (England)

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the real terms change in total revenue funding per pupil in schools will be in England between 1997–98 and 2007–08; and what the equivalent change was between 1979–80 and 1997–98. [41128]

Jacqui Smith: By 2007–08, total revenue funding per pupil will have increased nationally by over £1,400 in real terms since 1997–98, an increase of some 50 per cent. Information is not available prior to 1997–98 on the same basis.

Notes:

1. Funding consistent with Education Standard Spending Education Formula Spending plus all schools-related revenue grants in DfES's departmental expenditure limit which are relevant to pupils aged 3–19. Funding excludes child care and Surestart.
2. Calculations are based on full-time equivalent pupils aged 3–19 in maintained schools in England. This includes estimated numbers of three-year-olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational establishments.
3. Includes funding for academies and specialist schools but excludes CTCs.
4. Pensions transfers to Education Formula Spending have been deducted from 2003–04 onwards, with notional transfers for the final two years.
5. Real terms figures have been calculated using the September 2005 gross domestic product deflators with 2004–05 as the base year.

Services Education

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent representations she has received on the education of service children in state schools. [47908]

Jacqui Smith: We received a paper from the right hon. Member for Witney (Mr. Cameron) on behalf of the head teacher of a primary school in his constituency with a high proportion of children from service families. The paper outlines the background to his case that schools with service children should be recognised and supported, provides details of the difficulties faced by the children and by schools like his, and suggests possible solutions.

I had arranged to meet the right hon. Member and the head teacher to discuss these issues. The right hon. Member had to cancel that meeting but I remain happy to meet him to discuss this important matter.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department is taking to meet the particular educational needs of the children of servicemen and women; and if she will make a statement. [47156]

Jacqui Smith: Children of servicemen and women can face extra challenges in education, mainly because their parents' redeployment leads to frequent changes of schools. A working group comprising head teachers from schools with significant numbers of children of service personnel, officials from the Ministry of Defence and the Department for Education and Skills, and the Children's Education Advisory Service (an MOD agency that supports service families) meets regularly to examine the needs of these children and identify possible solutions. Funding arrangements are in place to help schools manage high pupil mobility and local authorities are encouraged to use their funding flexibly to help service schools. DfES officials also work closely with Service Children's Education, an MOD agency responsible for forces schools abroad, to ensure that service children get the same education abroad that they would receive in this country. The school admissions code of practice advises admission authorities to take

account of the needs of service families. Admission authorities can accept applications from parents returning to the area some months in advance and allocate a school place for when the family returns. In areas with a significant standing presence of service personnel, service representatives should be invited to join the admissions forum.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many school pupils in England are the children of servicemen and women. [47157]

Jacqui Smith: The information is not collected centrally.

Special Measures

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if she will list local education authorities in which there are *(a)* three to five and *(b)* more than six schools in special measures; [46411]

(2) if she will list the local education authorities in which *(a)* three, *(b)* four, *(c)* five, *(d)* six and *(e)* seven or more schools are in special measures. [47370]

Jacqui Smith: The information is set out in the following tables:

Local authorities with 3 to 5 schools in special measures

Local authority	*Number*
Barking and Dagenham	3
Bradford	5
Bristol	5
Cambridgeshire	3
Cornwall	5
Croydon	3
Cumbria	3
Derbyshire	3
Devon	4
Doncaster[1]	4
Essex	5
Gloucestershire	3
Hampshire	4
Lancashire	3
Lincolnshire	4
Norfolk	5
Rotherham	3
Salford	4
Sandwell	4
Southwark	3
Stoke on Trent	5
Wiltshire	4
Worcestershire	5

[1] One school listed is in Doncaster but is a non-maintained special school.

Local authorities with 6 or more schools in special measures

Local authority	*Number*
Birmingham	6
Kent	6
Kirklees	6
Leicestershire	6
Northamptonshire	7
Somerset	7
Staffordshire	6
Surrey	7
Warwickshire	6

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools have been in special measures for longer than nine terms in each year since 1995. [47368]

Jacqui Smith: The number of schools that have been in special measures for more than nine terms at the end of each academic year since 1995 is set out in the following table:

Academic year	*Number of schools in special measures for more than nine terms*
1994/95	0
1995/96	2
1996/97	6
1997/98	14
1998/99	10
1999/2000	3
2000/01	9
2001/02	6
2002/03	10
2003/04	4
2004/05	3

Two schools are currently still in special measures after nine terms.

Teachers

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 12 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 533W, on teachers, how many first degree initial teacher training qualifiers at English higher education institutions were domiciled *(a)* within the UK and *(b)* overseas. [40437]

Bill Rammell: Figures for the academic year 2004/05 were released by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) on 10 January, so figures for 2003/04 and 2004/05 are given in the table.

First degree initial teacher training (with QTS) qualifiers at English HE institutions

Domicile	*2003/04*	*2004/05*
UK	5,985	5,705
EU and other overseas	85	65
Total	6,070	5,770

Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers in England have reported a violent incident against them carried out by *(a)* a pupil and *(b)* a parent or guardian of a pupil in each of the last 10 years. [45894]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers were employed in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in the (i) City of York and (ii) North Yorkshire Education Authority in each of the last 10 years. [46800]

Jacqui Smith: The following table provides the full-time equivalent number of regular teachers employed in maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools in the City of York and North Yorkshire local authorities in each January since 1996.

Full-time equivalent teachers in nursery, primary and secondary maintained schools in the City of York and North Yorkshire local authorities, 1996 to 2005

	City of York		North Yorkshire	
	Nursery/ Primary	Secondary	Nursery/ Primary	Secondary
1996[1]	n/a	n/a	2,710	3,020
1997	630	600	2,140	2,340
1998	610	600	2,060	2,390
1999	630	600	2,090	2,480
2000	650	640	2,170	2,550
2001	650	660	2,230	2,590
2002	680	650	2,270	2,570
2003	640	680	2,250	2,630
2004	630	700	2,200	2,750
2005	620	700	2,200	2,760

n/a = not applicable.

[1] In April 1996 North Yorkshire was reorganised into two authorities, City of York and North Yorkshire.

Note:

Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

Annual survey of teacher numbers and teacher vacancies, Form 618G.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what additional resources her Department is providing to schools to finance teachers' preparation, planning and assessment time; and if she will make a statement. [46985]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* Consideration was given to the additional resources that all schools might require to implement planning, preparation and implementation (PPA) time. Accordingly we estimate the cost of implementing PPA time from September 2005 will add an additional 0.7 per cent. to the cost pressures on primary schools for 2006–07—and that has been added to the universal cost pressures on schools for 2006–07 to give a Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) for nursery and primary schools of 4 per cent. for that year. The MFG figure for secondary and special schools will be set at 3.4 per cent. for 2006–07.

The overall increase in the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allocation for 2006–07 is 6.4 per cent., within which there is an indicative allocation of £70 million for implementing the final phase of workforce reform in primary schools. This funding will be consolidated into the DSG baseline for 2007–08.

Individual local authorities should decide, after consultation with their Schools Forums, how much additional funding they should allocate in 2006–07 for PPA.

Truancy

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils played truant from *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in each of the last five years. [46441]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested on unauthorised[1] absence is shown in the table.

[1] Unauthorised absence includes other forms of absence such as lateness, holidays during term time not authorised by the school, absence where reason is not yet established and truancy. Truancy forms only one part of the unauthorised figures.

Pupils with at least one session of unauthorised absence in maintained schools

	Number of pupils absent	
	Primary	Secondary
2001	591,393	541,968
2002	564,445	566,644
2003	564,664	631,669
2004	567,503	696,600
2005	583,859	774,347

Trust Schools

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether trust schools will be entirely self-governing in respect of sex education. [47764]

Jacqui Smith: As for all maintained schools, trust schools will need to meet the requirements for sex education as set out in national curriculum science. They will also be required to have regard to the guidance on sex and relationship education issued by the Secretary of State when determining their sex education policy. Beyond this, trust schools will be free to use the non-statutory framework for personal, social and health education to develop their programmes further taking into account the views of parents and the needs of pupils.

University Students

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which 10 universities attracted the *(a)* highest and *(b)* lowest numbers of students from working class backgrounds in the last period for which figures are available. [39800]

Bill Rammell: Information for Higher Education Institutions is published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in the annual publication "Performance Indicators in Higher Education". The latest available figures on the percentage of young full time first degree entrants from National Statistics—Socio Economic Classes (NS-SEC) 4, 5, 6 and 7 are shown in the table.

Percentage of young full-time first degree entrants from National Statistics—Socio Economic Classes 4–7—English HE institutions—2003/04

HE institution	*Number of young full time first degree entrants*	*Percentage with known data*	*Percentage from NS-SEC 4–7*[1]
10 institutions with the highest percentage			
Harper Adams University College	210	89.6	68.3
University of Bradford	1,185	71.4	49.2
Newman College of HE	255	73.5	48.7
University of Wolverhampton	2,160	70.5	48.5
University of Greenwich	1,595	71.5	45.8
University of Luton	600	62.3	44.8
Middlesex University	1,840	53.5	44.0
Bishop Grosseteste College	215	88.4	43.5
London Metropolitan University	1,890	48.9	43.0
University of Westminster	2,670	66.6	43.0
10 institutions with the lowest percentage			
Royal Veterinary College	225	95.2	17.1
University of Exeter	2,220	92.2	16.6
University of York	1,940	93.9	16.6
University of Nottingham	4,090	94.7	16.1
University of Durham	3,295	92.9	15.8
University of Bristol	2,725	93.8	14.1
University of Oxford	2,895	95.0	11.5
University of Cambridge	2,900	95.3	11.4
Courtauld Institute of Art	35	97.1	9.1
Royal Academy of Music	65	91.0	8.2

[1] 4: small employers and own account workers
5: lower supervisory and technical occupations
6: semi-routine occupations
7: routine occupations

Source:
Higher education Statistics Agency (HESA) 'Performance Indicators in HE'.

Vocational Education

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on her policy to extend vocational curriculum options for children aged 14-to-16 years. [47761]

Phil Hope: The 14-to-19 Education and Skills White Paper and the Implementation Plan (published December 2005) lay out detailed proposals for changes to the 14-to-19 curriculum. Key to these changes is the introduction of specialised diplomas, which will be available to young people from age 14, in 14 sector-related lines of learning. Specialised diplomas will provide young people with the skills and knowledge they need to progress into skilled employment, training and further or higher education; the diplomas will have a significant focus on applied learning. Employers are leading on the content development of the specialised diplomas, to ensure that these qualifications teach young people skills that have real currency in the labour market. The first five diplomas will be piloted from 2008; all 14 lines will be available from 2010, and there will be a national entitlement to a diploma course from 2013.

The 14-to-19 Education and Skills White Paper also proposed a work-focused programme to motivate 14-to-16 year-olds with relatively low attainment, who are at serious risk of disaffection, building on the lessons of the Entry to Employment programme for 16-to-19 year-olds. Pilots are to start from 2006–7, and the White Paper suggested a figure of up to 10,000 young people on the programme from 2007–8.

The Young Apprentices programme, which provides an opportunity for 14-to-16 year olds to gain a taste of 'real work' through two days a week (or equivalent) work experience, and to pursue qualifications that relate to particular occupational sectors, as well as following core national curriculum subjects, will continue to run. So too will the Increased Flexibility Programme, in which 14-to-16 year olds have the opportunity to study off-site at a college or training provider for one or two days a week throughout Key Stage 4. The pupils may work towards vocational and work related qualifications, and so develop their knowledge and understanding in a work context. GCSEs in vocational subjects will also continue to be offered: there are currently eight titles available, each of which is a double award. A further six titles are being developed; in some cases, these will be single, rather than double, awards.

In addition to these specific learning programmes, from September 2004 there has also been a statutory requirement for all pupils to undertake some work-related learning at Key Stage 4, through planned activity that uses the context of work to develop knowledge, skills and understanding useful for work.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

ASBOs (Legal Aid)

Bob Spink: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the largest amount paid in legal aid has been in respect of an individual appealing against an antisocial behaviour order. [46184]

Bridget Prentice: The largest amount paid in legal aid in respect of an individual appealing against a free-standing antisocial behaviour order (ASBO) as at December 2005 was £3,230. These funds were granted to pay for an appeal to the Crown court.

This does not include those appeals against ASBOs that also form part of a wider appeal in civil and criminal proceedings. The ASBO element of these cases could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

City Status

Mr. Burns: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) whether she plans to award city status to towns to celebrate Her Majesty the Queen's 80th birthday; [47034]

(2) when city status will next be awarded to towns in the UK. [47035]

Ms Harman: There are no plans to make further grants of city status in the near future. It is for Her Majesty the Queen to decide when a grant of city status should be made. Competitions are usually held to mark important royal anniversaries which are national in nature, not personal. The Queen's 80th birthday is a personal anniversary, being marked by other events.

Immigration Appeals Centres

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many appeals have been heard at each immigration appeals centre in the UK in each of the last five years; and how many were successful in each centre in each year. [47192]

Bridget Prentice: Information taken from the databases of the AIT and its predecessor the immigration appellate authority (IAA), showing the proportion of successful appeals for all case types at the adjudicator and immigration judge stage, is set out for the past five years as follows.

Financial year	*Number of decisions*	*Percentage allowed*
2000–01	34,226	19
2001–02	61,816	24
2002–03	92,941	25
2003–04	110,223	25
2004–05	105,590	28
4 April to September 2005 (2005–06)	48,638	30

The information for the period April to September 2005 is provisional.

It has not been possible to provide information on volumes of successful appeals broken down into individual hearing centres.

From the period April 2004 to September 2005 it has been possible to set out the volume of promulgations per hearing centre, although it is not possible to break this down into appeal outcomes.

Hearing centre	*April 2004 to March 2005*	*April 2005 to September 2005*
Birmingham/Walsall	11,956	5,186
Bradford	7,875	3,149
Field House	24	132
Glasgow	3,255	1,517
Hatton Cross/Surbiton/ Harmondsworth	26,305	12,529
Manchester	8,852	3,828
Newport	5,426	3,222
North Shields	4,964	1,962
Stoke/Nottingham	8,254	3,606
Taylor House/Croydon	28,147	12,750
Other	533	756
Total	105,590	48,638

The number of decisions in each period relate to the number of appeals promulgated in the period and not to the volume of appeal hearings.

Legal Aid

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what estimates she has made of the savings that would have been made had means testing for legal aid in *(a)* magistrates courts and *(b)* Crown courts not been abolished in 2001; and if she will make a statement. [47334]

Bridget Prentice: The previous means testing system was abolished because it was inefficient and costly to administer. In 1997–98, criminal legal aid contributions totalled £6.2 million, but the direct cost of administering the system was £5 million.

The purpose of re-introducing means testing through the Criminal Defence Service Bill is to ensure that the significant number of defendants who can afford to pay for their defence costs are now made to do so. The new means testing model will avoid the bureaucracy and delay associated with the ineffective contributory system of the past. Its implementation in the magistrates courts alone will deliver estimated annual savings of at least £35 million.

National Mediation Helpline

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people are employed at the National Mediation Helpline. [44690]

Bridget Prentice: The Department has funded one full-time operator to work on the National Mediation Helpline for a year. Up to three other trained operators are available, on a part-time basis, to handle calls at peak times.

Visitor Visas

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what proportion of *(a)* oral and *(b)* written appeals against refusals for visitor visas were successful in each year since 2000. [46875]

Bridget Prentice: The proportion of family visitor appeals found in favour of the appellant in each year since 2000 at the adjudicator or immigration judge stage, is as follows.

1 April to 31 March	Paper hearing	Oral hearing
		Percentage
2000-01	32	64
2001-02	39	71
2002-03	39	66
2003-04	38	58
2004-05	37	57
2005 (April to September)	31	52

The information for the period 2000 to 2004 is taken from the database of the asylum and immigration tribunal's (AIT) predecessor, the immigration appellate authority (IAA). The provisional information for 2005 is taken from the database of the AIT.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Consultant Referrals

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether, under the new consultant referral arrangements, a general practitioner may refer a patient to the relevant consultants' waiting list before his existing referrals have been dealt with. [47641]

Mr. Woodward: Under the new arrangements which I announced in January, all primary care referrals will be handled by a new central referrals management system from where, if they are non-urgent, they will be forwarded to new Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services (ICATS) for assessment of the most appropriate next step.

Separate arrangements will be put in place to find an appropriate and equitable resolution for existing referrals. These are currently being developed in collaboration with general practitioners and consultants.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people employed by the Northern Ireland Office are based in each of the parliamentary constituencies in Northern Ireland. [44516]

Mr. Woodward: The following table shows a breakdown of Northern Ireland Office staff across each of the 18 parliamentary constituencies.

Parliamentary constituency	Number of staff
Belfast East	690
Belfast North	49
Belfast South	672
Belfast West	3
East Antrim	172
East Londonderry	66
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	1
Foyle	7
Lagan Valley	107
Mid Ulster	1
Newry and Armagh	2
North Antrim	1
North Down	11
South Antrim	1
South Down	1
Strangford	19
Upper Bann	3
West Tyrone	22
Total	1,828

The above figures include Northern Ireland civil service and Home civil service staff, industrial and non-industrial, permanent and temporary staff but not staff currently on career break, uniform Prison Service staff or Youth Justice Agency social workers at 1 January 2005.

Departmental Targets

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what data source he will use for the purposes of measuring performance against 2004 public service agreement target number 3; [29863]

(2) what data source he will use for the purposes of measuring performance against 2004 public service agreement target number 2; [29864]

(3) which data source he will use for the purposes of measuring performance against 2004 public service agreement target 1. [30279]

Mr. Hain: In common with the other Whitehall departments, the Northern Ireland Office provides details of the data sources used to measure performance against its 2004 public service agreement (PSA) targets in the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) SR2004 PSA technical notes which is available on the NIO website at *http://www.nio.gov.uk*. The SR2004 technical notes will also appear in the NIO's 2005 autumn performance report, due to be published on 15 December 2005, which reports progress against the PSA targets during the period April to September 2005.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the data required to measure 2004 public service agreement target number 1 are from consistent data sources. [29865]

Mr. Woodward: There are two elements to the Northern Ireland Office's public service agreement target number 1. The first relates to increasing confidence in the police and policing arrangements and the second to increasing Catholic representation in the police service.

The composite baseline measure for confidence in the police and policing arrangement element of PSA target number 1 was calculated using a weighted average of three indicators from the April 2004 Northern Ireland omnibus survey (NIOS) and four indicators from the 2003-04 Northern Ireland crime survey (NICS). The now continuous NICS will be used to measure progress towards achieving this part of the target.

Both surveys are conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency in accordance with national statistics principles. Their samples are drawn from a common sampling frame and are representative of the adult population of Northern Ireland. The NIOS, used to monitor performance during SR 2002, is conducted several times a year and has a smaller sample size than the NICS. From 2005, the NICS has moved from a biennial to a continuous basis, facilitating the production of more robust and more frequent performance measurement data than that previously available.

Data in relation to Catholic representation in the police has consistently been provided by the PSNI. The source of this data is the notification by existing officers

of their primary school attendance. The religious affiliation of new recruits will be determined from their own declarations based on guidance issued by the Equality Commission.

Housing

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he will publish the Planning Policy Statement on housing in rural areas; and if he will make a statement. [47642]

Mr. Woodward: It is anticipated that draft Planning Policy Statement 14—"Sustainable Development in the Countryside", that will contain policies on housing in rural areas, will be published in the first quarter of 2006.

Martin Kelly

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with the Police Service of Northern Ireland in relation to the investigation into the disappearance of Martin Kelly from Holywood in County Down. [47827]

Mr. Woodward: I am being kept fully informed by the Police Service of Northern Ireland about any developments in this case. However, as this is part of a live police investigation, I am unable to comment further.

Private Pensions

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to alleviate the financial difficulties of pensioners in Northern Ireland who have private pensions on which they pay a significant proportion of tax. [47591]

Mr. Hanson: Almost half of United Kingdom pensioners pay no income tax. For those who do, the age-related personal allowances in 2006–07 for people aged between 65 and 74 will rise from £7,090 to £7,280, and for people aged 75 and over from £7,220 to £7,420. This means that no person aged 65 or over will pay tax on an income of less than £140 per week.

This Government has introduced a number of measures since 1997 to help pensioners enjoy a better standard of living, including higher state pensions, pension credit, winter fuel payments and age-related payments. In addition to helping the poorest pensioners, pension credit specifically targets extra money on those with modest savings or income, for example, from a private pension. As a result of these measures across the United Kingdom over £10 billion more will be spent on pensioners in 2006–07 than in 1997.

Search Warrants

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many search warrants have been granted in each parliamentary constituency in Northern Ireland in the last 12 months. [48280]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland do not hold this information on a central record. To obtain such details would require a manual trawl of records across all district command units and as such could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Troubles (Injuries/Deaths)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* police and military and *(b)* civilian (i) deaths, (ii) serious injuries related to the troubles have occurred in each (A) ward and (B) constituency in Northern Ireland since 1976, listed in descending order. [47997]

Mr. Woodward: PSNI has advised that it continues to research this material, which must be cross-referenced with Historical Inquiry Team records before final submission.

The statistics collated by the PSNI relate to deaths only and, as presented, do not currently differentiate between security forces and civilians. Moreover, they are presented as a Northern Ireland wide total and do not breakdown by District Command Unit (DCU) area. To have to break down by serious injury etc. now would require a manual trawl of records at disproportionate cost.

Valuation and Lands Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his answer of 2 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 838W, on the Valuation and Lands Agency, if he will place in the Library a copy of the updated Health and Safety in the Field Policy document to staff. [48038]

Angela E. Smith: Operation of the Health and Safety in the Field Policy has resulted in a number of amendments. These are being incorporated into a revised document, which will be available in March 2006. On issue a copy of this will be placed in the Library.

Waste Management Grant

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what changes there have been to the level of waste management grant to district councils in Northern Ireland since January 2005; and whether grants are ring-fenced for capital expenditure. [48285]

Angela E. Smith: The waste management grant to district councils for 2004–05 was £10 million, with a further £10 million anticipated for closing the scheme in 2005–06.

Since January 2005, the overall level of the next, and final phase of support, has been reduced to £9 million. This grant will now be made available over two years in two tranches; £7 million in 2006–07 and £2 million in 2007–08, and restricted to capital projects only. The scheme will close in March 2008.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General what advice his Department issues for members of the public wishing to make a complaint against the Crown Prosecution Service; and if he will make a statement. [48110]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) operates its own complaints procedure. This is outlined in the CPS complaints leaflet; copies of which are available in the House of Commons Library and on the CPS website (www.cps.gov.uk)

If a member of the public contacts the Attorney General's Office to make a complaint about the CPS, they are directed to the CPS so that their complaint can be dealt with via the CPS's complaints procedure.

Where a complainant has exhausted the CPS's complaints procedure, they can have the handling of their complaint examined by the Correspondence Unit within the Attorney General's Office. The Unit does not undertake another review of the merit of the complaint itself, but will examine whether the CPS has handled the complaint in accordance with their established procedure.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General (1) what assessment he has made of the complaints procedures for the Crown Prosecution Service; [48115]

(2) whether he plans to review the complaints procedures for the Crown Prosecution Service; and if he will make a statement. [48119]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service manages its complaints procedure and reviews it at regular intervals. Officials indicate that the arrangements work satisfactorily.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Solicitor-General how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in the Law Officers Departments *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43503]

The Solicitor-General: The figures in relation to my Departments are shown in the following table.

	Disciplinary action commenced						*Sanction*					
	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*
Treasury Solicitor's Department	1	1	5	6	2	1	1	1	4	6	1	[1]—
Crown Prosecution Service	7	23	19	24	27	—	3	5	15	9	17	—
Serious Fraud Office	[2]—	[2]—	10	7	3	—	[2]—	[2]—	8	3	2	—
HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	[3]—	—	—
Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office (RCPO)[4]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

[1] Proceedings not completed.
[2] No systematic records were kept prior to 2003.
[3] Ongoing.
[4] Since its creation, on 18 April 2004, the RCPO has not commenced any disciplinary action against civil servants employed or taken action that has resulted in a sanction being applied.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether assets and units of 16 Air Assault Brigade will be made available for taking part in the US Operation Enduring Freedom. [46977]

John Reid *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* United Kingdom forces deploying to Southern Afghanistan—including elements of 16 Air Assault Brigade—will carry out tasks identified by NATO to help build the capacity of the Afghan Government, maintain security, and help the Afghanis rebuild their economy and society; they will initially come under Coalition command until Transfer of Authority for Stage III of ISAF expansion to NATO. UK forces will continue to operate under UK targeting directives and UK Rules of Engagement. Throughout, the UK force will operate in pursuit of the ISAF objectives.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence under which North Atlantic Council Resolution United Kingdom forces have been deployed to Afghanistan since 2003. [47996]

John Reid: The international security assistance force (ISAF) operates under the authority of United Nations' Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs). The North Atlantic Council does not pass resolutions but its decisions have defined the support given by NATO to the ISAF. The first of these was taken on 17 October 2002. On 16 April 2003 the council agreed NATO should take command of the ISAF later that year, and on 1 December 2003, confirmed NATO should proceed with the progressive expansion of the ISAF.

C-17

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps have been taken in the past six months to lease further C-17s from Boeing to expand the capacity of the air bridge to Iraq. [45677]

Mr. Ingram: We keep our strategic airlift capability under review, and have considered a range of options for enhancing our capability. Over the past six months we have enhanced our capacity in support of operations in Iraq through the charter of large aircraft.

Conflict Prevention

Mrs. Riordan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of his Department's budget was allocated to conflict prevention in *(a)* 2003–04, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2005–06. [47129]

Mr. Ingram: All Defence expenditure contributes to the overarching Defence aim, which is to

> "deliver security for the people of the United Kingdom and the overseas territories by defending them, including against terrorism, and to act as a force for good by strengthening international peace and security."

Conflict prevention is an integral part of this.

The costs of specific conflict prevention activities (including security and peace-building tasks) are voted for separately by Parliament, through either the HM Treasury reserve or the conflict prevention pools. As such, these funds do not form part of the Defence budget.

On this basis, the Department was voted additional resources for conflict prevention activities of around £1.5 billion in 2003–04 and £1.1 billion in 2004–05. For the financial year 2005–06, the resources required based on the level of conflict prevention activity in the financial year will be reflected in the spring supplementary estimates.

Daedalus Site, Lee-on-the-Solent

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the *(a)* public and *(b)* other bodies which are negotiating to acquire an interest in the Daedalus site at Lee-on-the-Solent; what the nature of that interest is in each case; and if he will ensure that local authorities and other interested bodies have opportunities for consultation before any commitment to transfer land is finalised. [47994]

Mr. Touhig: The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) will be acquiring a freehold interest in the airfield site, which will enable them to implement the Government's maritime safety policy. Hampshire police will be acquiring a leasehold interest from the MCA. This will enable the police authority to continue with its important surveillance operations.

The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) will be acquiring a freehold interest in the balance of the Daedalus site. In accordance with the Regional Development Agencies Act 1988, SEEDA will promote regeneration of the area including business efficiency, investment and competitiveness, employment and coatribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

It is the intention to reserve a right for the RN Gliding Centre to continue its glider training programme in accordance with MCA's operational procedures.

Upon decommissioning of the site in 1996 the Daedalus Strategy Group was formed comprising Gosport and Fareham borough councils and Hampshire county council. Throughout the holding period, the Ministry of Defence has consulted fully with this group and all key stakeholders. It is now more appropriate that these consultations should be continued by SEEDA and MCA.

DCAE Cosford

Mr. McFadden: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) when he next plans to visit DCAE Cosford; [38985]

(2) how many jobs DCAE Cosford supports *(a)* directly and *(b)* indirectly in the West Midlands economy; and if he will make a statement. [38988]

Mr. Touhig: DCAE Cosford directly supports 1,243 jobs. Of these 562 are military personnel, 481 are civilian staff and 200 personnel are currently engaged as contractors. The Department does not hold a figure for the number of jobs indirectly supported by DCAE Cosford in the West Midlands.

Defence Ministers have no plans at present to visit DCAE Cosford.

Departmental Websites

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost of maintaining his main departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46301]

Mr. Touhig: The cost of maintaining the Ministry of Defence's main departmental website www.mod.uk was £127,192 in the financial year 2004–05. The website received the following number of visitors in each of the past seven months. Figures for the period January to June 2005 are unavailable.

	Number of visitors
July 2005	241,278
August 2005	223,588
September 2005	231,649
October 2005	206,174
November 2005	204,908
December 2005	160,392
January 2006	203,623

Aircraft Carriers

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the size of future aircraft carriers will prevent them from docking at *(a)* Portsmouth and *(b)* Plymouth; and if he will make a statement. [32169]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 30 November 2005]:* Portsmouth was selected in 2002 as the base-port for the future aircraft carriers (CVF). The approach channel will be realigned and widened to permit safe access for the carriers, and some dredging work within the harbour will be also required. CVF will be too large to enter Devonport Naval Base.

Gulf War Illness

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research has been provided to the Government on a possible relationship between the self reported use of nerve agent pre-treatment tablets and incidence of Gulf war illness. [46694]

Mr. Touhig: Research provided to the Government on possible associations between ill health among veterans of the 1990–91 Gulf conflict and exposures, including nerve agent pre-treatment set tablets, is generally in the form of published peer-reviewed medical/scientific papers and academic systematic reviews of such papers. Two reviews are considered of particular significance and authority.

The active ingredient in NAPS tablets is the compound Pyridostigmine Bromide (PB). In 2000, the US Institute of Medicine's review "Gulf War and Health: Volume 1. Depleted Uranium, Pyridostigmine Bromide, Sarin, and Vaccines", concluded that there was inadequate/insufficient evidence to determine whether an association does or does not exist between PB and long-term adverse health effects. In 2003, the UK Medical Research Council's review of research into UK Gulf veterans' illnesses noted that for many years PB has been used routinely to treat neuromuscular disease. This had involved much higher doses administered over long periods of time. No serious side effects have been observed as a result of the use of PB in this latter context.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many members of *(a)* the Fourth Armoured Brigade, *(b)* the Seventh Armoured Brigade, *(c)* the First Armoured Division Force Maintenance Area, *(d)* the RAF and *(e)* the Royal Navy involved in Operation Granby in 1991 have since been examined by the Gulf War Medical Assessment programme; how many in each category were found to be suffering from diagnosed neurological illnesses; and how many in each category are claiming war pensions for (i) neurological illnesses and (ii) non-neurological illnesses; [46864]

(2) how many cases of diagnosed *(a)* neurological and *(b)* auto-immune illnesses in 1991 Gulf war veterans have been examined by the Gulf War Medical Assessment programme since 1992. [46872]

Mr. Touhig: Since the Gulf Veterans' Medical Assessment programme was established in 1993, it has medically assessed 3,278 1990–91 Gulf veterans. Of those seen, 2,521 were Army, 299 Navy and 458 RAF, of whom 117,17 and 27 respectively had neurological disorders.

No unusual diseases or pattern of diseases were found. Of 161 cases of neurological disorder, the most common was migraine (43), followed by epilepsy (28) (22 idiopathic, 6 post traumatic) and multiple sclerosis (19). Of the 161 only one was medically assessed as a result of service in the Gulf. The remaining 71 veterans suffered a miscellaneous group of disorders, some of a genetic nature, others extant before deployment to the Gulf and others developing many years after return from the Gulf, none of which were assessed by Medical Assessment programme physicians to be caused by either deployment to the Gulf or medical countermeasures used during that campaign.

In relation to auto-immune illnesses, there have been three cases of systemic lupus erythematosus autoimmune disease, and three cases of common variable immunodeficiency. Two of the latter were asymptomatic and discovered by chance. None of these six cases was assessed as being due to service in the 1990–91 Gulf conflict. However, since 2002, routine investigations for immune diseases have not been routinely undertaken unless clinically indicated.

Information is not held centrally on the individual units that patients of the Medical Assessment programme served with in theatre, or the number of war pensions in payment to patients that have attended, and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Iraq

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the average number of insurgent attacks in Multinational Division South East is for each month since January 2005; where they have occurred; and if he will make a statement; [23063]

(2) how many incidents in Multinational Division South East for each month since January 2005 have been caused by use of improvised explosive devices; and if he will make a statement. [23120]

John Reid: The total number of attacks in Multinational Division (South East) since January 2005 is 562 making the monthly average 46.8. We assess that 115 have been caused by improvised explosive devices. This makes the monthly average 9.5.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the infiltration by sectarian militias of *(a)* the Interior Ministry and *(b)* defence forces in Iraq. [33937]

Mr. Ingram: Ethnic, religious and tribal loyalties are widespread within Iraqi society. Part of the reform and democratisation process of Iraqi institutions is the removal of those individuals whose loyalties are not to the state. The performance of the Iraqi Interior and Defence Ministries and of the Iraqi Security Forces will be important factors in determining the rate of transfer to Iraqi control of security and we continue to make detailed capability assessments of the Iraqi Security Forces within the UK area of responsibility.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British soldiers have been wounded in Iraq; how many were returned home as a result of their injuries; and whether his Department keeps records of their geographical location in the UK when they return. [36699]

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British *(a)* servicemen and *(b)* women have been very seriously injured in Iraq in each month since March 2003. [39267]

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many service personnel in Iraq were wounded in *(a)* action and *(b)* accidents in each year since hostilities began, broken down by severity of injury. [45453]

John Reid: *[holding answers 20 December 2005 and 26 January 2006]:* Centrally available records show that some 230 UK personnel have been treated at UK medical facilities in theatre for wounds received as a result of hostile action between March 2003 and December 2005[1].

Our Notification of Casualty reporting records also allow us to give a figure for those categorised in theatre as Very Seriously Ill/Injured/Wounded (VSI), meaning that their life was imminently endangered. Some 40 personnel were categorised as VSI as a result of injury or wounds, however caused, in Iraq between March 2003 and December 2005[2].

Separate records show that between February 2003 and December 2005 some 4,000 military and civilian personnel (including a few Iraqis) have been medically

evacuated from theatre. The great majority of cases were due to illness or accidental injury and not as a result of hostile action.

The MOD intends to publish casualty figures for Iraq on the MOD website in the next few weeks, identifying the number of personnel categorised as "Seriously Injured" and "Very Seriously Injured". The figures will be updated regularly. I will write to inform the hon. and right hon. Members prior to the first publication.

The Ministry of Defence keeps records of all armed forces personnel currently serving and where they are located. The Veterans Agency maintains up to date records of those troops that have been medically discharged in order to pay their medical pensions.

[1] Before October 2004, we only have centrally held records for the Shaibah UK Field Hospital. The figure does not include, for example, UK casualties of hostile action who were treated either by other UK Field Hospitals (early stages of operation only—for which unit records are not held centrally) or by coalition partners, or those with more minor injuries who did not receive Field Hospital treatment. From October 2004, the figure relates to all those wounded who were treated in any of the UK medical facilities in the UK-led Multi-National Division South East MND(SE) area. This figure excludes any personnel who subsequently died.

[2] The VSI figure excludes any personnel who subsequently died.

Iraq Service Medal

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many personnel are eligible for the Iraq service medal; how many medals have been awarded to date; and what the average time taken has been to award the medal; [43419]

(2) how many non-military personnel are eligible for the Iraq service medal; and how many have been awarded. [43455]

Mr. Touhig: The information is not held in the format requested, however, as at 20 January 2006 there have been 99,839 applications for the Iraq medal received from armed forces personnel of which 97,006 have been awarded. The current average waiting time from application to issue is three months.

As at 20 January 2006 there have been 933 applications for the Iraq medal received from non-military personnel all of which have been awarded.

Qinetiq

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the nature of the special share in Qinetiq to be retained by the Government. [43775]

John Reid *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The purpose of the Special (or Golden) Share in Qinetiq is solely to protect UK defence or security interests. The Ministry of Defence has held a Special Share in the Company for this purpose from the time of the Public Private Partnership Transaction with the Carlyle Group in 2003. The Government consider it necessary to retain this Special Share after the Initial Public Offering, adapted as necessary to reflect the new corporate structure of the Company.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Government plans to reserve a proportion of shares in Qinetiq for small shareholders. [43850]

John Reid *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The Government do not intend reserving a proportion of shares for small shareholders in the forthcoming Initial Public Offering of Qinetiq.

As is the case in any institutional offer, members of the public may apply for shares through a private client stockbroker, although there will be no allocation of shares reserved for that purpose. Members of the public will also be able to buy shares in Qinetiq once trading has commenced. The cost to the taxpayer of any special arrangement would be between £5 million and £23 million and based on advice from our financial advisers and it is the Government's view that inclusion of a retail offer in this way would not offer value for money for the taxpayer.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the availability of shares in Qinetiq to retail investors. [43851]

John Reid *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* As is the case in any institutional offer, members of the public may apply for shares through a private client stockbroker, although there will be no allocation of shares reserved for that purpose. Members of the public will also be able to buy shares in Qinetiq once trading has commenced. The cost to the taxpayer of making particular and special provision, based on previous experience, would be between £5 million and £23 million and based on advice from our financial advisers, it is the Government's view that inclusion of a retail offer in this way would not offer value for money for the taxpayer.

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the Government's policy is on the flotation of Qinetiq; and if he will make a statement. [43852]

John Reid *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The flotation of Qinetiq is the logical next step in the Public Private Partnership (PPP) for Defence Research announced in the 1998 Strategic Defence Review. The aims of the PPP were to strengthen the linkages between defence and civil technologies, encourage the commercial exploitation of the taxpayers' investment in science and technology, and create a sustainable future for DERA and its staff whilst retaining within Government (the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory) those functions not appropriate to the private sector. The Government, informed by the advice of its professional advisers, believes that an Initial Public Offering (IPO) now provides the best route for Qinetiq further to develop its excellence as a supplier of advanced technology in a global market. Following the IPO, the MOD will continue to retain a significant stake in the company, and a Special Share to protect the United Kingdom's defence and security interests in Qinetiq.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the value was of assets of Qinetiq prior to the sale of shares in 2002. [44096]

John Reid: The net asset value in the Qinetiq Group plc as shown in the annual report and financial statements for 2002 was £312.5million.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will refer the sale of Qinetiq to Carlyle in 2002 to the National Audit Office. [46895]

John Reid: The National Audit Office announced on 26 January that it would carry out a study into the Qinetiq Public Private Partnership. The study will include consideration of the sale to Carlyle, which took place in February 2003.

It is routine for the NAO to look at complex PPP transactions of this sort and it would have been very surprising if it had not wished to examine the Qinetiq privatisation. The MOD welcomes its involvement and looks forward to co-operating fully with their work.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what privileges his Department's special share in Qinetiq will confer after flotation. [47269]

John Reid: The special share that the Ministry of Defence presently holds in Qinetiq will be retained after the flotation of the company, to protect UK defence or security interests, as at present. Along with the principal agreement, the special share gives MOD the ability, among other things, to:

prohibit or restrict Qinetiq from undertaking activities which may lead to an unmanageable conflict of interest that would be damaging to the defence or security interests of the United Kingdom;

veto any proposed contract, transaction, arrangement or activity which may result in what the MOD considers to be an unacceptable ownership, influence, control or activity of Qinetiq contrary to the defence or security interests of the United Kingdom; and

require Qinetiq' s Board to take appropriate action to protect the defence or security interests of the United Kingdom.

Further detail of the rights conferred to MOD by the special share is available in the Qinetiq sale prospectus, a copy of which was placed in the Library of the House on 26 January 2006. This includes detailed summaries of the rights (pp.150 and 212), detail of restrictions on shareholdings (pp.17 and 55), and fuller details of the special share on pp. 244–247.

Service Children's Education

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many and what proportion of 15-year-olds in schools operated by Service Children's Education achieved five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades *(a)* A* to C and *(b)* A* to C including English and mathematics in each year since 1995. [47158]

Mr. Touhig: Service Children's Education (SCE) was launched as an agency of the Ministry of Defence on 1 April 1996, at that point assuming responsibility for all Service schools located outwith the United Kingdom. I am therefore unable to provide the academic achievement for 1995. Academic results for 2005 currently await formal validation by representatives of Defence Internal Audit and will be published in the SCE Annual Report and Accounts, copies of which are placed in the Library of the House, prior to the summer recess. The relevant Agency results from 1996 to 2004 are set out in the tables:

	1996		*1997*		*1998*	
GCSE(s) 5+ A to C*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Total	190	45	193	44	218	48
Total including Mathematics and English	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

	1999		*2000*		*2001*	
GCSE(s) 5+ A to C*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Total	194	47	211	52	183	48
Total including Mathematics and English	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

	2002		*2003*		*2004*	
GCSE(s) 5+ A to C*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Total	208	57	208	60	223	62
Total including mathematics and English	183	50	166	48	169	47

n/a = not available

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many and what proportion of 11-year-olds in schools operated by Service Children's Education achieved level 4 in *(a)* English, *(b)* mathematics, *(c)* science, *(d)* reading, *(e)* writing, *(f)* reading and writing and *(g)* reading, writing and mathematics in each year since 1995. [47366]

Mr. Touhig: Service Children's Education (SCE) was launched as an agency of the Ministry of Defence on 1 April 1996, at that point assuming responsibility for all Service schools located outwith the United Kingdom. I am therefore unable to provide details of academic achievement in 1995. Academic results for 2005 currently await formal validation by representatives of Defence Internal Audit and will be published in the SCE Annual Report and Accounts, copies of which are placed in the Library of the House, prior to the summer recess.

The relevant Agency results from 1996 to 2004 are set out in the tables.

Subject(s) Level 4 or above	1996 Number	1996 Percentage	1997 Number	1997 Percentage	1998 Number	1998 Percentage
English	611	60	703	71	752	74
Mathematics	601	59	715	73	696	68
Science	682	67	767	78	800	79
Reading	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Writing	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Reading and Writing	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Reading, Writing and Mathematics	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Subject(s) Level 4 or above	1999 Number	1999 Percentage	2000 Number	2000 Percentage	2001 Number	2001 Percentage
English	792	73	716	75	704	76
Mathematics	699	70	662	72	639	69
Science	817	81	802	88	843	91
Reading	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	784	85
Writing	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	536	58
Reading and Writing	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	529	57
Reading, Writing and Mathematics	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	464	50

Subject(s) Level 4 or above	2002 Number	2002 Percentage	2003 Number	2003 Percentage	2004 Number	2004 Percentage
English	617	75	636	77	691	82
Mathematics	645	78	629	76	630	75
Science	751	91	756	91	770	91
Reading	699	85	696	84	726	86
Writing	458	56	479	58	566	67
Reading and Writing	444	54	471	57	546	65
Reading, Writing and Mathematics	424	51	432	52	481	57

n/a = not available

Service Personnel

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 226W, on service personnel, what options he has identified for the use of trained mediators in the resolution of disputes; what measures were approved by the Service Personnel Group following its meeting of 19 January; and what the timetable is for further action. [47787]

Mr. Touhig: A number of options regarding the use of trained mediators in the resolution of disputes were discussed by the Service Personnel Executive Group on 19 January 2006. These are now subject to further discussion with the Equal Opportunities Commission and I will write to my hon. Friend when a course of action has been decided upon.

SevenCs

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will set out the rules governing the commercial operations of his Department and its agencies; how his Department applied the rules to the acquisition of SevenCs by the UK Hydrographic Office; and if he will make a statement. [47221]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* Guidance covering the Ministry of Defence commercial policy and procedures is contained in the commercial toolkit (CmT) available through the acquisition management system at www.ams.mod.uk.

In relation to the UK Hydrographic Office the rules governing its commercial operations are set out in the Government Trading Funds Act 1973, the Government Trading Act 1990 and the Hydrographic Trading Fund Order 1996. In addition to this UK legislation, German civil law also governed the acquisition of SevenCs by the UK Hydrographic Office. In acquiring SevenCs the UK Hydrographic Office ensured that it did so within the applicable rules.

Soldiers (Retirement)

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research he has commissioned into the appropriate retirement age of soldiers. [45938]

Mr. Touhig: In August 2001 the Army Policy and Resources Committee authorised a review of the soldiers' career structures. The review, known as the Non Commissioned Engagement and Career Study, reported its findings in November 2002 and recommended the introduction of a more flexible and efficient career structure for soldiers, that would meet the operational and administrative needs of the Army and the individual in the 21st century while enabling better use of those soldiers who wish to serve beyond a 22-year engagement. As a first step in November 2004 the longer career model (LCM) was introduced for the staff and personnel support branch of the Adjutant General's Corps offering the possibility of three-five years extension of service beyond the 22-year point. The LCM is also available to other cap badges and several are now actively investigating the feasibility of longer

service for their soldiers. Plans to offer even greater flexibility in length of service for soldiers are also under consideration.

Territorial Army

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of the Territorial Army were declared Fit For Role at the end of the last training year. [41654]

Mr. Touhig: The number of members of the Territorial Army that were declared Fit For Role at the end of the last training year is not currently held centrally and can only be provided at disproportionate cost. I can confirm that as at 1 April 2005, 19,290 officers and soldiers were declared as trained. It is this which determines whether an member of the TA may be called up for deployment.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the Territorial Army bounty is for *(a)* the first year, *(b)* the second year, *(c)* the third and fourth years and *(d)* five years and above; and how many bounties were claimed in respect of each band for 2004–05. [43676]

Mr. Touhig: The rates of Territorial Army bounty can be found in the following table.

Rates of training bounty payable from April 2005-April 2006

£

	1st year	*2nd year*	*3rd/4th year*	*5th and subsequent years*
Group A (Higher Training obligations for officers and soldiers)	371.00	816.00	1,260.00	1,462.00
Group A (Lower Training obligations for officers and soldiers)[1]	n/a	450.00	698.00	816.00
Group B—Officers, Officer Cadets and Soldiers in the Officer Training Corps (OTC)	127.00	148.00	180.00	180.00

[1] In certain individual cases involving special business or domestic reasons, COs may permit trade qualified personnel of independent and specialist units to undertake the lower training liability.

Note:
Excludes non regular permanent staff officers and soldiers

The number of TA bounties paid in 2004–05 can be found in the following table. It should be noted that these bounties paid were for qualification of bounty in the training year 2003–04.

Classification	*Recipients*
Year 1	2,098
Year 3	2,288
Year 5	14,585
Not classified	2,96
Total	21,167

Notes:
1. The figures include OTCs.
2. Those 'not classified' are personnel that do not fit into the standard categories.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* the establishment and *(b)* the strength is of each Territorial Army Infantry Battalion; and what the establishment is for the future Territorial Army Infantry Battalions under the Future Army Structure. [43680]

Mr. Touhig: The establishment and current strength of each Territorial Army Infantry Battalions is as shown as follows:

Unit	*Establishment*	*Current strength*	
		Number	*Percentage*
The London Regiment	632	501	(79)
4th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment	324	395	(122)
The Royal Irish Rangers	260	281	(110)
The Rifle Volunteers	570	523	(92)
The Royal Rifle Volunteers	475	471	(99)
3rd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment	378	365	(97)
The Royal Welsh Regiment	477	456	(96)
The West Midlands Regiment	570	472	(83)
The East and West Riding Regiment	539	518	(96)
The Lancastrian and Cumbrian Volunteers	442	424	(96)
The Kings Cheshire Regiment	474	468	(99)
The East of England Regiment	569	534	(94)
The Tyne Tees Regiment	573	576	(101)
51st Highland Regiment	657	605	(92)
52nd Lowland Regiment	474	389	(82)

No decisions have yet been taken on the future establishment for the Territorial Army Infantry Battalions. An announcement will be made in due course.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* establishment and *(b)* strength was of Territorial Army (i) staff, (ii) Royal Armoured Corps, (iii) Royal Artillery, (iv) Royal Engineers, (v) Royal

Signals, (vi) infantry, (vii) Army Air Corps, (viii) Royal Army Chaplains Department, (ix) Royal Logistics Corps, (x) Royal Army Medical Corps, (xi) Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, (xii) Adjutant General's Corps, (xiii) Royal Army Veterinary Corps, (xiv) Small Arms School Corps, (xv) Royal Army Dentistry Corps, (xvi) Intelligence Corps, (xvii) Army Physical Training Corps, (xviii) general list, (ixx) Queen Alexandra's Royal Auxiliary Nursing Corps, (xx) Officer Training Corps and (xxi) unallocated staff in (A) 1997 and (B) 2005. [45644]

Mr. Touhig: At 1 April 1997 the establishment and strength of the Territorial Army was 59,000 and 56,200 respectively. At 1 April 2005 the establishment and strength of the Territorial Army was 41,610 and 36,180 respectively. Table A provides a breakdown for the Territorial Army strengths by Arm and Service. A breakdown of the establishment figures for 1997 is not available.

Table A: Territorial Army Establishments and Strengths, 1997 and 2005

	1 April 1997			1 April 2005		
Arm/Service	*Establishment*	*Strength*	*Of which: Mobilised*	*Establishment*	*Strength*	*Of which: Mobilised*
Total	59,000	56,200	n/a	41,610	36,180	1,460
Staff	—	70	n/a	0	90	0
Household Cavalry/Royal Armoured Corps	—	2,060	n/a	1,320	1,220	100
Royal Regiment of Artillery	—	3,100	n/a	3,030	2,210	150
Corps of Royal Engineers	—	5,460	n/a	3,080	2,370	50
Royal Corps of Signals	—	4,530	n/a	5,390	3,850	130
Infantry	—	15,760	n/a	8,140	6,960	320
Army Air Corps	—	140	n/a	160	110	0
Royal Army Chaplains' Department	—	110	n/a	90	60	0
Royal Logistics Corps	—	9,210	n/a	6,820	5,900	240
Royal Army Medical Services	—	4,430	n/a	6,880	4,080	120
Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers	—	3,460	n/a	1,640	2,240	70
Adjutant General's Corps	—	2,370	n/a	460	1,260	40
Small Arms School Corps	—	0	n/a	0	0	0
Intelligence Corps	—	620	n/a	510	490	20
Army Physical Training Corps	—	0	n/a	30	0	0
General List	—	360	n/a	390	360	10
Corps of Army Music	—	0	n/a	0	0	0
Officers Training Corps	—	4,520	n/a	3,500	4,760	0
Unallocated	—	0	n/a	160	200	200

n/a = Not available

Notes

1. All data exclude NRPS.
2. All data include trained and untrained.
3. Standard Arm/Service titles used except Royal Army Medical Services.
4. Royal Army Medical Services comprises of Royal Army Medical, Veterinary and Dental Corps and Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps.
5. All strengths and 1 April 2005 Establishment data rounded to the nearest 10, numbers ending in '5' have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias. 1 April 1997 Establishment figure is rounded to the nearest 100.

Type 23 Frigate

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 506W, on Type 23 frigates, why HMS Richmond was not included in the information provided. [44530]

Mr. Ingram: HMS Richmond has no allocated helicopters at present. The ship is currently undergoing a refit which is scheduled to be completed in June 2006. HMS Richmond will receive Merlin Mk1 during sea trials following her refit.

HEALTH

Agency Staff (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of agency *(a)* nurses and *(b)* doctors has been in each year since 1997 in Coventry South. [44555]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 24 January 2006]*: The information requested is shown in the table.

Coventry teaching primary care trust (PCT)

£000

	Medical	*Nursing, midwifery and health visiting*
2002–03	504	0
2003–04	771	0
2004–05	359	0

Source:
Financial Returns Coventry Teaching PCT 2002–03 to 2004–05.

University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire National Health Service Trust

£000

	Medical	*Nursing, midwifery and health visiting*
1997–98	427	957
1998–99	625	1,548
1999–2000	415	2,288
2000–01	634	2,986
2001–02	888	3,144
2002–03	3,870	3,001
2003–04	5,478	1,715
2004–05	4,348	479

Notes:
1. Figures given are for the Coventry Teaching PCT, and the University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust, and relate to the cost of agency nurses, midwifery and health visiting, and doctors.
2. Information for Coventry Teaching PCT is only available for 2002–03 to 2004–05.

Source:
Financial Returns University Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust 1997–98 to 2004–05.

Dentistry

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children are not registered with an NHS dentist; and what assessment her Department has made of the merits of revising the provision of school based dental checks for children. [42918]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of children not registered with a national health service dentist is not collected centrally.

As at 30 September 2005, the number of children registered with an NHS dentist with a general dental services or personal dental services contract in England was 6,927,299. This is estimated to be 59 per cent. of the total child population in England.

The National Screening Committee is currently reviewing the arrangements for the screening of children's dental health.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the providers of each of the dental access centres in England. [43533]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Dental access centres operate under personal dental services arrangements. Therefore, it is the local primary care trust (PCT) that is the provider. The following PCTs operate one or more of the 53 dental access centres in England.

Ashford
Barnet
Bath and North East Somerset
Bedford
Bristol North
Bristol South and West
Bromley
Bury
Cambridge City
Canterbury and Coastal
Central Cheshire
Central Liverpool
Daventry and South Northamptonshire
East Cambridgeshire and Fenland
East Kent Coastal
East Lincolnshire
East Yorkshire
Eastern Cheshire
Enfield
Exeter
Guildford and Waverley
Halton
Herefordshire
Huntingdonshire
Kennet and North Wiltshire
Leeds North West
Mendip
Milton Keynes
Morecambe Bay
Newcastle
North East Oxfordshire
Northampton
Oxford City
Plymouth
Reading
Rochdale
Shropshire County
Slough
Somerset Coast
South Somerset
South Warwickshire
South West Oxfordshire
South Worcestershire
Southampton City
St. Helens
Swindon
Telford and Wrekin
Walsall Teaching
Warrington
West Cumbria
West Hull
West Lincolnshire
West Norfolk
West Wiltshire
Woking Area
Yorkshire Wolds and Coast

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in Beverley and Holderness have left the NHS to work in private practice in each year since 1997. [44317]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table, provides the numbers of dentists who have left the general dental services (GDS) or personal dental services (PDS) within Beverley and Holderness constituency in each year since 1997.

However, information on whether dentists leave the national health service to work in private practice is not available.

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS)—number of dentists who have left the GDS or PDS in Beverley and Holderness constituency as at 30 September each year

	Complete leaver
1997	0
1998	0
1999	1
2000	2
2001	0
2002	3
2003	1
2004	1
2005	0

Note
Complete leaver means the dentist had an open GDS or PDS contract in September of the previous year but no GDS or PDS contract in September of the specified year.

Source
Dental Practice Board

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* NHS dental practices and *(b)* NHS dentists there were in the Easington constituency in each of the last five years. [46007]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the following table.

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS). Number of national health service dental practices and NHS dentists within Easington constituency as at 30 September each year.

	GDS or PDS dental practices	GDS or PDS dentists
2001	9	14
2002	9	14
2003	9	13
2004	9	12
2005	9	17

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* location and *(b)* date of (i) opening and (ii) closing is of each dental school in England; and how many dental students there were at each in each of the last 30 years. [36896]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are currently nine dental schools in England. Information on the date of opening of the dental schools is not held centrally. University College London dental school was closed in 1992. The table shows the numbers of dental students admitted to the nine dental schools each year since 1993, the years for which figures are available.

Dental school intake, 1993–2005 (England)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
University of Birmingham	69	73	74	69	68	71
University of Bristol	65	64	44	57	55	50
University of Leeds	52	54	52	53	52	51
University of Liverpool	50	54	48	55	51	49
Kings College London	157	156	154	149	167	142
University of Manchester	59	74	65	114	55	60
University of Newcastle	70	70	83	81	79	78
Queen Mary, University of London	57	59	53	53	52	54
University of Sheffield	51	60	54	54	53	48
Total	630	664	627	685	632	603

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005[1]
University of Birmingham	70	69	72	75	75	81	90
University of Bristol	52	50	51	55	53	53	84
University of Leeds	55	50	54	61	55	52	85
University of Liverpool	49	45	49	52	63	60	90
Kings College London	130	144	140	162	138	142	168
University of Manchester	71	74	73	71	75	79	59
University of Newcastle	63	72	68	70	71	80	98
Queen Mary, University of London	57	63	61	55	75	58	90
University of Sheffield	53	56	58	64	67	69	84
Total	600	623	626	665	674	674	848

[1] provisional data

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of people were registered with an NHS dentist in *(a)* Yeovil constituency, *(b)* Somerset, *(c)* South Somerset and *(d)* England in each year since 1995. [28223]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 18 November 2005]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

General dental services (CDS) and personal dental services (PDS). Number of patients registered and percentage of people registered with an national health service dentist in England, local authorities in Somerset and Yeovil parliamentary constituency as at 30 September each year

Number

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Registration data					
England	27,147,294	23,898,728	24,118,683	24,527,730	24,297,247
Bath and North East Somerset local authority	114,364	101,669	99,742	91,237	85,386
North Somerset local authority	106,935	96,827	96,103	96,503	100,591

General dental services (CDS) and personal dental services (PDS). Number of patients registered and percentage of people registered with an national health service dentist in England, local authorities in Somerset and Yeovil parliamentary constituency as at 30 September each year

Number

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*
South Somerset local authority	107,139	94,947	94,514	91,510	87,724
West Somerset local authority	18,343	18,176	18,358	21,325	21,265
Yeovil parliamentary constituency	71,804	62,580	61,960	58,606	56,576

	2002	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Registration data:				
England	24,217,483	24,295,652	23,639,904	24,168,352
Bath and North East Somerset local authority	83,155	85,386	83,451	85,819
North Somerset local authority	101,010	102,404	106,115	108,022
South Somerset local authority	82,208	100,255	83,849	86,666
West Somerset local authority	22,319	22,432	24,530	23,300
Yeovil parliamentary constituency	53,658	75,527	62,093	64,707

Percentage

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*
Registrations per head of population					
England	56	49	49	50	49
Bath and North East Somerset local authority	69	61	60	54	50
North Somerset local authority	58	52	51	51	53
South Somerset local authority	72	64	63	61	58
West Somerset local authority	55	54	53	61	61
Yeovil parliamentary constituency	—	—	—	—	—

	2002	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Registrations per head of population				
England	49	49	47	48
Bath and North East Somerset local authority	49	50	48	50
North Somerset local authority	53	53	55	56
South Somerset local authority	54	65	54	56
West Somerset local authority	63	63	69	65
Yeovil parliamentary constituency	—	—	—	—

Notes:
1. The drop in registrations between September 1997 and September 1998 is mostly attributable to the reduction in re-registration period from two years to fifteen months.
2. Most PDS schemes that have registrations have a re-registration period in excess of fifteen months, so the figures for PDS schemes are generally higher than they would have been for the same attendance pattern under CDS.
3. Prison registrations are included in these figures.
4. Salaried dentist registrations are not included in these figures.
5. A dentist with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much NHS treatment as he or she chooses or agreed with the PCT.
6. The Dental Practice Board has no information concerning the amount of time dedicated to NHS work by individual dentists.
7. The areas have been defined using practice postcodes within the current boundaries.
8. Areas have been defined using the Office of National Statistics All Fields Postcode Directory.
9. Population data at constituency area are not available.

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of children in Hereford constituency are registered with an NHS dentist. [44613]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available in the format requested. However, the proportion of children registered within the Herefordshire Primary Care Trust as at November 2005 was 70 per cent.

Notes:
1. The percentages of the population registered with a dentist (or registration rate) have been estimated by including patient registrations in the area of the dentist, that is, according to the postcode of the dental surgery and not the patient's address. So the registration rates for some areas may be affected by some patients receiving dental treatment in a different area from the one in which they live.

2. Estimates have been calculated using population estimates for the nearest year for which data are available. Percentages for 2005 have been calculated using 2004 mid year population estimates.
3. Information on children registered with a dentist at constituency level is not available as a percentage of the total number of children in the constituency. This is due to population data not being available at constituency level.

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Drug Treatment Programmes

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what average time a patient requiring *(a)* residential and *(b)* in-patient specialist drug treatment was on a waiting list for treatment in the last period for which figures are available. [44641]

Caroline Flint: The last period for which these figures are available is for the three months July to September 2005. The average waiting time for patients on a waiting list requiring residential drug treatment was 2.6 weeks, and 3.1 weeks for patients requiring in-patient specialist drug treatment.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many drug treatment places for abuse of illegal drugs were available in each of the last five years. [47706]

Caroline Flint: We do not record the number of places. Drug treatment is measured by activity. In 2004–05, 160,450 were in treatment—an increase of 28 per cent. on the previous year.

Feltham Young Offenders Institute

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of prison health care provision was at Feltham Young Offenders Institute in the last three years for which figures are available. [45460]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The funding allocation for health care provision for Her Majesty's Young Offenders Institute, Feltham was £4.5 million in 2003–04, £4.7 million in 2004–05 and £4.8 million in 2005–06.

HIV/AIDS (Hertfordshire)

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1667W, on HIV/AIDS, what assessment she has made of HIV infection rates in Hertfordshire. [46370]

Caroline Flint: The data available on HIV infection is by strategic health authority (SHA) rather than county and relate to new diagnoses rather than infection rates.

The most recent data available on HIV diagnoses in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA is available on the Health Protection Agency's website at: www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hiv_and_sti/hiv/epidemiology/hars_tables.htm

Influenza Pandemic Planning

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on how many occasions the Cabinet Committee on Influenza Pandemic Planning (MISC 32) has met since it was established. [46492]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I have been asked to reply. Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice and the proceedings of Cabinet and Cabinet committees is generally not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Mental Health

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what treatment and resources are provided to ex-servicemen suffering post combat mental heath illness who are also alcohol or drug dependent; and if she will make a statement.

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 31 January 2006]*: National health service services for post traumatic stress disorder and alcohol or drug dependence are freely available to all, including ex-service people. In addition, the Ministry of Defence funds a range of services provided by Combat Stress, specifically for this group.

The NHS is working closely with the Ministry of Defence and Combat Stress to ensure that services work more closely together.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effects of the use of prone restraint in *(a)* mental health and *(b)* care institutions; and if she will make a statement. [45282]

Ms Rosie Winterton: While all restraint positions are potentially harmful, there is no empirical evidence which indicates that the prone position carries a greater risk of harm to patients than other restraint positions.

Individual authorities are required by the Code of Practice of the Mental Health Act 1983 to have clear policies on the use of prone restraint and other forms of physical restraint. Physical restraint should take place only as a last resort, not routinely. Any restraint used should also be reasonable in the circumstance, apply the minimum force necessary to prevent harm to the patient or others, for only as long as is necessary and be sensitive to gender and race issues. This advice applies in all healthcare settings and to all age ranges. Trusts should regularly audit their physical restraint procedures to ensure these are consistent with the framework of clinical governance.

The Department emphasises the recognition and prevention of aggression and violence wherever possible and published guidance in 2004, "Mental Health Policy Implementation Guide: Developing Positive Practice to Support the Safe and Therapeutic Management of Aggression and Violence in Mental Health Inpatient Settings".

We also commissioned guidance from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), which looked at the management of aggression and violence, including restraint. NICE published "Disturbed (violent) behaviour: the short-term management of disturbed (violent) behaviour in in-patient psychiatric settings" in February 2005.

In September 2005, the National Health Service Security Management Service formally launched its training programme, "Promoting safer and therapeutic services", following the successful piloting of this in a number of national health service trusts.

The National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE) is also reviewing positive practice standards in relation to the safe and therapeutic management of aggression and violence. NIMHE, together with the National Patient Safety Agency, who are undertaking a project on preventing and managing violence, will publish guidance and a checklist early in 2006 to ensure that all restraint procedures meet rigorous standards. The project team is also developing proposals for the accreditation and regulation of physical intervention trainers.

MRSA

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of MRSA there have been at Essex Rivers health care in the past 12 months; and at which locations. [44974]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The best available information is from the mandatory meticillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) blood stream infections surveillance which started in April 2001. This information is collected at trust level. The most recent data shows that there were 37 MRSA bacteraemia reports from April 2004 to March 2005 in Essex Rivers healthcare national health service trust.

Neuroblastoma

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients in England were diagnosed as having neuroblastoma in each of the last three years. [47414]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl dated 2 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question concerning how many patients in England were diagnosed as having neuroblastoma in each of the last three years. I am replying in her absence. (47414)

The most recent available information on registration of newly diagnosed cases (incidence) are for the year 2003. Numbers of newly diagnosed cases of neuroblastoma registered in England between 2001 and 2003, are given in the table.

Numbers of newly diagnosed cases of neuroblastoma[1] registered in England 2001–03

	England
2001	89
2002	83
2003	92

[1] Neuroblastoma is defined solely by morphology code, as codes 9500/3 and 9522/3 in the 'International Classification of Diseases for Oncology, Second Edition' (ICD-O2).

Source:
Office for National Statistics

New Hospital (St. Albans)

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assurances her Department gave the former hon. Member for St. Albans of a new hospital being constructed by the West Hertfordshire NHS Trust. [41119]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There have been no assurances given about the proposed new Hospital in Hatfield. However, in July 2004, my right hon. Friend the then Secretary of State for Health (John Reid), did approve Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority's strategic outline case, "Investing in Your Health", which included the option of building a new hospital in Hatfield. A clear timetable was set out that would see East and North Hertfordshire National Health Service Trust completing and submitting a detailed outline business case for the new hospital by the end of 2006. Firm assurances can not be given because the final investment proposals are subject to confirmation as part of the business case process.

NHS Contracts

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what calculations were made to estimate the cost of *(a)* the consultant contract, *(b)* agenda for change and *(c)* the new general medical services contract, as provided in her Department's public expenditure questionnaire 2005 for the Health Committee; and whether there have been cost overruns on each of these contracts. [36604]

Mr. Byrne: The consultant contract was costed on a methodology agreed with the British Medical Association and on that basis the estimated cost of the contract, and the funding, was £133 million in 2003–04 rising to £250 million in 2005–06. In late 2004, we adjusted the tariff for 2005–06 by £150 million in response to suggestions from the service that this was the further cost pressure. However, our national survey, published in February 2005, indicated that the actual additional cost to the service was around £90 million.

Agenda for change costs were estimated from experience in a number of early implementer sites to be consistent with the agreed funding envelope of £480 million in 2004–05 rising to £950 million in 2005–06.

There are concerns based on monitoring in a number of sample sites that initial costs may have been higher than expected, and follow-up work is currently being carried out on the costs of implementation within each strategic health authority to test this. The agenda for change funding envelope is due to increase in 2006–07 and 2007–08 and it is too soon to conclude whether or not the overall envelope will be exceeded.

For the general medical services contract, forecast spend based on available primary care trust data is shown in the table.

Forecast spend against PCT allocated resources

£ billion

Financial year	*Allocation*	*Outturn*	*Over*
2003–04	5.7	5.8	0.1
2004–05[1]	6.8	6.9	0.1
2005–06[1]	7.4	7.5	0.1

[1] Forecast outturn, that is still subject to finalised PCT accounts.

Optometry

Angela Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions her Department has had

with optometrists concerning their payment system for NHS eye examinations; and if she will make a statement. [34513]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 5 December 2005]*: I met with representatives of optometrists and dispensing opticians on 27 October 2005. One of the issues raised was their concern that changes might be made to current arrangements for a nationally negotiated sight test fee, with sight tests funded from a national budget. I assured them that we did not envisage any changes to these arrangements.

The fee for the national health service funded sight test is currently subject to a three-year agreement, which ends in March 2006. Negotiations on the sight test fee for 2006–07 are due to begin shortly.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much each of the Suffolk primary care trusts will receive in 2006–07 per head of population; and what the national average is expected to be. [44637]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Revenue allocations per head of population to primary care trusts (PCTs) in Suffolk, as well as the England average, for 2006–07 are shown in the table.

Allocations to PCTs are based on the population weighted for a number of factors. These factors include:

age related need—to recognise that people tend to have greater need as they grow older;

additional needs—to reflect difference in health need over and above that accounted for by age; and

unavoidable difference in the cost of providing services.

PCT allocations per head of population

PCT	2006–07 allocation (£000)	2006 population	2006–07 allocation per head (£)
Central Suffolk	106,743	100,398	1,063
Ipswich	179,944	144,219	1,248
Suffolk Coastal	115,682	99,209	1,166
Suffolk West	256,665	244,287	1,051
Waveney	160,058	126,465	1,266
England	64,309,595	50,476,231	1,274

Prisons (Health Care)

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans her Department has for the contracting-out of prison health care. [45461]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have no central plans for the contracting out of prison health care in the public prisons. From April 2006, primary care trusts will be responsible for commissioning health care services for prisons in their area. They will do this in conjunction with their prisons according to the needs of their population.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many contracts have been awarded to private sector companies for the provision of healthcare within HM Prison Service; and if she will list the *(a)* prisons and *(b)* companies concerned. [45459]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not available centrally. It is for the primary care trusts, working in conjunction with the prisons in their area, to commission services based on the needs of their populations. Large contracts with private sector companies, for the provision of health care, are not the norm in the public sector prisons although Her Majesty's Young Offenders Institute, Feltham has recently entered into a contract with SERCO for the provision of primary health care services.

Worcestershire Royal Hospital

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will investigate the series of complaints made against the Worcestershire Royal hospital concerning poor care in the hospital; and if she will make a statement. [45557]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 26 January 2006]*: This is a matter for West Midlands South strategic health authority (SHA) which is responsible for ensuring that its primary care trusts commission services to meet the needs of the local populations and that those services are of an appropriate quality. The SHA is looking into the matter and will write to the hon. Member with its findings.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Brownfield Development (Hammersmith and Fulham)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many hectares of brownfield land have been developed in Hammersmith and Fulham in each year since 1997; and how many new homes have been built in the course of those developments; [45272]

(2) what percentage of new housing development in Hammersmith and Fulham has been on brownfield land in each year since 1997. [45274]

Yvette Cooper: The available estimates are from land use change statistics, shown in the following table.

	Previously-developed land developed for all uses (hectares)	New dwellings on previously-developed land[1] (number)	Proportion of new dwellings on previously-developed land[1] (percentage)
1997	10	429	96
1998	9	213	96
1999	4	106	93
2000	3	101	100
2001	9	61	98
2002	3	n/a	100

[1] Excludes dwellings from conversions and change of use.

Buncefield Oil Depot

Mike Penning: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make it his policy to suspend all new developments around *(a)* oil depots and *(b)* refineries until the inquiry into the Buncefield oil depot fire by the Health and Safety Executive has reported; and if he will make a statement. [47589]

Yvette Cooper: Decisions about development in the vicinity of oil depots and refineries are, in the first instance, matters for local planning authorities. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has established consultation zones around these sites. Within these zones, local planning authorities have to consult the Health and Safety Executive about proposed development so that it can advise them about the risk from the sites and their potential effects on nearby development.

The Health and Safety Executive and the Environment Agency are currently investigating the causes of the incident at Buncefield. So far the investigation has not revealed any grounds to change the basis of HSE's existing advice to planning authorities. Until the causes of the incident are established it would be premature to comment.

Mike Penning: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will take steps to stop the reduction in *(a)* full-time and *(b)* retained (i) fire stations and (ii) firefighters in Hertfordshire until the inquiry into the Buncefield oil depot fire by the Health and Safety Executive has reported; and if he will make a statement. [47590]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Fire and Rescue Authorities are required by the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework to have in place and maintain an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which reflects local need and sets out plans to tackle effectively both existing and potential risks to communities. It is, therefore, for Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority to determine appropriate fire cover and the level of service in its area. I am sure that the authority will wish to consider all issues associated with the Buncefield oil depot fire before reaching a final decision.

It is not the role of Ministers to agree the operational proposals in an authority's plan; that is for elected members of the authority concerned. They are best placed to act on the professional advice of principal officers and to balance the competing local demands on available resources for the benefits of the communities they serve.

Fire Services

Peter Viggers: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what factors relating specifically to fire control led the Government to decide that the south east regional government area is the most appropriate area to be controlled from a single fire control centre. [47995]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The report "The Future of Fire and Rescue Control Rooms in England and Wales: Update 2003" by consultants Mott MacDonald concluded that a regional approach is the optimal way of delivering fire and rescue control services. Government office for the regions boundaries have been chosen because they help maximise benefits and simplify issues such as funding, ownership and accountability. A further benefit is that the regional resilience teams, with whom the control centres will work, follow the same boundaries.

John Bercow: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures have been taken by his Department to incorporate the proposed housing expansion and development within the Buckingham constituency into the new Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority budget. [47759]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2006-07 and 2007-08 that was laid before the House by my hon. Friend the Minister for Local Government on 31 January 2006 took account of projected population growth in each authority's area. This grant combined with council tax, specific grants and reserves determine the annual budget of an authority.

However, the population projections do not take into account events that have not yet occurred, such as population change as a result of proposed housing expansion, as these are affected by future policy changes or local decisions. There is no additional specific grant available to fire and rescue authorities relating to housing expansion.

Gershon Efficiency Submissions

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will deposit in the Library a copy of the Gershon efficiency submission from each *(a)* local, *(b)* police and *(c)* fire authority in England. [47144]

Mr. Woolas: Annual Efficiency Statements from each local authority are already in the public domain on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1134484. The 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales publish information about their efficiency plans in their annual policing plans. All English fire and rescue authorities have provided Annual Efficiency Statements but the figures are provisional and currently subject to revision. These will also be published on the ODPM website in due course.

Housing

Lynne Jones: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* council tenancies, *(b)* registered social landlord tenancies and *(c)* private landlord tenancies there were in (i) England, (ii) the West Midlands and (iii) Birmingham in each of the last 20 years. [42222]

Yvette Cooper: Information is not collected centrally on the number of tenancies although estimates for social tenancies can be made using stock figures. The number of private tenancies can only be estimated from housing surveys and is not available at local authority level.

Stock figures by local authority district and region are published for the local authority sector for 1994 to 2005 and the registered social landlord sector for 1997 to 2005 on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website in tables 116 and 115 respectively. Figures are also given for England and for the Government Office Regions. The links for these tables are at:

Table 116: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/22/Table116Excel127Kb_id1156022.xls

Table 115: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/21/Table115Excel96Kb_id1156021.xls

The number of private sector tenancies can be estimated from housing surveys and the estimates for West Midlands and England are tabled as follows. Due to the size of these surveys it is not possible to obtain reliable estimates at local authority level.

	West Midlands	*England (thousand)*
1984[1]	138	1,920
1988[1]	127	1,702
1991[1]	142	1,824
1992[2]	138	1,724
1993[2]	140	1,833
1994[2]	150	1,869
1995[2]	172	1,939
1996[2,3]	167	1,995
1997[2]	164	2,053
1998[2]	159	2,063
1999[2]	153	1,998
2000[2]	157	2,017
2001[2]	167	2,035
2002[2]	164	2,112
2003[2]	173	2,212
2004[2]	185	2,226
2005[2]	176	2,385

[1] 1984 to 1991: DOE Labour Force Survey Housing Trailer
[2] 1992 to 2005: ONS Labour Force Survey
[3] 1996 figures adjusted because of change in methodology

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many hectares of *(a)* greenfield and *(b)* brownfield land have been developed in each London borough in each year since 1997; how many new homes have been built in each development; and if he will make a statement; [42635]

(2) what percentage of new housing development in each London borough has been on brownfield land in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [42949]

Yvette Cooper: The available estimates are from Land Use Change Statistics, shown in the following tables. Amounts of land changing to residential uses are shown up to 2003. Estimates of percentages of dwellings on previously-developed land are also shown for 2004 on a provisional basis. Numbers of new dwellings built on all individual developments could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Total numbers of dwellings built in each London borough are published in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Housing Statistics.

(a) Land changing to residential use from greenfield land: 1997–2003: London

Hectares

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*Total 1997–2003*
City of London	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Barking and Dagenham	1	5	2	1	0	1	1	10
Barnet	3	0	1	0	2	2	1	8
Bexley	8	5	0	0	1	8	0	22
Brent	0	0	5	6	2	3	0	16
Bromley	1	2	2	2	1	3	1	12
Camden	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Croydon	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	8
Ealing	0	1	2	0	0	3	0	6
Enfield	1	1	2	3	3	0	0	10
Greenwich	2	5	1	2	4	1	0	15
Hackney	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
Hammersmith and Fulham	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Haringey	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Harrow	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Havering	1	0	0	4	1	0	4	9
Hillingdon	0	0	1	1	4	0	1	6
Hounslow	0	2	2	0	1	3	0	8
Islington	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Kensington and Chelsea	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Kingston upon Thames	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	5
Lambeth	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	5
Lewisham	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Merton	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	3
Newham	3	1	4	1	2	2	2	14
Redbridge	1	0	1	6	1	0	0	9
Richmond upon Thames	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Southwark	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
Sutton	0	1	2	6	1	0	0	10
Tower Hamlets	4	1	1	0	0	1	0	7
Waltham Forest	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	6
Wandsworth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Westminster	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
London	39	33	28	38	25	28	13	206

Note

0 means less than 0.5 hectares

(b) Land changing to residential use from brownfield land: 1997–2003: London

Hectares

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Total 1997–2003
City of London	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
Barking and Dagenham	5	11	3	11	7	3	4	43
Barnet	8	8	11	5	18	5	16	72
Bexley	3	4	3	5	5	10	7	37
Brent	4	5	4	5	5	4	10	36
Bromley	10	6	12	12	18	21	13	93
Camden	6	3	2	2	2	2	0	17
Croydon	9	9	7	4	11	9	8	57
Ealing	2	2	4	2	3	3	5	21
Enfield	6	10	8	11	22	7	4	68
Greenwich	6	12	12	11	21	11	15	88
Hackney	11	6	4	6	5	5	10	46
Hammersmith and Fulham	7	2	1	1	2	1	0	16
Haringey	5	2	2	3	2	4	5	23
Harrow	5	14	3	2	4	4	4	35
Havering	3	4	1	5	11	4	2	31
Hillingdon	11	8	19	10	5	3	4	59
Hounslow	14	4	6	2	7	10	4	47
Islington	6	3	3	3	2	5	3	25
Kensington and Chelsea	1	3	1	1	0	1	0	7
Kingston upon Thames	9	10	9	6	6	2	2	43
Lambeth	5	7	5	11	6	6	1	42
Lewisham	10	3	4	8	5	4	6	40
Merton	6	5	3	2	2	7	1	27
Newham	11	7	5	9	2	8	7	50
Redbridge	7	5	7	8	8	10	4	50
Richmond upon Thames	15	5	5	8	3	6	3	46
Southwark	17	12	4	9	7	9	12	70
Sutton	8	7	3	8	4	12	10	52
Tower Hamlets	16	16	14	10	12	4	11	84
Waltham Forest	17	13	1	5	1	1	8	47
Wandsworth	9	15	7	6	1	2	2	41
Westminster	8	7	2	6	4	5	2	34
London	261	225	177	201	212	185	187	1,447

Note:
0 means less than 0.5 hectares

Percentage of dwellings built on previously-developed land[1]: 1997–2004 London

Percentage

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average 1997–2004
City of London	100	100	100	100	100	—	—	—	100
Barking and Dagenham	92	68	62	93	96	71	86	92	81
Barnet	70	100	95	100	92	76	94	100	90
Bexley	30	43	100	100	84	54	97	100	63
Brent	95	100	47	45	73	55	100	100	71
Bromley	94	80	84	86	93	88	94	94	89
Camden	98	100	100	100	85	100	81	100	97
Croydon	70	74	97	92	97	97	99	83	87
Ealing	91	79	68	94	100	48	100	36	73
Enfield	82	95	82	81	88	97	95	100	88
Greenwich	75	69	92	86	85	92	99	95	86
Hackney	92	100	70	100	100	96	100	100	94
Hammersmith and Fulham	96	96	87	100	96	100	80	100	95
Haringey	100	95	100	83	100	100	100	100	97
Harrow	100	99	100	100	86	92	86	100	95
Havering	77	94	85	56	96	100	40	100	81
Hillingdon	98	100	95	95	56	100	89	100	91
Hounslow	97	66	78	98	91	76	92	100	86
Islington	90	97	97	97	83	100	100	100	95
Kensington and Chelsea	100	93	100	93	100	62	100	100	90
Kingston upon Thames	97	76	100	98	90	100	80	100	90
Lambeth	54	100	100	99	95	100	69	100	89
Lewis ham	85	100	95	100	100	95	96	99	94
Merton	97	100	68	57	100	100	100	100	91
Newham	76	94	56	91	45	82	83	100	78
Redbridge	88	92	92	58	86	99	100	94	85
Richmond upon Thames	99	90	91	97	99	97	99	88	96

Percentage of dwellings built on previously-developed land[1]: 1997–2004 London

Percentage

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*Average 1997–2004*
Southwark	93	98	100	100	100	100	89	99	96
Sutton	99	83	62	59	89	100	100	100	85
Tower Hamlets	81	92	97	100	97	88	100	100	93
Waltham Forest	100	96	100	55	100	86	95	62	89
Wandsworth	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Westminster	100	92	100	100	100	100	100	100	98
London	87	87	86	84	89	87	93	94	88

[1] Excluding conversions

Industrial Development (East Midlands)

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what are the biggest three industrial development sites available in the East Midlands. [45746]

Yvette Cooper: Many sites allocated for industrial use within the region are subject to planning permission being issued and/or the provision of major infrastructural improvements before becoming readily available. With this proviso, the three largest sites in the region are all in Derbyshire, at Markham Vale (Chesterfield), Stanton Works (Erewash) and Castlewood (Pinxton/South Normanton).

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46755]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister values the diversity of its staff and promotes awareness of religious festivals and events. The equality and diversity unit provide information on the ODPM intranet about six major faiths: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism. This includes information about the major festivals which is regularly reviewed and updated. The equality and diversity unit make available to staff a number of SHAP calendars of religious festivals every year and the ODPM has organised a programme of seminars which have included seminars on faith communities.

Local Government Finance

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) whether it is his Department's policy that a business premises partly used as a domestic residence for individuals should be liable for council tax; [48058]

(2) whether it is his Department's policy that a domestic residence part used for business purposes by the occupiers should be liable for business rates. [48059]

Mr. Woolas: Primary legislation provides that a property used partly for non-domestic purposes and partly for domestic purposes shall be liable for business rates and council tax. Legislation also ensures that only the non-domestic and the domestic elements of the property are valued for business rates and council tax respectively.

London Resilience Strategic Emergency Plan

James Brokenshire: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether Rainham in the London borough of Havering has been identified as one of the *(a)* primary and *(b)* back-up (i) landfill and (ii) bulk debris examination sites referred to in the London Resilience Strategic Emergency Plan. [47037]

Jim Fitzpatrick: A contingency plan exists for the clearance, removal and disposal of debris post catastrophic incident in London. A landfill site located in Rainham has been identified as one of the primary landfill and bulk debris examination sites referred to in the London Resilience Strategic Emergency Plan.

This plan is due to be reviewed and updated to reflect new national guidance on the development of a site clearance capability in England and Wales, published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in October 2005. As part of this work landfill sites identified in the London plan will be reviewed for their continuing suitability.

MORI Poll

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost of the MORI poll was in respect of *(a)* perceptions of the effectiveness of his Department held by board members and unit heads within the Department and *(b)* perceptions of the effectiveness of his Department held by external stakeholders of the Department; and if he will make a statement. [47408]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Meriden on 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2190W.

Overcrowding (London)

Mr. Khan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his latest estimate is of the number of households in London living in overcrowded housing conditions. [42921]

Yvette Cooper: The number of households in London that do not meet the bedroom standard over the three-year period 2002–03, 2003–04 and 2004–05 was 194,000.

Information on compliance with the statutory overcrowding standard is not collected systematically and reliable estimates for London on this basis are not available. However, in the autumn of 2001, it was estimated that 25,000 households across the whole of England were living in conditions that breached these standards. This was based on data from the "Survey of English Housing" for the period 1997–98 to 1999–2000 and from the 1996 "English House Condition Survey".

RNIB Talking Books

Mr. Wills: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of local authorities meet the costs of the Royal National Institute of the Blind talking books for users scheme. [46778]

Mr. Lammy: I have been asked to reply.

The Government do not hold this information centrally; however, according to the Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB), 131 English local authorities subscribe to the RNIB talking books scheme.

Sex Offenders Register

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) whether his Department has responsibilities in relation to the vetting of registered sex offenders in relation to employment in local authorities; [47032]

(2) what advice the Government have issued to local authorities on the employment of staff on the sex offenders register whose work involves contact with the public. [47031]

Mr. Woolas: Local authorities are independent bodies responsible to their electorates who work within the framework of law as laid down by Parliament.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the property-based taxes in which the Valuation Office Agency has an involvement other than council tax, business rates, inheritance tax and capital gains tax. [47145]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

The Valuation Office Agency will provide valuations and advice to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, through its District Valuer Services business stream, where requested, for Corporation Tax, Income Tax, Stamp Duty Land Tax and VAT.

TREASURY

Breast Cancer

Steve Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what data sources are used by his Department to estimate the number of cases of breast cancer each year; and what the latest estimate is of the number of such cases. [47988]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 2 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent parliamentary question concerning what data sources are used by his department to estimate the number of cases of breast cancer each year; and what the latest estimate is of the number of such cases. I am replying in her absence. (47988)

Information on newly diagnosed cases of cancer is collected and registered by the nine regional cancer registries in England. Extracts from the registration information are then submitted to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Annual figures for the incidence of cancer in England (based on newly diagnosed cases) are published by ONS in the series 'MB1, Cancer statistics registrations', which is available on the National Statistics website:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk = 8843&Pos = &ColRank = 1&Rank = 224

The most recent available information on registration of newly diagnosed cases of breast cancer is for the year 2003. There were 36,509 newly diagnosed cases of breast cancer in females and 295 in males in England in 2003 (code C50 in the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision).

Child Trust Funds

Mr. Davey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what *(a)* research and *(b)* analysis his Department has conducted relating to the income level of eligible families who do not open child trust fund accounts; and if he will place the results in the Library. [47928]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: A statistical and distributional analysis of the child trust fund will be published in 2007 and placed in the Library.

Construction Industry Scheme

James Duddridge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of *(a)* small, *(b)* medium and *(c)* large contractors were contacted by his Department during consultations on the forthcoming reforms to the Construction Industry Scheme. [47258]

John Healey: The information in the form sought is not available. However, as part of the consultation exercise starting in November 2002, over 20 meetings were held nationwide with industry representatives. We distributed over 1,000 hard copies of the consultation document. Our website containing an electronic version of the document received more than 3,000 hits. Over 200 individuals and businesses responded.

At a national level, ongoing formal consultation has taken place through the Construction Industry Reform Implementation Panel (CIRIP), which meets monthly under a HMRC chair. CIRIP represents a wide cross-section of trade professional and software house interests.

James Duddridge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much HM Revenue and Customs has spent since the introduction of the Construction Industry Scheme in 1999 on *(a)* informing the construction industry about the correct determination of employment status and *(b)* enforcing compliance on employment status. [47259]

John Healey: No specific data is held on the cost to HM Revenue and Customs (and the former Inland Revenue) since 1999 of informing the construction industry about the correct determination of employment status.

HM Revenue and Customs police employment status as part of their general employer compliance activity.

They do not routinely collect data in respect of the policing of specific types of employer obligations. It is therefore not possible to identify the amount spent on enforcing compliance with employment status.

James Duddridge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many workers from *(a)* Great Britain and *(b)* the European economic area have registered for the Construction Industry Scheme in each year since 1999; [47262]

(2) how many and what percentage of individuals from European economic area countries who are registered under the Construction Industry Scheme are also registered for national insurance. [47263]

John Healey: In 2004–05 there were around 900,000 active subcontractors registered for the Construction Industry Scheme. No records are kept of the country of origin of subcontractors registered for the Construction Industry Scheme.

Contractors

James Duddridge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many contractors identified under the leverage exercise by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs came under investigation in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005; and how many he expects to come under investigation in 2006. [47261]

John Healey: The CIS leverage exercise was undertaken on a two-year basis for 2004–05 and 2005–06. The number of cases selected for review were 2,192 in 2004–05 and 2,280 in 2005–06. Some cases selected for review, particularly those commenced in late 2005–06, will not be concluded until 2006–07.

Council Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 19 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1681W, on council tax, following the postponement of the council tax revaluation in England, if he will place in the Library the remaining written advice. [47044]

Dawn Primarolo: There is nothing I can usefully add to my earlier answer. For reasons I gave then, it would not be appropriate to disclose the advice concerned.

Departmental Expenditure

David Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what proportion of Government spending in each year since 1997 was allocated to *(a)* Her Majesty's Court Service, *(b)* predecessor judicial institutions and *(c)* magistrates courts. [39964]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

The information can be found in the following table.

Analysis of judicial spend for David Taylor PQ January 2006

All figures shown in £ million

	Year ending March									
	1996–97 Actuals	*1997–98 Actuals*	*1998–99 Actuals*	*1999–2000 Actuals*	*2000–01 Actuals*	*2001–02 Actuals*	*2002–03 Actuals*	*2003–04 Actuals*	*2004–05 Actuals*	*2005–06 Budget*
Total Government spending, (total managed expenditure)	315,963	322,735	332,689	340,852	364,082	387,605	417,970	455,233	484,105	518,600
(a) Her Majesty's Court Service	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	993
Percentage of TME	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.19
(b) Predecessor Judicial institutions: Court Service	225	174	260	135	339	425	509	503	481	n/a
Percentage of TME	0.07	0.05	0.08	0.04	0.09	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.10	n/a
(c) Magistrates Courts	287	274	344	267	307	350	319	315	336	n/a
Percentage of TME	0.09	0.08	0.10	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.08	0.07	0.07	n/a

1. 2005–06 was the first year of operation of the HMCS inclusive of the magistrates courts. The figure shown here represents the latest delegated budget position.

2. Prior to 2005–06, DCA allocated funds to local authorities to cover only 80 per cent. of the funding of the Magistrates Courts Committees. The balance of funding came from the LA themselves and this figure is not reported above.

3. Unification changes funded in 2005–06 relating to harmonising of the magistrates courts into the central Government accounting framework. The key changes to the magistrates costs included 20 per cent. balance of funding from ODPM (£87 million), capital charges introduced with the new resource accounting methodology applied to the magistrates element (£73 million) and in addition there were also some DCA HQ departments transferred across into HMCS (£24 million).

4. Figures are shown in terms of net costs, i.e. after netting off any income from fees and fines. Capital spend is included within both comparators and depreciation is subtracted from the combined figures, with the exception of the magistrates courts which did not charge depreciation on the assets before 2005–06. Note that estimated depreciation figures have been used.

5. The 2004–05 figures represent latest estimated provisional outturn and are subject to change.

6. Figures for 1996–97,1997–98 and 1998–99 have been drawn from previous years DCA departmental reports, which did not report on a Resourcing Accounting and Budgeting Stage 2 basis. Therefore we have attempted to put these figures.

Earnings

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the *(a)* average and *(b)* median (i) hourly and (ii) weekly gross earnings (A) including and (B) excluding overtime were for (1) male, (2) female and (3) all (x) employees, *(y)* full-time employees and *(z)* part-time employees aged (aa) 16 to 17 years, (bb) 18 to 21 years, (cc) 22 to 29 years, (dd) 30 to 39 years, (ee) 40 to 49 years and (ff) over 50 years in (I) Scotland and (II) each of the unitary local authority areas in Scotland in the last period for which figures are available; [46135]

(2) what the *(a)* average and *(b)* median (i) weekly and (ii) hourly gross earnings were (A) including and (B) excluding overtime of (1) male, (2) female and (3) all employees (aa) working in the private sector, (bb) working in the public sector and (cc) not classified in (I) Scotland and (II) each of the unitary local authority areas in Scotland was in the last period for which figures are available. [46143]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply. His responses will be placed in the Library.

Economic Activity (South-West)

Mr. Wills: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he is taking to increase the rate of economic activity in *(a)* Swindon, *(b)* Wiltshire and *(c)* the south-west. [46826]

John Healey: The Government has put in place policies that will raise the trend rate of growth for all English regions and local areas, including Swindon, Wiltshire and the south-west.

GVA statistics show that between 1989, when comparable regional records began to 2004, the south-west region enjoyed the highest average annual GVA growth of all the English regions bar the south-east. It is also experiencing employment levels close to record highs, after increasing by 184,000 since 1997. The employment rate in Swindon of 80.1 per cent. and Wiltshire of 80.5 per cent., are well above the national average of 74.3 per cent.

The Neighbourhood Statistics Service provides a wide range of statistical information at parliamentary constituency level, taken from the 2001 census and other sources. This service is available on the National Statistics website at http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk./

Financial Protection Products

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to examine whether the sale of financial protection products through non-advised channels is compatible with the regulatory requirement to treat customers fairly. [46896]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Financial Services Authority (FSA) is responsible for the regulatory requirement for financial services firms to treat their customers fairly. The FSA is operationally independent of the Government. I will ask the FSA's chairman, Sir Callum McCarthy, to write to the hon. Member.

Fuel Prices

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the European Union's concession to France on fuel prices in rural areas; and if he will reduce fuel prices in the islands of Scotland by three per cent. until 2011. [47746]

John Healey: The French Government made a recent decision to allow their regional councils to introduce reduced rates of duty for road fuel consumed within their territories.

This decision required the prior approval of the Council of Ministers and the Commission to allow a derogation from the Energy Products Directive permitting this measure. We assessed the French Government's application when they made their application for derogation to the Commission last year.

The UK Government believe that taxation policy is a matter for individual member states. Within the UK, however, we believe that allowing variations from the national fuel duty rate for one region or another would represent a departure from the principle of uniform duty rates across the UK. It would also conflict with our environmental objectives and create potential for fraud.

Gold Reserves

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the sale proceeds were of gold reserves sold in the last five years; and what the current equivalent value is. [48079]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: 395 tonnes of gold were sold from the reserves between July 1999 and March 2002. The proceeds in dollars, and further details, can be found on page 27 of "Review of the sale of part of the UK gold reserves" published by the Treasury in October 2002 (http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media//9EFEF/GoldReserves.PDF).

At closing market prices on 30 January 2006, the total value of this gold would be approximately £4,082 million.

The programme was part of a prudent restructuring of the foreign currency and gold reserves aimed at achieving a better-balanced portfolio. As a result of the programme a one-off reduction in risk of approximately 30 per cent. was achieved (as measured by value-at-risk).

The proceeds from the sales were reinvested in interest bearing foreign currency assets in broadly the same proportions as the foreign currency assets held in the net reserves (40 per cent. dollars; 40 per cent. euros; and 20 per cent. yen) and these have earned returns over this period.

It is inappropriate to measure gains or losses resulting from fluctuations in market values over a short-term period.

HM Revenue and Customs Estate

Mr. Francois: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the oral answer of 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1505, on HM Revenue and Customs Estate, how many companies competed for the contract which was won by Mapeley in 2001 regarding properties included in his Department's estate. [46915]

Dawn Primarolo: The competition for the contract that was eventually awarded to Mapeley comprised three stages.

1. A Pre-Qualification Questionnaire for which 10 submissions were received
2. An Invitation to Submit an Outline Proposal that involved five consortia.
3. An Invitation to Negotiate that was issued to three consortia.

The NAO looked at the STEPS contract and published a report on 7 May 2004.

Home Information Packs

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 523W, on home information packs, (1) what assessment *(a)* HM Treasury and *(b)* HM Revenue and Customs have made of the revenue to be generated from levying VAT on home information packs; [48102]

(2) whether VAT will be levied on home information packs. [48150]

Dawn Primarolo: The exact nature of the packs, and how they will be provided, is still under consideration by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, following a consultation on draft regulations which ended on 30 December 2005.

Population Estimates

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the net change to the *(a)* number of households and *(b)* population size in each government office region in each of the next 20 years. [47878]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 2 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your question concerning the projected change in households and population over the next 20 years. I am replying in her absence. (47878)

Household projections are the responsibility of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The 2002-based interim household projections are the latest available set and these are being updated to take into account more recent information on household formation and the 2003 based subnational population projections. Table 1 shows average annual household growth for the Government Office Regions in England between 2001 and 2021.

Table 2 shows the projected net population change for the Government Office Regions in England.

The population projections are demographic trend-based projections that indicate what the population levels of an area are likely to be if recently observed trends in fertility, mortality and migration were to continue. They take no account of future development which may affect trends.

Like subnational population projections, household projections are trend based and illustrate what would happen if past trends in household formation were to continue into the future. The projections are heavily dependent on demographic assumptions used. These projections are not policy based forecasts of what the government expects or intends to happen.

Table 1: Projected net household growth for Government office regions in England 2002-based interim household projections

Thousand

	Additional households per year 2001–21
North East	3.0
North West	15.5
Yorkshire and the Humber	12.8
East Midlands	15.9
West Midlands	14.4
East	24.6
London	46.4
South East	33.9
South West	22.6
England	188.6

Source:
ODPM's 2002 Based Interim Household Projections

Table 2: Net population change for Government office regions in England 2003-based subnational population projections

Thousand

	North East	*North West*	*Yorkshire and the Humber*	*East Midlands*	*West Midlands*	*East*	*London*	*South East*	*South West*
2006	-3.0	9.7	13.9	22.7	12.2	36.7	45.1	44.4	33.0
2007	-2.3	10.9	14.3	22.8	13.0	36.8	46.1	44.9	33.3
2008	-2.2	11.0	14.3	22.5	13.0	36.7	46.6	44.5	32.9
2009	-2.1	11.3	14.5	22.5	13.3	36.8	47.4	44.5	32.8
2010	-1.8	11.9	14.9	22.5	13.8	37.0	48.3	44.9	32.9
2011	-1.6	12.5	15.1	22.5	14.3	37.4	49.0	45.4	33.0
2012	-1.6	13.0	15.3	22.6	14.7	37.8	49.6	46.0	33.1
2013	-1.5	13.6	15.4	22.7	15.1	38.0	50.1	46.3	33.2
2014	-1.4	14.0	15.6	22.8	15.5	38.2	50.2	46.8	33.5
2015	-1.2	14.4	15.9	23.0	15.8	38.4	50.1	47.3	33.8
2016	-1.2	14.8	16.2	23.2	16.1	38.5	49.6	47.7	34.0
2017	-1.1	15.1	16.3	23.3	16.2	38.5	49.1	48.0	34.2
2018	-1.2	15.0	16.3	23.2	16.2	38.5	48.5	48.3	34.3
2019	-1.3	14.9	16.1	23.0	16.1	38.4	47.6	48.5	34.4
2020	-1.5	14.5	15.8	22.8	16.0	38.3	46.6	48.5	34.4
2021	-1.6	14.0	15.6	22.5	15.6	37.7	45.2	48.2	34.1
2022	-1.7	13.6	15.5	22.3	15.3	37.0	43.7	47.7	33.9
2023	-1.7	12.8	15.3	21.9	14.8	36.1	42.3	46.8	33.4
2024	-1.9	12.1	14.9	21.2	14.1	35.3	40.8	45.9	32.8
2025	-2.2	11.2	14.1	20.5	13.5	34.5	39.5	44.8	32.1

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Regulatory Reform Orders

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many regulatory reform orders his Department has laid before Parliament in each of the last five calendar years. [46812]

John Healey: HM Treasury has laid one regulatory reform order before Parliament since their introduction in 2001. This was the Credits Union Order in 2003. Further information on this can be viewed at: http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/regulatory_reform/orders_made/2003/credun.asp

Tax Credits

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the letter from the hon. Member for St. Albans of 14 October and the answer of 13 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 428, on tax credits, what steps he is taking to expedite the repayment of the overpayment relating to the constituents of the hon. Member, Mr. and Mrs. Keys; if he will send to the hon. Member his Department's calculations used in the assessment of the case; and if he will investigate the case further. [42623]

Dawn Primarolo: I have further examined this case, and have written to the hon. Member to explain the calculations used.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what measures are in place to ensure that the risk of companies fraudulently claiming research and development tax credits is minimised; and if he will make a statement. [47332]

John Healey: HM Revenue and Customs manages non-compliance through a process of risk assessment and deploys resources according to the risks identified.

'Supporting growth in innovation: next steps for the R&D tax credit', published in December 2005, announced that HMRC will set up specialist R and D units. These units will develop specialised expertise to ensure more consistent handling of claims, together with an effective focus on non-compliance.

Tax Investigations

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 17 January 2006, what estimate he has made of the cost of providing the information sought; what information he would need to collect to be able to answer the question at a proportionate cost; how many officials within *(a)* his Department and *(b)* HM Revenue and Customs spent some or all of their working day on tax investigations in 2004–05; and what estimate he has made of public expenditure on tax investigations for that year. [45676]

Dawn Primarolo: In 2004–05 resourcing data within the Inland Revenue (now HMRC) was kept by reference to the operational directorates dealing with a mix of processing, customer support, compliance and corporate support work. To calculate the figures requested for investigation work it would be necessary to:

identify all the "investigation" functions within each of the operational directorates,

ascertain or estimate the time spent by staff on those investigation functions, and

estimate the costs and full-time equivalent figures.

Reconstructing the figures required for the historical period in the original question would have taken a considerable amount of research and analysis of disparate and, in the earlier years, paper based records.

Our best estimate of staff employed on all Inland Revenue investigation work in 2004–05 is 14,800 at a cost of £424 million, this will include tax investigations.

Tourism (Wales)

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many new jobs have been created in the tourism sector in Wales since 1997. [47650]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 2 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about tourism-related jobs in Wales. I am replying in her absence. (47650)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, in numbers of jobs, from year to year.

The attached table shows the number of employee jobs in tourism-related industries in Wales for each year from 1997 to 2004, the latest year for which information is available. This total is obtained by combining figures for employee jobs in the following industries, as identified by Standard Industrial Classification 2003:

Hotels and other tourist accommodation

Restaurants, bars and canteens

Transport

Travel agencies/tour operators

Recreation services.

These estimates are from the Annual Business Inquiry and, as with any sample survey, are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Change in employee jobs in tourism-related industries: Wales, 1997 to 2004

	Employee jobs	*Change year-on-year*[1]
1997	109,000	—
1998	109,000	-1,000
1999	121,000	12,000
2000	114,000	-7,000
2001	122,000	8,000
2002	119,000	-4,000
2003	124,000	6,000
2004	133,000	8,000

[1] Annual change is calculated using unrounded data.

Source:
ABI (1998–2004) and rescaled AES (1997).

UK Financial Regulation

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much central funding was spent on UK financial regulation in each year since 1995. [46220]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The following table shows Government expenditure on the Registry of Friendly Societies and on insurance supervision from 1995 to 31 November 2001. Other forms of UK financial regulation were not funded by the Government over this

period. After 31 November 2001 the Financial Services Authority (FSA) assumed full responsibility for UK financial regulation. The FSA is funded via an industry levy and not by the Government.

Central funding spent on UK financial regulation

£ million

	Registry of Friendly Societies (RFS) (including the Building Societies Commission (BSC) and Friendly Societies Commission (FSC))	*Insurance supervision*
1995–96	[1]3	[2]6
1996–97	[1]2	[2]5
1997–98	[1]3	[2]6
1998–99	[1]1	[4]6
1999–2000	[2]2	[4]13
2000–01	[3]3	[4]15
2001–02	[3]3	[4]15

[1] Government expenditure plans 2000–01 to 2001–02 CM 4615
[2] Government expenditure plans 1997–99 lo 1999–2000 Cm 3605
[3] DTI expenditure plans 1998–99 CM 3905
[4] Expenditure plans 2000–01 to 2003–04 CM 5116
[5] Expenditure plans 2001–02 t o 2003–04 CM5116

Unpaid Pay-as-you-earn Tax

James Duddridge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much has been collected by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs in unpaid pay-as-you-earn tax since the leverage exercise began in 2004. [47260]

John Healey: It is not possible to say how much pay-as-you-earn tax has been collected by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs since the leverage exercise began. Of the cases selected for review under the exercise, many remain under inquiry and are not expected to be concluded until later this year and in some cases beyond.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a copy of the staff manual for the Valuation Office Agency. [46963]

Dawn Primarolo: The Valuation Office Agency's staff handbook "The Guide" has been placed in the Library of the House.

VAT

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2808W, on VAT, what the total cost to his Department of the VAT reduction on the specified schemes was in each of the last five years. [48230]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Revenue and Customs do not collect data on the revenue cost of this VAT reduction.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much VAT fraud has been reported in each region of the UK in descending order in the last year for which figures are available. [48013]

Dawn Primarolo: A regional breakdown of VAT fraud is not available.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued by courts in *(a)* Merseyside and *(b)* Wirral in each quarter since the penalty was introduced; and what percentage of these were issued where the claimant was aged *(a)* 10 to 14, *(b)* 15 to 19, *(c)* 20 to 24, *(d)* 25 to 29 and *(e)* 30 years and over. [45860]

Hazel Blears: The available information is given in the following tables.

Table A: The number of antisocial behaviour orders issued at all courts, as notified to the Home Office, where prohibitions are imposed within the criminal justice system area of Merseyside[1], by age and period, from 1 July 2000[2,3] up to 30 June 2005 (latest available)

		Age					
	Total all ages and unknown	*Not known*		*10 to 14*		*15 to 19*	
Period	*Number*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
2000							
July-September	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
October-December	3	—	—	—	—	2	66
Sub-total	3	—	—	—	—	2	66
2001							
January-March	2	—	—	—	—	1	50
April-June	4	—	—	1	25	1	25
July-September	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
October-December	1	—	—	—	—	1	100
Sub-total	7	—	—	1	14	3	43
2002							
January-March	3	—	—	2	66	1	33
April-June	6	—	—	—	—	5	83
July-September	4	—	—	—	—	3	75
October-December	9	—	—	4	44	5	56
Sub-total	22	—	—	6	27	14	64

Table A: The number of antisocial behaviour orders issued at all courts, as notified to the Home Office, where prohibitions are imposed within the criminal justice system area of Merseyside[1], by age and period, from 1 July 2000[2,3] up to 30 June 2005 (latest available)

		Age					
	Total all ages and unknown	Not known		10 to 14		15 to 19	
Period	Number	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2003							
January-March	6	—	—	—	—	4	66
April-June	6	—	—	2	33	4	66
July-September	15	—	—	1	7	8	53
October-December	12	—	—	3	25	6	50
Sub-total	39	—	—	6	15	22	56
2004							
January-March	19	—	—	30	16	10	53
April-June	11	—	—	5	45	4	36
July-September	9	1	11	1	11	6	66
October-December	14	—	—	—	—	10	71
Sub-total	53	1	2	9	17	30	57
2005							
January-March	22	—	—	5	23	9	41
April-June	15	—	—	3	20	3	20
Sub-total	37	—	—	8	22	12	32
Total	161	1	1	30	19	83	52

	20 to 24		25 to 29		30 years and over	
Period	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2000						
July-September	—	—	—	—	—	—
October-December	1	33	—	—	—	—
Sub-total	1	33	—	—	—	—
2001						
January-March	—	—	1	50	—	—
April-June	—	—	—	—	2	50
July-September	—	—	—	—	—	—
October-December	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total	—	—	1	14	2	29
2002						
January-March	—	—	—	—	—	—
April-June	—	—	—	—	1	17
July-September	—	—	—	—	1	25
October-December	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total	—	—	—	—	2	9
2003						
January-March	1	17	—	—	1	17
April-June	—	—	—	—	—	—
July-September	3	20	—	—	3	20
October-December	—	—	1	8	2	17
Sub-total	4	10	1	3	6	15
2004						
January-March	—	—	2	11	4	21
April-June	—	—	—	—	2	18
July-September	—	—	—	—	1	11
October-December	—	—	1	7	3	21
Sub-total	—	—	3	6	10	19
2005						
January-March	1	5	1	5	6	27
April-June	1	7	4	27	4	27
Sub-total	2	5	5	14	10	27
Total	7	4	10	6	30	19

[1] Includes figures for Wirral, as given in table B.

[2] From 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000 data were collected on aggregate numbers only by police force area. During this period eight orders were reported as issued within the criminal justice system area of Merseyside.

[3] For the month of June 2000 no orders were reported as issued within the criminal justice system area of Merseyside.

Table B The number of antisocial behaviour orders issued at all courts, as notified to the Home Office, where prohibitions are imposed within the local government authority area of the Metropolitan borough of Wirral by age and period, from 1 July 2000[1,2] up to 30 June 2005 (latest available)

Period	Total all ages and unknown	Age					
		Not known		10 to 14		15 to 19	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2000							
July-September	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
October-December	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2001							
January-March	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
April-June	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
July-September	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
October-December	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
2002							
January-March	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
April-June	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
July-September	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
October-December	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2003							
January-March	3	—	—	—	—	2	66
April-June	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
July-September	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
October-December	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total	4	—	—	—	—	2	50
2004							
January-March	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
April-June	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
July-September	3	1	33	—	—	2	66
October-December	1	—	—	—	—	1	100
Sub-total	5	1	20	—	—	3	60
2005							
January-March	5	—	—	—	—	2	40
April-June	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total	8	—	—	—	—	2	25
Total	20	1	5	—	—	7	35

Period	20 to 24		25 to 29		30 years and over	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2000						
July-September	—	—	—	—	—	—
October-December	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total	—	—	—	—	—	—
2001						
January-March	—	—	1	100	—	—
April-June	—	—	—	—	2	100
July-September	—	—	—	—	—	—
October-December	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total	—	—	1	33	2	66
2002						
January-March	—	—	—	—	—	—
April-June	—	—	—	—	—	—
July-September	—	—	—	—	—	—
October-December	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total	—	—	—	—	—	—
2003						
January-March	—	—	—	—	1	33
April-June	—	—	—	—	—	—
July-September	—	—	—	—	1	100
October-December	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total	—	—	—	—	2	50
2004						
January-March	—	—	1	100	—	—
April-June	—	—	—	—	—	—
July-September	—	—	—	—	—	—
October-December	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sub-total	—	—	1	20	—	—

Period	20 to 24		25 to 29		30 years and over	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2005						
January-March	1	20	—	—	2	40
April-June	—	—	3	100	—	—
Sub-total	1	12	3	38	2	25
Total	1	5	5	25	6	30

[1] From 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000 data were collected on aggregate numbers only by police force area. During this period eight orders were reported issued within the criminal justice system area of Merseyside.
[2] For the month of June 2000 no orders were reported as issued wherein prohibitions are imposed within the local government authority area of the Metropolitan borough of Wirral.

Arnhem Support Centre

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time was for the Arnhem Support Centre to clear entry visa applications under the new system from the receipt of the documentation from the embassy of origin in the last period for which figures are available; and what the average time was in the last period of the old system. [46147]

Bridget Prentice: I have been asked to reply.

Information from the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) indicates that an immigration appeal, comprising both in-country and entry clearance cases, lodged between April 2004 and the end of March 2005 took an average of 54 weeks to be decided by an immigration adjudicator following the appeal being lodged with the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) of the Home Office, either directly by the appellant or having being forwarded to IND from the entry clearance post.

Provisional information for entry clearance appeals lodged after 4 April 2005, up to September 2005 only currently covers a low volume of appeals. It is therefore difficult to provide an accurately indicative figure for the average waiting times from appeal lodgement to a decision by an immigration judge for appeals lodged in this period. Accounting for the times allowed for the respondent to prepare the appeal bundle in entry clearance cases, it is expected that appeals are decided by an immigration judge approximately 27 or 35 weeks from the date of lodgement, dependent on the type of case. This includes time allowed for international transit of documents to and from the tribunal.

The entry clearance appeals decided prior to the commencement of the AIT were lodged with the original decision maker in accordance with the procedure rules of the Immigration Appellate Authority (IAA), the appellate body subsequently replaced by the AIT. Once lodged the appeals were transferred to the IND for preparation before being forwarded to the IAA to be decided by an immigration adjudicator.

With the commencement of the AIT entry clearance appeals can be lodged either directly to the AIT or with the relevant entry clearance post. Where an appeal is lodged with the relevant entry clearance post it must be endorsed and forwarded to the AIT as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any event within 10 days.

ASBOs

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many young people have been taken to court for breach of antisocial behaviour orders in the last year for which figures are available. [45957]

Hazel Blears: The information held centrally, on the Home Office court proceedings database, only covers breach proceedings where there has been a conviction. antisocial behaviour order (ASBO) breach data are currently available from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 for ASBOs issued since 1 June 2000. During 2003, 305 persons aged 10–17 breached their ASBO on one or more occasions.

Community Safety Partnerships

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are used to assess the effectiveness of community safety partnerships; which have underperformed against these measures; and what assistance has been given to each underperforming partnership. [46079]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office has performance management arrangements in place to measure the effectiveness of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in Wales and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) in England. Under these arrangements, challenging targets for crime reduction have been agreed with each CSP and CDRP and the Home Office and Government Offices/Welsh Assembly Government regularly monitor progress against them. The Home Office and Government Offices/Welsh Assembly Government also work with partnerships to support them in monitoring or improving performance. The targets are to be delivered by 2007–08.

Community Wardens

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what provision he has made to fund community wardens in neighbourhood renewal funding areas when the current funding period expires. [47365]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I have been asked to reply.

There are no plans to fund community wardens in neighbourhood renewal funding areas when the current funding period expires.

Companies (Ownership)

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what indications he has received from *(a)* companies whose headquarters are in the

United Kingdom, *(b)* companies under the management or control of companies based in the European Union, *(c)* companies under the management or control of companies from the United States, *(d)* faith based organisations and *(e)* not-for-profit organisations regarding interest in bidding for contracts for the end-to-end management of offenders. [46515]

Fiona Mactaggart: The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) engages with public, private and voluntary sector providers through a variety of channels. As a result some expressions of interest in providing future NOMS services have been received from all sectors. However these indications have been informal and non-specific in nature and therefore at this time, clarity as to the commercial and legal status of these organisations has not been obtained. In due course a more formal process will be undertaken, at which time it will be possible to be more specific, but in accordance with European Union procurement rules.

Designated Areas

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he had with the police in designating the area specified in the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (Designated Area) Order 2005 (S.I. 2005 No. 1866). [46129]

Paul Goggins: The Home Secretary met representatives of the Metropolitan Police to discuss the area to be designated . The area is based on the operational experience of the Metropolitan Police as to where demonstrations are likely to take place which hinder the proper operation of Parliament, cause a security risk, or are a risk to the safety of members of the public .

Elder Abuse

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of cases of elder abuse that occurred in the last 12 months. [46551]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office does, via the British Crime Survey (BCS), measure levels of violence against adults (ages 16 and over) in private households. The risks of being a victim of violence are published annually by age group for men and women. The most recent figures, based on the 2004-05 BCS, showed that the overall risk of being a victim of violence was less than one per cent for both men and women aged 65 or over.

The risk of becoming a victim of violent crime was 0.4 per cent. for men aged 65–74, 0.2 per cent. for men aged 75 or over, 0.5 per cent. for women aged 65–74, and 0.5 per cent. for women aged 75 or over. In terms of domestic violence, the 2004-05 BCS indicates that the risk among men and women in these ages groups is low (0 per cent. and 0.1 per cent. among men and women aged 65–74, respectively, and 0 per cent. for both men and women aged 75 and over).

However, it is recognised that the core BCS measure of domestic violence may be an underestimate as some victims may be unwilling to report experience of domestic violence to an interviewer, and it does not cover adults living in institutions.

Harmondsworth Detention Centre

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many detainees have *(a)* committed and *(b)* attempted suicide in Harmondsworth Detention Centre over the last six months; and how many of these detainees had been placed under suicide watch procedures. [47067]

Mr. McNulty: There has been one apparently self-inflicted death at Harmondsworth in the last six months.

Twenty-six detainees have self-harmed at Harmondsworth since the beginning of July 2005. Of these, five detainees were already on watch procedures prior to self-harming. Following each incident, the detainee concerned was placed on a watch.

Home Detention Curfew Scheme

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners on the home detention curfew scheme (HDCS) have sentences of four years and over; and what the exceptional circumstances were allowing entry into the HDCS in each case. [45866]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prisoners serving sentences of four years or more whose offences were committed prior to 4 April 2005 are statutorily ineligible for release under the home detention curfew (HDC) scheme. Those whose offences were committed on or after 4 April 2005 are not statutorily ineligible for release but are presumed unsuitable unless there are exceptional circumstances. No prisoners serving four years or more have been released on HDC.

Police Response Times

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average response time to an emergency call to the police was in Uxbridge in each year since 1998. [46605]

Hazel Blears: Data on time taken to respond to emergency calls is not collected centrally. This is essentially an operational matter for the commissioner and this query could therefore be directed to the Metropolitan police.

Polygamy

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many men who were not UK citizens were permitted to enter the UK with more than one wife in each of the last five years. [47160]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply. Entry to the United Kingdom that results in the formation of a polygamous household is not permitted under the immigration rules. Therefore, no men have been given entry clearance to settle in the UK, or for other long-term purposes (.g students, work permit holders), with more than one wife.

However, the immigration rules do not prevent polygamous households from entering the UK for the purpose of a visit. If an entry clearance officer overseas is satisfied that each applicant meets the requirements of

paragraphs 40 and 41 of the immigration rules relating to visitors, they may grant a man and more than one of his wives entry clearance as visitors at the same time. UKvisas does not have a separate record of how many such visit visas are issued.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners who had committed two violent offences previously were released on parole in the last five years; and how many of those released reoffended *(a)* within two years and *(b)* within five years. [46420]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is not centrally collated. National two-year re-offending rates are published on the Home Office's website. The data relates to offenders who were discharged from prison or began a community sentence in the first quarter of 2002. www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb2505.pdf. Five-year re-offending rates are not available.

Prisoner release rates are available from the Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004 publication. www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb1705.pdf.

Prisoners

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* female and *(b)* male prisoners who declare themselves as Muslim were held in each prison establishment in England and Wales for each of the last five years for which figures are available. [45849]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested, as recorded on the Prison Service IT system, is provided in the following table.

Number of declared Muslims held in each prison establishment

	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Acklington	21	0	20	0	24	0	22	0	22	0
Albany	14	0	18	0	18	0	20	0	25	0
Altcourse	19	0	30	0	28	0	32	0	29	0
Ashfield	19	0	6	0	5	0	7	0	9	0
Ashwell	26	0	37	0	43	0	38	0	59	0
Askham Grange	0	6	0	4	0	11	0	5	0	4
Aylesbury	33	0	45	0	64	0	54	0	75	0
Bedford	39	0	48	0	32	0	45	0	54	0
Belmarsh	107	0	122	0	141	0	143	0	148	0
Birmingham	104	0	97	0	135	0	188	0	160	0
Blakenhurst	52	0	57	0	74	0	60	0	104	0
Blantyre House	9	0	7	0	7	0	8	0	12	0
Blundestone	49	0	44	0	41	0	57	0	75	0
Brinsford	41	0	40	0	43	0	60	0	56	0
Bristol	30	0	36	0	34	0	27	0	29	0
Brixton	139	0	126	0	157	0	156	0	158	0
Brockhill	0	9	0	11	0	4	0	10	0	4
Bronzefield[1]	—	—	—	—	—	—	0	1	0	9
Buckley Hall	36	0	0	2	0	10	0	8	0	5
Bullingdon	66	0	104	0	121	0	122	0	134	0
Bullwood Hall	0	6	0	4	0	6	0	8	0	3
Camp Hill	51	0	51	0	68	0	71	0	61	0
Canterbury	16	0	21	0	17	0	15	0	21	0
Cardiff	41	0	37	0	37	0	39	0	48	0
Castington	6	0	5	0	5	0	7	0	4	0
Channings Wood	9	0	13	0	25	0	25	0	27	0
Chelmsford	33	0	37	0	44	0	46	0	50	0
Coldingley	43	0	38	0	39	0	42	0	42	0
Cookham Wood	0	4	0	6	0	5	0	8	0	9
Dartmoor	24	0	29	0	24	0	19	0	23	0
Deerbolt	6	0	14	0	10	0	22	0	15	0
Doncaster	60	0	74	0	68	0	92	0	85	0
Dorchester	3	0	4	0	5	0	5	0	12	0
Dovegate[2]	—	—	70	0	109	0	118	0	110	0
Dover	23	0	63	0	168	0	105	0	138	0
Downview	44	0	0	8	0	9	0	5	0	15
Drake Hall	0	10	0	7	0	11	0	6	0	8
Durham	10	1	12	1	26	1	23	2	17	0
East Sutton Park	0	7	0	4	0	7	0	6	0	7
Eastwood Park	0	8	0	4	0	3	0	3	0	7
Edmunds Hill[3]	—	—	—	—	—	—	0	12	26	0
Elmley	73	0	65	0	71	0	58	0	82	0
Erlestoke	21	0	14	0	26	0	19	0	31	0
Everthorpe	22	0	30	0	50	0	51	0	44	0
Exeter	4	0	7	0	5	0	14	0	15	0
Featherstone	46	0	58	0	69	0	64	0	84	0
Feltham	119	0	114	0	96	0	140	0	138	0
Ford	27	0	47	0	49	0	46	0	53	0
Forest Bank	27	0	60	0	74	0	85	0	65	0
Foston Hall	0	5	0	3	0	5	0	8	0	7

Number of declared Muslims held in each prison establishment

	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Frankland	57	0	52	0	62	0	56	0	63	0
Full Sutton	67	0	61	0	67	0	81	0	84	0
Garth	45	0	50	0	72	0	70	0	86	0
Gartree	17	0	19	0	17	0	31	0	47	0
Glen Parva	30	0	43	0	42	0	40	0	57	0
Gloucester	10	0	12	0	15	0	10	0	15	0
Grendon/Spring Hill	35	0	37	0	59	0	64	0	64	0
Guys Marsh	18	0	24	0	34	0	33	0	31	0
Haslar	60	0	47	0	85	0	45	0	50	0
Hatfield[4]	17	0	13	0	—	—	—	—	—	—
Haverigg	9	0	23	0	23	0	33	0	43	0
Hewell Grange	20	0	13	0	17	0	18	0	34	0
Highdown	65	0	60	0	53	0	62	0	93	0
Highpoint[5]	66	6	49	12	—	—	98	0	106	0
Highpoint North	—	—	—	—	0	8	—	—	—	—
Highpoint South	—	—	—	—	73	0	—	—	—	—
Hindley	48	0	29	0	40	0	48	0	29	0
Hollesley Bay Warren Hill	25	0	26	0	23	0	18	0	32	0
Holloway	0	18	0	24	0	20	0	16	0	29
Holme House	41	0	27	0	21	0	19	0	49	0
Hull	6	0	17	0	40	0	29	0	48	0
Huntercombe	27	0	41	0	18	0	43	0	42	0
Kingston (Portsmouth)	8	0	18	0	15	0	8	0	11	0
Kirkham	35	0	37	0	43	0	45	0	54	0
Kirklevington	17	0	9	0	17	0	16	0	20	0
Lancaster	7	0	12	0	8	0	11	0	7	0
Lancaster Farms	14	0	22	0	21	0	28	0	26	0
Latchmere House	22	0	26	0	27	0	33	0	29	0
Leeds	122	0	154	0	132	0	134	0	132	0
Leicester	19	0	36	0	33	0	31	0	28	0
Lewes	26	0	17	0	18	0	17	0	17	0
Leyhill	17	0	15	0	24	0	50	0	31	0
Lincoln	6	0	12	0	7	0	15	0	19	0
Lindholme	90	0	104	0	91	0	77	0	118	0
Littlehey	45	0	46	0	41	0	50	0	55	0
Liverpool	64	0	78	0	68	0	59	0	68	0
Long Lartin	50	0	68	0	60	0	58	0	66	0
Low Newton	0	3	—	—	0	5	0	3	0	8
Lowdham Grange	58	0	66	0	68	0	67	0	62	0
Maidstone	17	0	38	0	38	0	39	0	60	0
Manchester	88	0	107	0	111	0	118	0	130	0
Moorland	58	0	86	0	103	0	78	0	87	0
Moorland Open[4]	—	—	—	—	27	0	39	0	22	0
Morton Hall	0	5	0	4	0	8	0	9	0	11
New Hall	0	6	0	5	0	1	0	4	0	6
North Sea Camp	5	0	15	0	21	0	22	0	20	0
Northallerton	15	0	13	0	9	0	9	0	12	0
Norwich	27	0	32	0	47	0	61	0	56	0
Nottingham	19	0	24	0	31	0	53	0	38	0
Onley	37	0	31	0	52	0	47	0	52	0
Pare	24	0	9	0	22	0	29	0	34	0
Parkhurst	50	0	69	0	64	0	61	0	46	0
Pentonville	184	0	191	0	194	0	219	0	218	0
Peterborough[6]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	26	6
Portland	40	0	44	0	51	0	78	0	76	0
Preston	38	0	39	0	30	0	47	0	52	0
Ranby	59	0	50	0	40	0	63	0	71	0
Reading	17	0	17	0	16	0	16	0	19	0
Risley	50	0	62	0	83	0	88	0	65	0
Rochester	113	0	13	0	20	0	33	0	62	0
Rye Hill	77	0	91	0	84	0	104	0	124	0
Send	0	10	0	12	0	9	0	16	0	15
Shepton Mallet	5	0	7	0	10	0	10	0	8	0
Shrewsbury	14	0	14	0	15	0	13	0	24	0
Stafford	46	0	46	0	51	0	45	0	47	0
Standford Hill	32	0	43	0	57	0	53	0	48	0
Stocken	46	0	48	0	57	0	56	0	45	0
Stoke Heath	9	0	21	0	28	0	34	0	39	0
Styal	0	4	0	10	0	3	0	10	0	11
Sudbury	60	0	65	0	67	0	76	0	57	0
Swaleside	85	0	98	0	104	0	126	0	132	0

Number of declared Muslims held in each prison establishment

	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	M	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*
Swansea	2	0	4	0	6	0	3	0	6	0
Swinfen Hall	24	0	22	0	31	0	47	0	72	0
The Mount	116	0	126	0	127	0	111	0	125	0
The Verne	23	0	27	0	21	0	46	0	60	0
The Weare	27	0	26	0	15	0	37	0	—	—
The Wolds	17	0	14	0	18	0	29	0	22	0
Thorn Cross	1	1	0	22	0	16	0	29	0	30
Usk/Prescoed	2	0	8	0	14	0	14	0	15	0
Wakefield	24	0	29	0	29	0	25	0	31	0
Wandsworth	181	0	190	0	180	0	185	0	210	0
Warren Hill[7]	—	—	—	—	19	0	16	0	23	0
Wayland	47	0	59	0	79	0	74	0	69	0
Wealstun	83	0	62	0	59	0	38	0	91	0
Wellingborough	29	0	45	0	53	0	45	0	49	0
Warrington[8]	—	—	—	—	5	0	6	0	10	0
Wetherby	14	0	33	0	18	0	10	0	26	0
Whatton	10	0	8	0	18	0	17	0	18	0
Whitemoor	76	0	85	0	73	0	73	0	74	0
Winchester	36	2	19	1	22	2	26	0	17	0
Woodhill	55	0	64	0	88	0	93	0	98	0
Wormwood Scrubs	130	0	148	0	154	0	201	0	237	0
Wymott	34	0	58	0	48	0	47	0	66	0
Total	4,916	110	5,380	122	6,008	129	6,431	139	7,082	164

[1] Bronzefield opened June 2004
[2] Dovegate opened July 2001
[3] Highpoint North became Edmunds Hill in October 2003
[4] Hatfield was renamed Moorland Open in 2002
[5] Highpoint was divided into Highpoint North (female) and Highpoint South (male)
[6] Peterborough opened in March 2005
[7] Warren Hill opened as a separate prison in August 2002, was formerly part of Hollesley Bay
[8] Warrington has only young persons

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners are to be deported upon their release; and if he will make a statement. [45872]

Fiona Mactaggart: The immigration and nationality directorate (IND) considers the cases of foreign nationals sentenced to a term of imprisonment to determine their liability to removal and whether removal is appropriate.

As each prisoner's case is assessed on its own merits, it is not possible to predict how many will be deported at the end of their custodial sentences.

Probation Service

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent changes he has made to the arrangements for probation officers interviewing offenders; and if he will make a statement. [46181]

Fiona Mactaggart: The National Probation Directorate at the Home Office updates its guidance to the Probation Service from time-to-time but there has not recently been a significant change in relation to interviewing offenders.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likely impact of the proposed changes to police boundaries on the national probation service. [46507]

Fiona Mactaggart: We will consider how best the probation service, as well as the wider criminal justice system, can take into account changes to police structures once final decisions on future police boundaries have been taken. Co-terminosity in the criminal justice system remains an important principle.

Shoot to Kill Policy

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the status is of the Metropolitan Police Service's policy on shooting to kill suspected suicide bombers. [45969]

Hazel Blears: All police use of firearms is subject to the usual law on the use of force. In particular, the Criminal Law Act 1967 provides that the police may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to effect an arrest or to prevent crime. The law applies to the operational tactics developed by police to deal with suspected suicide bombers as it does in any other case.

Speed Cameras

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was collected through fines from speed cameras in each local authority in the last year for which figures are available. [46263]

Paul Goggins: Information on the total revenue from speed camera convictions is not collected centrally. The information collected by RDS-OCJR identifies the number of fixed penalties ordered to be paid and the number and amounts of court fines issued for such

offences within each police force area. Not all fines and fixed penalties will have been paid.

According to the Department for Constitutional Affairs, the 2005-06 national fines payment rate target is 81 per cent. and performance is currently on trajectory to achieve this.

Suicide

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many detainees have committed suicide in *(a)* Harmondsworth and *(b)* Yarl's Wood in the last five years; and if he will list the nationalities of each. [48149]

Mr. McNulty: There have been two apparently self-inflicted deaths at Harmondsworth in the last five years. The nationalities of the two people concerned were Ukrainian and Eritrean respectively.

There has been one apparently self-inflicted death at Yarl's Wood in the last five years. The nationality of the person concerned was Angolan.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 6 February 2006

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proportion of the funds pledged during the London Conference on Afghanistan will be channelled into the Counter Narcotics Trust Fund. [49267]

Dr. Howells: In total, US$77.5 million has been pledged by the international community to the Government of Afghanistan's Counter Narcotics Trust Fund. This includes US$60.1 million worth of assistance pledged during the London Conference on Afghanistan (31 January to 1 February) by the UK, US, Sweden and Korea.

The UK commitment of £30 million includes an initial £10 million from the Afghan Drugs Inter-Departmental Unit and £20 million from the Department for International Development.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the proportion of Afghan warlords opposed to the Taliban who are involved with the production and trading of narcotics. [48768]

Dr. Howells: No such estimate has been made. Given the complexity of the situation in Afghanistan, it would not be possible to collect the data necessary to make this assessment.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the proportion of Afghan warlords who have *(a)* supported and *(b)* opposed the Taliban. [48769]

Dr. Howells: The term "warlords" is most often used to describe militia commanders, or others exercising influence in the provinces, not appointed by the central Government. The vast majority of warlords opposed the Taliban regime, and many played an active role in the regime's overthrow in 2001, including in some cases by contributing forces to the Northern Alliance.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the role of warlords in the political order in Afghanistan. [48770]

Dr. Howells: The Government assesses that the negative influence of "warlords" in Afghanistan's political process is gradually diminishing. Those who chose to embrace the new democratic process were required to cut all links with militia groups before putting themselves forward as candidates at the September 2005 parliamentary and provincial elections. Those who still remain outside the democratic process are finding their influence reduced by nation-wide disarmament programmes and the growing control exercised by centrally-appointed Provincial Governors and Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police forces. But this is a long process—democratic institutions, although now established, are fragile and the political process of resolving violent conflict will take time to have effect, though the Government of Afghanistan is determined to see it through.

Ascension Island

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the human rights position of Ascension islanders in respect of *(a)* rights of abode, *(b)* ownership of property and *(c)* appeal rights in cases of deportation; and whether rights differ between native-born and immigrant islanders. [47242]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There is no indigenous population, or "islanders", on Ascension Island. People working and living there do so for the duration of their contracts. None of those individuals currently working and living on Ascension, whether born on the island or not, has the right of abode or the right to own property. The human rights of those currently on Ascension Island are protected by those human rights instruments which have been extended to the island, including the European Convention on Human Rights. Procedures relating to deportation for breach of the immigration rules are governed by the Entry Control Ordinance. There is a right to make representations to the Governor against any deportation order.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will place in the Library the timetable he provided to the Ascension Island Council for the introduction of legislation regarding property, immigration and property rights. [47243]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government have provided no such timetable to the Ascension Island Council.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is on access for civilian aircraft to Wideawake Airfield in Ascension Island; and if he will make a statement. [47244]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The agreement between the UK and US Governments relating to Wideawake Airfield, which came into force on 1 October 2003, provides for up to four non-scheduled civil aircraft movements (take-off or landing) per week. This facility has not been used on a regular basis. This is a matter for commercial decision by potential operators.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions have taken place in the last 12 months with the US Administration on changes in the Administration of the Ascension Islands. [47245]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There has been no change to the basis on which people work and live on Ascension Island. The administration of Ascension Island is a matter for the UK Government and the Ascension

Island Administration. The UK has regular contacts with representatives of all organisations based on the island including the appropriate US authorities.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the reasons were for the rejection of a desk study into the Ascension Island Fisheries Protection Project; and what estimate was made of the cost of such a study. [47246]

Ian Pearson: A desk study on Ascension Island's fish resources was conducted in 1990. Another desk study would not add greatly to the information available from this earlier work (a further study would have cost approximately £30,000) and is not considered an appropriate use of Foreign and Commonwealth Office funds.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the potential revenue from the sale of fishing licences for tuna in the seas around Ascension Island. [47327]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Revenue accruing from the sale of fishing licences for Ascension Island was, up until 1 April 2005, combined with that for St. Helena. The figure for 2003–04, the most recent available, was approximately £128,000. Because of the level of uncertainty surrounding both the current state of the stocks of migratory fish in that part of the Atlantic and the intentions of distant water fishing fleets, Ascension Island has not sold any fishing licences since 1 April 2005. It is therefore difficult to estimate the potential revenue from the sale of fishing licences for Ascension Island.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many Ascension Islanders have reached retirement or the end of their contracts in each of the last 10 years; and how many have been allowed to remain on the island thereafter. [47439]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There is no indigenous population, or "islanders", on Ascension Island. People working and living there do so for the duration of their contracts. Figures on retirement or termination of contracts are a matter for the individual organisations based on the Island and are not centrally held. A small number, less than 5, have remained on the Island on the expiration of their contract. Their cases are under review.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what consultations took place with Ascension Island User Organisations before the preliminary summit meeting between islanders and officials of Her Majesty's Government. [47440]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There is no indigenous population, or "islanders", on Ascension Island. People working and living there do so for the duration of their contracts. The Government have regular contacts with representatives of the principle Use organisations as part of their ongoing work in administering Ascension Island.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the progress of the legislation to provide a right of abode and a right to own property on Ascension Island; and how much was spent by Her Majesty's Government in providing legal advice in preparation of the legislation. [47441]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There are no plans to introduce legislation to develop a right of abode in Ascension Island. The cost of legal advice provided by the Constitutional Adviser on the Overseas Territories amounted to less than £2,500.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will place in the Library representations he has received from the Ascension Island Council since the end of November 2005. [47442]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I have placed a copy of the letter dated 7 December 2005 from Ascension Island Council in the Library of the House.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what were *(a)* the names and *(b)* grades of the UK officials of Her Majesty's Government in the delegation which visited Ascension Island in November 2005. [47443]

Ian Pearson: The Head of Overseas Territories Department, Tony Crombie, a Senior Management Structure officer in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), together with two D6 officers and two B3 officers responsible for Ascension Island in the FCO, and officials from other UK Government Departments, made up the delegation visiting Ascension Island in November 2005.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will place in the Library a copy of the Economic Study on Ascension Island which was commissioned in September 2005. [47444]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: A copy of the Economic Study by the Oxford Policy Management Group, which was completed in October 2005, has been placed in the Library of the House.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many new houses have been *(a)* started and *(b)* completed by the Ascension Island council since it was established. [47445]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Ascension Island council has approved the construction of four houses which are due for completion in 2006.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had in the last six months on the future of Ascension Island. [47453]

Ian Pearson: Ministers and officials have had discussions with a range of interested parties, including Ascension Island councillors and other persons working and living on the Island, over the past six months.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) how many people have been *(a)* deported from and *(b)* required to leave Ascension Island (i) in each of the last five years for which records are available and (ii) since 30 November 2005; and to where they have been deported; [47454]

(2) how many people have been *(a)* deported or *(b)* required to leave Ascension Island and removed to St. Helena (i) in each of the last five years for which records are available and (ii) since 30 November 2005. [47458]

Ian Pearson: There is no indigenous population on Ascension Island. People working and living there do so for the duration of their contracts. Employees whose contracts end, and are not renewed, are required by law to leave the Island. Figures are held by employer organisations, and we therefore do not have access to this information. The employment contracts usually place on the employer an obligation to return the employee to a specified location at the end of the contract. Approximately 70 per cent. of those working and living on Ascension Island originate from St. Helena. We are aware of two people being removed from Ascension Island. One was removed to the UK, the other to St. Helena.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what compensation arrangements are in place for small business owners *(a)* deported from and *(b)* required to leave Ascension Island following his announcement of 30 November 2005. [47455]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government made no announcement on 30 November 2005. My noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, wrote to Ascension Island councillors on 19 January 2006 to set out the Government's policy. There is no right of abode on Ascension Island. Employees whose contracts end, and are not renewed, are required by law to leave the Island. We have no plans to change this. Those working on the Island are aware of these conditions when they are recruited. There is, therefore, no question of compensation. Almost all the individuals operating the approximately 15 small businesses on the Island are already employed by the main organisations based on Ascension, or the Ascension Island Administration, or are the spouses of these employees. They may therefore continue to remain on the Island as long as the relevant contracts last.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what consultations were undertaken prior to his announcement of 30 November 2005 that the circumstances of inhabitants of Ascension Island were to be altered. [47456]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government made no announcement on 30 November 2005. There has been no change to the basis on which people work and live on Ascension Island.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what compensation arrangements are in place for individual inhabitants *(a)* deported from and *(b)* required to leave Ascension Island following his announcement of 30 November 2005. [47457]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government made no announcement on 30 November 2005. My noble Friend the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, wrote to Ascension Island Councillors on 19 January 2006 to set out the Government's policy. There is no right of abode on Ascension Island. Employees whose contracts end, and are not renewed, are required by law to leave the Island. Those working on the Island are aware of these conditions when they are recruited. There is, therefore, no question of compensation.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the Wideawake Agreement with the United States Government; and what is the current operational status of Wideawake Airfield on Ascension Island. [47459]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Wideawake Airfield is a military airfield. The 2003 Agreement between the UK and US Governments concerning the use of Wideawake Airfield on Ascension Island by civil aircraft not engaged in scheduled international air services provides the basis for non-scheduled civil flights (e.g. charter flights). This facility has not been used on a regular basis.

British Virgin Islands

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's expenditure on internal security and policing was for the British Virgin Islands in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003, *(c)* 2004 and *(d)* 2005; and what expenditure is planned for 2006. [47098]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The following sums have been spent on policing and internal security in the British Virgin Islands during 2003–04, 2004–05 and 2005–06 financial years.

As the British Virgin Islands also receive further support from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office through a number of regional initiatives including training/exchange programmes and courses, as well as receiving on-going support from FCO funded advisers, figures for the cross-Territory (regional) support of security initiatives is also included.

£

	FCO funding for the British Virgin Islands	*Cross-Territory (regional) funding*
2003–04	345,039	1,013,165
2004–05	141,399	687,976
2005–06	8,198	957,045

The above figures do not, however, include local expenditure made at Post through the Governor's Delegated Fund. Figures for 2005–06 are anticipated. Allocations for 2006–07 have not yet been made.

The 2002–03 figures are not included as they are not immediately available. I will therefore write to my hon. Friend with this information as soon as it becomes available and will place a copy in the Library of the House.

Burma

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment the Government has made of whether *(a)* Serbia and *(b)* Montenegro are making arms sales to Burma. [48615]

Dr. Howells: The Government has not made a formal assessment of possible arms sales by Serbia or Montenegro to Burma. Serbia and Montenegro's Law on Foreign Trade in Weapons, Military Equipment and Dual Use Goods states that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will consider the

> 'level of violation and or respecting of human rights and freedoms in the country of final destination',

as well as the EU Code of Conduct on arms exports before approving an export licence.

Charles Munyaneza

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what steps *(a)* were taken *(b)* are planned by his Department to satisfy itself that Charles Munyaneza has no case to answer under international law on war crimes and genocide; [48206]

(2) what discussions he has had with the Chief Prosecutor of the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda on the case of Charles Munyaneza. [48209]

Ian Pearson: Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials discussed the matter with the Office of the Chief prosecutor on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) on 27 January and again on 31 January. The ICTR confirmed that it has not issued an indictment relating to Charles Munyaneza and does not intend to do so. The case is also being considered by the UK police. Decisions on whether an individual has a case to answer under UK criminal law are a matter for the police and the Crown Prosecution Service.

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government has taken to implement the international arrest warrant for Charles Munyaneza. [49192]

Ian Pearson: Recent media allegations concerning Charles Munyaneza, a Rwandan national, are being investigated by the UK police and Crown Prosecution Service. It would be inappropriate to comment on international arrest procedures while that investigation is ongoing.

China

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the implications for UK security of the reciprocal arrangements made between China and Iran concerning long-term oil supply to China. [47022]

Ian Pearson: Iran is the world's fourth largest oil exporter. China imports around 13 per cent. of her oil from Iran. The details of commercial arrangements between China and Iran are a matter for those two countries.

We consult very closely with China on policy towards Iran. We welcome the agreement reached on 30 January between the Foreign Ministers of the UK, China, France, Germany, Russia and the US concerning Iran's nuclear programme.

Correspondence

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will respond to the letter from the hon. Member for Sutton and Cheam dated 15 March 2005, on behalf of Mary Stevenage, regarding human rights abuses in Cuba. [47990]

Mr. Douglas Alexander *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* Although a reply was prepared to the hon. Member's letter, for reasons we are looking into, it does not appear to have been issued. This has now been rectified and a response was sent on 1 February.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter dated 10 August 2005 from the hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, concerning the export of handcuffs. [48884]

Dr. Howells: I am sorry that my right hon. Friend has not had a reply to her letter. An administrative error meant that the letter referred to was not received in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office until 24 January 2006. A reply will be sent shortly.

Dr. Oscar Biscet

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received about the situation of Dr. Oscar Biscet, imprisoned in Cuba; and what representations he has made to the government of Cuba on Dr. Biscet's case. [47757]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We regularly receive expressions of concern about Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet's situation. We are very concerned about his situation, particularly the effect of the severe conditions of his confinement on his health. Our Embassy in Havana continues to monitor Dr. Biscet's case and maintains close contact with his supporters and family. Most recently, a member of our embassy staff met his wife in December 2005. The Government consider his imprisonment to be a violation of his civil and political freedoms, and in particular his freedom of expression as recognised in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which includes the right

> 'to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers'.

We regularly raise the situation of all political prisoners in Cuba with Cuban authorities both in London and Havana, and call for their immediate release. During our presidency of the EU we issued a number of statements reiterating this message. The Minister responsible for relations with Cuba, Lord Triesman most recently raised this issue with the Cuban Ambassador on 8 November 2005 at the APPG Cuba meeting.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many meetings of the *(a)* Joint Committee (EC-Kingdom of Cambodia), *(b)* Joint Committee (EEC-China) and *(c)* Joint Committee (EEC-India) have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over

each meeting; which other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved Governments; and if he will make a statement. [39044]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: There was no EC-Cambodia Joint Committee during the UK presidency. The EC-India Joint Commission met on 24 25 October 2005. The UK was represented by officials from the British high commission in Delhi. EC-China Joint Committee met on 4 November 2005. There was no UK representation at this meeting. Commission officials presided over both meetings.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government), a copy of which is available at: http://www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf

Ministers from the devolved administrations have attended and do attend councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

European Anti-fraud Office

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what measures are being discussed in the EU to develop the European Anti-Fraud Office in preparation for future transformation into the European Public Prosecutor, as referred to in OJ C122, volume 48, 20 May 2005; and if he will make a statement. [48287]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Official Journal C122, volume 48, 20 May 2005 refers to the European Anti-Fraud Office's June 2003-July 2004 Activity Report. It contains a reference to the potential creation of a European Public Prosecutor's Office under the European Constitutional Treaty. Under the terms of the Treaty, the creation of a European Public Prosecutor would not be automatic, as it would first require the consent of every member state.

No measures are currently under discussion to prepare for a European Public Prosecutor. The UK has made it clear that it remains unconvinced of the need for an EPP, whether under the Constitutional Treaty or the current treaties.

Hamas

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the implications of Hamas' victory in the recent elections to the Palestinian Legislature for security in the region. [48109]

Dr. Howells: Following its meeting on 30 January, the Quartet (UN, EU, US and Russia) acknowledged the positive role of the Palestinian Authority security forces in helping maintain order during the recent elections. It expressed its view that progress on further consolidation, accountability and reform remains an important task. We support this position.

Hamas now has a choice to make between the path of democracy and the path of violence. The onus is on Hamas to change their approach to Israel, renounce violence and disarm. We are watching developments closely and taking stock of the situation.

Interpal

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has received on the activities of Interpal; and if he will make a statement. [47828]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed the issue with his Israeli counterpart most recently in July 2005 and I have dealt with parliamentary correspondence on Interpal. In these discussions, it was noted that, following allegations of connections to Hamas, the Charity Commission had investigated Interpal on several occasions and had found insufficient evidence to support taking action against Interpal.

Iran

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the extent to which *(a)* UK and *(b)* EU banks have ceased business with Iran; and if he will make a statement. [48592]

Dr. Howells: We are not aware that any UK or EU banks have recently ceased business with Iran. ABN Amro reportedly closed its offices in Iran in October 2004.

According to media reports, UBS said on 22 January that it would no longer deal with individuals, companies or state institutions in Iran, and Credit Suisse Group said on 23 January that it would stop new business with Iran.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what fora are available to the EU to express its concerns about human rights in Iran to the Iranian Government; and if he will make a statement. [48752]

Dr. Howells: Iran's poor human rights record is a long-standing concern of the EU and an important factor in shaping EU policy towards Iran.

During the UK presidency, the EU issued public statements and made representations to the Iranian authorities about human rights violations on more than 15 occasions.

The EU should also be able to discuss human rights concerns within the framework of the EU/Iran Comprehensive Dialogue, established in 1998, and the EU/Iran Human Rights Dialogue, established in 2002. Regrettably, however, these dialogues have not taken place since April 2003 and June 2004 respectively, despite the efforts of successive EU presidencies and the European Commission at both ministerial and official level.

The EU also voices its concerns in international fora. All EU member states co-sponsored the resolution on human rights in Iran adopted by UN General Assembly in December 2005.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs under what conditions negotiations on the EU-Iran Trade and Co-operation and Political Dialogue Agreements would resume; and if he will make a statement. [48754]

Dr. Howells: The EU has not taken forward negotiations on the draft EU-Iran Trade and Co-operation Agreement or the draft EU/Iran Political Dialogue Agreement since August 2005 when Iran unilaterally decided to resume uranium conversion activities, in violation of its commitments to the E3/EU and contrary to requests in the International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors resolutions.

The EU agreed at the 16 December European Council that whether the EU's long-term relationship with Iran improves or deteriorates will depend on progress by Iran in the EU's areas of concern. These include Iran's attitude towards terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Iran's approach to the Middle East Peace Process, human rights and fundamental freedoms, and regional issues.

Iraq

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the incidence of corruption in reconstruction projects in Iraq. [47856]

Dr. Howells: There have been several comprehensive assessments of financial management of the Iraqi reconstruction effort, the most prominent of which is the series of reports published by the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction. Given concerns about levels of corruption in Iraq generally, the Government does not fund Iraqi institutions directly. All UK reconstruction programmes are monitored continuously, and where we have had any financial or management concerns we have taken action to address them.

The UK is committed to working with the Iraqi Government, alongside the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and other donors, to improve accountability and transparency in Iraq's public finances. Iraq is making progress in developing its anti-corruption institutions. These now include a Board of Supreme Audit, Inspector Generals resident in each Ministry and a Commission for Public Integrity, which can refer cases to the Central Criminal Court of Iraq. In addition, our efforts include encouraging Iraq to adopt international legal frameworks and standards in natural resource management, including the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received on the abduction and detention incommunicado of *(a)* Qutaiba Hamdani, *(b)* Uday Nasser *(c)* Badr, *(d)* Yasser Hamad and *(e)* Firaz Imad in Iraq in February 2004. [49368]

Dr. Howells: In March 2004, our Representative to the United Nations in Geneva received a copy of a letter from the UN Special Rapporteur for Torture, Mr. Van Boven, which referred to those named in the question. The only other representations we are aware of on behalf of these individuals are those from the hon. Member himself.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 122W, on Iraq, whether he has *(a)* requested and *(b)* received information from (i) UK officials, (ii) UK armed service personnel and (iii) Iraqi official sources relating to the whereabouts of Mr. Quitaba Hamdani, Mr. Uday Nasser Badr, Mr. Yasser Hamad and Mr. Firaz Imad referred to in the letter of 12 March 2004 from Mr. van Boven, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture. [49369]

Dr. Howells: We have requested information about action taken by UK and US officials at the time of the van Boven letter. We have not approached the UK military or Iraqi officials.

Any reply to the Special Rapporteur's letter would have been sent by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), which was dissolved at the end of June 2004. A search of the CPA's permanent records has taken place without finding the Special Rapporteur's letter or any reply.

At the time of Mr. van Boven's letter there was a great deal of militia activity of the type mentioned in his letter and many reports from different sources urging that they should be investigated. In so far as it was possible in each case full investigations were undertaken and attempts made to stop illegal detention.

Ivory Coast

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the political situation in the Ivory Coast. [48743]

Ian Pearson: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Stroud (Mr. Drew) on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2240–241W. Talks continue in New York on targeted UN sanctions against individuals blocking the peace process. The UK strongly supports their imposition.

Kazakhstan

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Government of Kazakhstan on bringing its laws and practices on due process and freedom of expression into line with international standards. [47296]

Mr. Douglas Alexander *[holding answer 2 February 2006]*: Freedom of expression is a fundamental right and recognised under international law. It is also vital to the development of a modern society. Both bilaterally and alongside our EU partners we reminded the Kazakh Government throughout 2005 that the credibility of their bid for the chairmanship of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in 2009 rests on the soundness of their commitment to continue

political reforms and comply fully with all OSCE undertakings and standards, which include those on freedom of expression. On 10 and 17 November 2005 the UK as presidency of the EU, issued statements expressing deep concern about reported harassment of opposition parties and restrictions on freedom of the media, particularly with regard to printing and distribution and circulation seizures of independent newspapers during the presidential election campaign. These concerns were reflected again in the EU presidency statement which the UK issued immediately following the presidential elections in December 2005.

Kazakhstan's ratification of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in December 2005 and the release of opposition leader Galymzhan Zhakianov in January 2006 are two recent positive steps taken by the Kazakh authorities in relation to due process and freedom of expression. The EU OSCE statement on 19 January 2006 welcoming his release reiterated calls for Kazakhstan to respect its international commitments on ensuring freedom of expression.

When he met Foreign Minister Tokayev following the presentation of his credentials on 9 January, our newly accredited ambassador to Kazakhstan, Paul Brummell, assured the Foreign Minister of the readiness of the British Government to work with Kazakhstan to promote the human rights agenda across its whole spectrum. In the current financial year the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has invested approximately £20,000 in projects relating to freedom of expression, including legal support for independent media, the introduction of jury trials and training of judges.

We will continue to raise, both bilaterally and with our EU partners, the importance of freedom of expression in Kazakhstan and look for opportunities to provide suitable assistance.

Madagascar

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the operation of the Small Grants Scheme in Madagascar. [48572]

Ian Pearson: The Small Grants Scheme in Madagascar was discontinued when the British embassy closed in August 2005.

Middle East Peace Process

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on Iran's approach to the Middle East Peace Process. [48763]

Dr. Howells: We have long-standing concerns that groups seeking to undermine the Middle East Peace Process through violence draw support from inside Iran. We have called on Iran to renounce all links to groups using terror and violence, and support a solution to the Palestinian question based on the principle of two states living side-by-side in peace and security. The EU has said that progress in its relations with Iran will depend on action by Iran to address the EU's political concerns, including in the areas of Iran's approach to terrorism and its attitude to the Middle East Peace Process.

President Ahmadinejad's recent comments calling for Israel to be 'wiped from the map' were unacceptable. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has condemned them unreservedly. The Palestinian Authority has also rejected them and said that the focus should be on adding Palestine to the map, next to Israel.

Nepal

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the recent reports of human rights violations in Nepal. [49088]

Dr. Howells: The UK has made repeated statements deploring human rights violations by both the Nepalese security forces and the Maoists. We have been deeply troubled by the Maoists' decision to end their ceasefire and by their return to violence. In January 2006 the Maoists carried out over 40 bomb attacks, 350 kidnappings, and engaged in 70 clashes with security forces. This has resulted in large numbers of deaths and injuries amongst the royal Nepalese Army, the police and civilians. We have also been gravely concerned by human rights abuses carried out by the security forces and by the Government's infringements of civil liberties and democratic freedoms, and by the arrest of a large number of political party leaders and activists.

In response to events in January, the UK has joined the EU in issuing a statement available at:

http://www.eu2006.at/en/News/CFSP_Statements/January/2701Nepal.html

in which we said:

"The EU strongly condemns the use of force to suppress the Nepalese people's exercise of fundamental rights, including the right to freedom of assembly and freedom of expression. The EU calls upon the King, the Government of Nepal and the Security Forces to immediately restore all political and civil liberties in accordance with Nepal's international obligations, immediately release all political prisoners and human rights defenders, and ensure that political and civil rights, including freedom of assembly and freedom of speech, can be exercised peacefully. The EU strongly condemns the resumption of Maoist violence, including the recent murder of an election candidate. The EU underlines the obligation of all parties to fully respect international humanitarian law, including by way of protecting civilians and facilitating the access of humanitarian organisations seeking to aid affected persons."

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support his Department *(a)* is giving and *(b)* plans to give to Nepalese (i) human rights agencies and (ii) aid organisations in (A) India and (B) the United Kingdom to assist the restoration of constitutional democracy in Nepal. [49245]

Dr. Howells: The UK does not support or plan to support any Nepalese human rights agencies or aid organisations in India or the UK to assist the restoration of constitutional democracy in Nepal.

However, the UK has supported a number of civil society and human rights organisations in Nepal on a wide range of issues for several years. As part of the Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP) Nepal strategy, the UK has funded several local and international organisations since 2002. These have included the Nepalese National Human Rights Commission and the

International Committee of the Red Cross. The largest single contribution to any such organisation has been to the UN human rights monitoring operation under the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, to which we have contributed over £800,000. The GCPP also funds the Nepalese human rights non-governmental organisation (NGO) called Advocacy Forum. The Embassy's Small Grants Scheme also funds a number of small indigenous NGO groups. Our assessment is that we will continue to need to strengthen civil society and human rights organisations for the foreseeable future and we are intending to maintain our support under the GCPP.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not fund any aid organisations but the Department for International Development runs a bilateral aid programme to Nepal worth £36 million in 2005-06.

Greg Mulholland: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the government of Nepal about (*a*) detention of political leaders, (*b*) suppression of the media and (*c*) human rights violations. [49246]

Dr. Howells: Following the arrest of party leaders, political activists, members of civil society and human rights defenders on 19 and 20 January, I summoned the Nepalese Ambassador to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to explain his government's actions to senior FCO officials. I urged the Government of Nepal to release all of the political prisoners detained in the most recent round up of activists and party leaders.

I also issued a statement in which I said,

"The UK is extremely concerned by the King's actions, and we can see no grounds for these anti-democratic measures. I call on the King urgently to release those arrested, and to find ways to resume dialogue with the political parties."

The full text is available at:

http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029391638&a=KArticle&aid=1136906017567&20&year=2006&month=2006-01-01&date=2006-01-19.

The UK joined EU partners in issuing a statement, available at:

http://www.eu2006.at/en/News/CFSP_Statements/January/2701Nepal.html

expressing concern about the most recent round of arrests and of the infringements on human rights and democratic freedoms. In that statement we called on the King, the Government of Nepal and the security forces to immediately restore all political and civil liberties, release political prisoners and human rights defenders, and ensure that political and civil rights, including freedom of assembly and freedom of speech, can be exercised peacefully.

We are encouraged to note that some of the party leaders who were detained have now been released. But there are approximately 250 political activists still in detention in Kathmandu and another 250 outside. This includes one of the top party leaders who remains under house arrest.

The UK has made a number of representations to the Government of Nepal about restrictions on the media and abuses of human rights over the last year. During the UK's presidency of the EU, we led a senior officials level EU Troika visit to Nepal, in which we raised these issues and publicly urged the government and security forces to respect human rights and to use security legislation with utmost caution. In response to the arrests in January the EU demarched the Nepalese Foreign Minister on 27 January calling for the immediate release of recently detained political prisoners.

Nigeria

Michael Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Nigerian Government about recent attacks on oil installations and oil workers in the Niger Delta; and what assistance the UK Government are providing. [47631]

Ian Pearson: We have been in close contact with the Nigerian Government about recent attacks on oil installations in the Niger Delta, including the kidnapping of a Briton and three other expatriates on 11 January. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary spoke personally to President Obasanjo of Nigeria on 21 January. We were delighted at the hostages' safe release on 30 January. More broadly, we maintain a close dialogue with the Nigerian federal and state authorities on security and development in the Niger Delta, which includes support for Nigeria's extractive industries transparency initiative and other measures to improve accountability and governance.

Non-proliferation Treaty

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken to strengthen the non-proliferation treaty in accordance with the December 2003 European Union strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and if he will make a statement. [48750]

Dr. Howells: The Council of the European Union's "Six-monthly Progress Report on the implementation of Chapter III of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction" contains comprehensive details of steps being undertaken to strengthen the non-proliferation treaty. The report is published on the Council of the European Union's website at:

http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/06/st05/st05279-en06.pdf

Overseas Territories

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make each of the overseas territories eligible for EU and UK funding for infrastructure development to enhance resilience against natural and man-made disasters; and if he will make a statement. [46904]

Mr. Thomas: I have been asked to reply.

Funding for infrastructure development features prominently in both DFID and EU programmes to support the Overseas Territories. We have worked closely with the EU on a number of projects. Notable recent examples include new airports on Montserrat, Anguilla and Grand Turk and road infrastructure on Providenciales. DFID is also providing funding for an

airport on St Helena to maintain access after the island's passenger and supply ship reaches the end of her working life in 2010. On Pitcairn, work to pave the Hill of Difficulty, the only access road from the harbour to the main settlement of Adamstown, and make essential repairs to the jetty and slipway was completed during 2005. In addition we are planning to fund jointly with the EU repairs to the harbour wall on Tristan da Cunha and the construction of a breakwater on Pitcairn.

DFID's programmes focus on those countries which still need development assistance along the path to self-sufficiency. We would normally look to the wealthier Overseas Territories to finance their priorities for capital expenditure from their own resources, including under normal commercial borrowing terms. The EU also largely focuses its development programmes on those Overseas Countries and Territories (OTC)s whose economic development is least advanced. Similarly, we would not expect EU grant funding for infrastructure to be available for those OCTs with ready access to commercial borrowing.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the likely *(a)* medium-term and *(b)* long-term impact of climate change on the vulnerability to natural disasters of each of the overseas territories; and if he will make a statement. [46906]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: A Department for International Development (DFID) commissioned report by the Tyndall Centre called the Impacts of Global Climate Change on the UK Overseas Territories (OTs) found that long-term weather characteristics are likely to change. It concluded that regional warming in the Caribbean could be as much as 6 degrees by 2100, and slightly less in the South Atlantic and Pitcairn.

The report identified common areas of concern as many OTs share similar characteristics. In particular, many are islands with populations reliant on a fragile natural resource base. The effects of climate change include severe tropical storms and hurricanes in the Caribbean and likely increases in the severity and frequency of low rainfall events and droughts in all areas. Global sea level rise is now projected to be as much as 0.9 meters by 2100 and in the medium-term raised sea levels will exacerbate the effects of more severe storms, directly affecting coastal infrastructure and tourism.

On 30 January the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) published the book 'Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change'. Although not specifically directed at the impacts of climate change on OTs, the book discusses many of the potential impacts that OTs can expect to see in the future, such as degradation of marine ecosystems and increases in global sea levels.

As the international community makes efforts to tackle this global problem, the UK is keen to raise awareness in OTs of the impacts of climate change on their societies. For this reason the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and DEFRA have been working together to encourage OTs to be part of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol. The UK will build on this and share its knowledge and experiences through the UN's Inter-Governmental Panel Working Group looking at impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's expenditure on internal security and policing was for each of the overseas territories in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003, *(c)* 2004 and *(d)* 2005; and what expenditure is planned for 2006. [47097]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The following table details recorded expenditure for internal security and policing in each of the overseas territories during the financial years 2003-04 and 2004-05. The 2005-06 figures are anticipated. Allocations have not yet been made for the next financial year. As a number of cross-territory (regional) policing and security initiatives are supported by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, these figures are also included. The following table does not, however, record local expenditure at post which may have been supported through the Governors'/Administrators' delegated funds.

Neither the British Indian Ocean territory nor the sovereign based areas of Cyprus have been included in the table as this funding is provided by the Ministry of Defence.

£

Territory	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*
Anguilla	148,629	152,327	361,879
Ascension Island	101,000	0	0
Bermuda	0	0	0
British Virgin Islands	345,039	141,399	8,198
Cayman Islands	0	20,843	45,000
Falkland Islands	6,326	0	0
Gibraltar	110,000	125,000	45,000
Montserrat	130,117	115,468	13,321
Pitcairn	[1]170,000	175,995	154,460
South Georgia	0	0	0
St. Helena	30,577	253,702	263,000
Tristan da Cunha	0	20,546	0
Turks and Caicos Islands	15,900	122,670	32,000
Cross territory (regional) funding	1,013,165	687,976	957,045
Total	2,070,753	1,815,926	1,879,903

[1] Estimate

The figures for 2002-03 are not included as they are not immediately available. I will therefore write to my hon. Friend with this information as soon as it becomes available and will place a copy in the Library of the House.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to involve local communities and Overseas Territories' Governments in decisions on policing and security strategies and resourcing in each of the Overseas Territories; and if he will make a statement. [47101]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The precise constitutional arrangements for policing and internal security differ from Territory to Territory. But a common thread is that law and order is, rightly, a matter of concern for the whole community. Governors routinely discuss matters relating to internal security, including policing, with their Territory's Government. It is the Territories'

Government that apportions resources for the staffing and operations of the range of government activities, including policing. The Overseas Territories Law Enforcement Adviser, based in Miami, and other experts as appropriate, provide professional advice to Overseas Territories Governments and law enforcement agencies when necessary.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much was contributed by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* Overseas Territories' Governments towards policing and internal security in each of the Territories for each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [47102]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The following table details funding by both the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Overseas Territory Governments on policing and internal security during the past three years. The information on Territory Government spending is not always directly comparable as there are differences in the way that they apportion internal security resourcing.

£

	2003 or 2003-04		2004 or 2004-05		2005 or 2005-06	
Territory	*Local government*	*FCO*	*Local government*	*FCO*	*Local government*	*FCO*
Anguilla[1]	837,582	148,629	932,070	152,327	1,085,286	361,879
Ascension Island	168,138	101,000	176,517	0	n/a	0
Bermuda[1]	25,945,348	0	29,115,042	0	29,821,054	0
British Virgin Islands[1]	5,425,880	345,039	5,439,074	141,399	5,738,419	8,198
Cayman Islands	11,500,000	0	13,500,00	20,843	21,700,000	45,000
Falkland Islands	5,292,526	6,326	5,242,118	0	n/a	0
Gibraltar	8,600,000	110,000	8,400,000	125,000	n/a	45,000
Montserrat[1]	874,000	130,117	895,000	115,468	1,048,000	13,321
Pitcairn	0	170,000	0	175,995	0	154,460
South Georgia[1]	1,360,000	0	1,448,000	0	1,597,000	0
St Helena	450,845	30,577	509,201	253,702	649,971	263,000
Tristan da Cunha[1]	9,802	0	11,136	20,546	9,801	0
Turks and Caicos Islands	4,441,661	15,900	4,601,270	122,670	5,390,482	32,000
Cross-territory (regional) FCO funding	0	1,013,165	0	687,976	0	957,045

[1] Indicates that the Territory Government has provided financial data for a financial year from January to December.
[2] Estimate.

I also refer my hon. Friend to the answers I gave him today (UIN 47097 and UIN 47101) to his questions numbered 47097 and 47101 for further information on the FCO's support for internal security and policing.

Palestinian Election

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority following the recent Palestinian legislative elections. [48594]

Dr. Howells: We welcome the fact that the Rafah border crossing, with the help of the EU Border Assistance Mission, remained open in the period leading up to and beyond the Palestinian Legislative Council elections. However, we are concerned that the Kami crossing in the northern Gaza Strip has been closed since 15 January; that the United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs has reported an increase in the number of obstacles to movement in the West Bank; and that the deadline for the introduction of truck convoys between Gaza and the West Bank by 15 January was missed.

We call upon Israel to act on its commitments in the Movement and Access agreement and also call upon the new Palestinian Government to commit itself to non-violence, recognition of Israel and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the effect of the election victory of Hamas on the UK's relations with the Palestinian Authority. [48701]

Dr. Howells: Our policy is clear that democracy means accepting the results of elections, provided they are free and fair. The Palestinian Legislative Council elections are not an exception to this principle.

On 30 January the Quartet (UN, US, EU and Russia) and the EU at the General Affairs and External Relations Council reiterated their view that there is a fundamental contradiction between armed group and militia activities and the building of a democratic state. A two-state solution to the conflict requires all participants in the democratic process to renounce violence and terror, accept Israel's right to exist, and disarm, as outlined in the Roadmap. We support this approach.

Hamas now has a choice to make between the path of democracy and the path of violence. The onus is on Hamas to change, and fundamentally they have to change their approach to Israel. We are watching developments closely and taking stock of the situation.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his Lebanese counterpart regarding Hamas's victory in the recent Palestinian elections. [47855]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not had the opportunity to discuss Hamas' victory at last week's Palestinian elections with his Lebanese counterpart.

Rendition

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials were first informed of the existence of United States interrogation centres in third countries. [45300]

Mr. Straw: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him today (UIN 45312).

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his written statement of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 37–38WS, on rendition allegations (inquiries), for what reasons the Government declined in 1998 the two requests from the US Administration to refuel flights carrying detainees to the US; and where the flights originated in each case. [46697]

Mr. Straw: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Sheffield Hallam (Mr. Clegg) today (UIN 45312).

Road Map

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the policy of Hamas towards the Palestinian Authority's commitments under the Road Map, with particular reference to the commitment to seek to curtail terrorism; what steps he plans to take to promote the Authority's adherence to the Road Map following the elections for the Legislative Council; and if he will make a statement. [47774]

Dr. Howells: Both Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and the Israeli Government remain committed towards making progress against the Roadmap.

On the 30 January the Quartet (UN, EU, US and Russia) reiterated its view that all members of a future Palestinian Government must be committed to non-violence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap. We urge both parties to respect their existing agreements, including on movement and access. We support this approach.

Hamas now has a choice to make between the path of democracy and the path of violence. The onus is on Hamas to change their approach to Israel, renounce violence and disarm.

UN Mechanisms (Gaza)

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1704W, on Israel, when Sir Emyr Jones-Parry will be making his next statement at the United Nations Security Council open consultations; what other United Nations mechanisms are available to the UK for raising this matter; and if he will make a statement on Lieutenant General Halutz's response to the Government's concerns about low flying aircraft over Gaza. [47528]

Dr. Howells: We are concerned by Lt. Gen. Halutz's comment that the Israeli Air Force will continue to conduct operations including low-flying aircraft over the Gaza Strip. We will continue to call upon Israel to act in accordance with international law and to review its policy of collective punishment.

The British ambassador to the United Nations (UN), Sir Emyr Jones-Parry, raised this issue with the UN Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs on 31 January. She confirmed that this is an issue that the UN is aware of and that they are currently discussing these actions with the UN Relief and Works Agency. We will continue to follow this situation closely. We will also raise this issue with the Government of Israel.

United States

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment he has made of the *(a)* number and *(b)* location of interrogation centres operated by the United States Administration; [45312]

(2) what assessment he has made of US compliance with international human rights laws in the operation of its interrogation centres; [45313]

(3) whether a UK *(a)* citizen and *(b)* resident has been subject to an international rendition by the United States since 1995. [45373]

Mr. Straw: The Government's efforts to counter the threat of international terrorism must, by their nature, involve a degree of confidentiality. If we are successfully to detect and disrupt terrorist plans and activity, we must protect our sources and methods. We must also protect our counter-terrorism, and wider intelligence, relationships with key allies, including the United States, which are essential to the security of our citizens.

At the same time, any Government in a democratic society should be as open as it can be without jeopardising security. This principle guides our counter-terrorism policy. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office Human Rights Report of 2005 made clear our view that respect for human rights is vital, not least for long-term success in the fight against terrorism.

Over the last few weeks, the Government have been as open as possible with the House. Ministers have given a number of oral and written answers to hon. and right hon. Members in connection with "extraordinary rendition". I have also responded to letters from hon. and right hon. Members, and issued two written ministerial statements. I have informed and updated the House as far as possible within the constraints described above, I shall continue to do so.

There is a great deal of information on the work of the intelligence and security agencies which cannot be divulged publicly. Because of this, and other special circumstances relating to the work of the agencies, Parliament established the Intelligence and Security Committee; much information is provided to this committee in confidence.

We have no evidence that the United States Government has rendered any detainee through UK territory or airspace (including the overseas territories) during the present United States Administration (i.e. since January 2001), and we are clear that it would not do so without our permission.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's statement of 5 December made clear that the US Government has for decades rendered terrorist suspects from one country to another, and set out the basis on which it does so. Except in so far as UK responsibilities or obligations are engaged by such renditions (for example, because a detainee passes through UK territory), this is not a matter for the UK Government. Like any other country, the UK can only be responsible for compliance with its

own legal obligations and responsibilities. My written ministerial statement of 20 January summarised what we know of renditions through UK territory or airspace since May 1997. It is a matter of public record that a number of UK citizens, and non-UK citizens formerly resident in the UK, have been transferred to Guantanamo Bay (whence all the UK citizens have since been returned to the UK). We are not aware that any other UK citizens have been the subject of an international rendition since 1995. Given the open nature of our society, however, with huge flows of foreigners into and out of the UK, we cannot be sure whether any other non-UK citizens formerly resident in the UK have subsequently been the subject of international rendition.

It is also a matter of public record that the US Government has operated facilities in which terrorist suspects may be detained and questioned in Afghanistan since 2001, at Guantanamo Bay since 2002 and in Iraq since 2003.

I have today placed in the Library of the House a copy of my reply to a letter from the right hon. Member for Richmond, Yorks (Mr. Hague).

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Fair Trade Fortnight

Helen Jones: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what steps are being taken to mark Fair Trade Fortnight in the House. [49263]

Nick Harvey: As in previous years, the Refreshment Department will mark the Fairtrade Fortnight (6–19 March 2006) by running a special promotion of Fairtrade goods throughout the House of Commons cafeterias. In addition to those Fairtrade products always available—coffee, tea, chocolate, snack bars and, most recently, sugar—a wider range of biscuits, dried fruits, snack bars and fruit juices will be promoted under the Fairtrade Foundation's banner, "making Fairtrade your habit". The Department has also secured a consignment of Fairtrade bananas and pineapples, which will be offered during the fortnight.

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what total sum has been received by the House for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48496]

Nick Harvey: The House has not made charges for the release of information in the first year of operation of the Act.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Democratic Republic of Congo

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has to meet representatives of the Democratic Republic of Congo as head of the African Union. [49324]

Hilary Benn: The new chair of the African Union is President Sassou-Nguesso of the Republic of Congo.

While I do not have any immediate plans to meet President Sassou-Nguesso or his representatives, officials from both DFID and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office are in regular contact with members of the Republic of Congo Government and are seeking to establish suitable senior level meetings at the earliest opportunity.

Ethiopian Women (Fistulas)

Mr. MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding he has allocated in 2005–06 to treat women in Ethiopia with open fistulas; and if he will make a statement. [48869]

Hilary Benn: I have not allocated any funds specifically for this purpose. DFID's approach is to provide support to improving health services so that care for patients can be improved.

Fair Trade Produce

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much and what proportion of his Department's catering budget was spent on fair trade produce in the last period for which figures are available. [49235]

Mr. Thomas: Precise figures are not available, but our contracted catering service providers estimate that in the current financial year 2005–06, approximately £70,000, or 20 per cent. of total expenditure on food, drink, etc, was spent on Fairtrade items.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department's policy is on the procurement of fair trade produce for consumption on its premises. [49273]

Mr. Thomas: It is DFID's policy that all hot and cold beverages served within the Department are sourced from Fair Trade sources. In addition, our in-house caterer actively promotes and uses Fair Trade products wherever possible, including fruit, confectionery and disposable cups, etc.

Government Accountability

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action the Government are taking to support *(a)* parliaments in African countries and *(b)* the Pan-African Parliament (i) to hold their governments to account and (ii) to improve the effectiveness of public expenditure; and if he will make a statement. [47788]

Hilary Benn: The purpose of DFID support to African parliaments is to help them to hold their governments to account, monitor public expenditure and represent constituency and public interest.

In Kenya, DFID is working with parliamentary committees such as the Public Accounts Committee and the Public Investments Committee to strengthen their oversight of public resource management and expenditure. We are also supporting the Kenyan National Assembly to develop effective information, research and legal services. Our support for a new library will help Members of Parliament and Parliamentary Committees to scrutinise the executive more effectively. Similarly, in Malawi, DFID is providing support to the national parliament to monitor state spending, the budget and taxation. In Nigeria, Tanzania and Sierra Leone, DFID is working jointly with USAID and an international non-government organisation, National Democratic Institute, to strengthen parliamentary committees in these countries. In Ethiopia, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia, we are developing capacity building programmes for parliaments. DFID is also supporting the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank, which supports African parliaments to network and learn from each other.

The Pan Africa Parliament is a young organisation. It is an advisory and consultative body. It agreed its first forward plans at the end of 2005. European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA) have asked for DFID support for the parliament. This is currently under consideration.

Hamas

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact of Hamas's success in the recent elections to the Palestinian Legislature on UK aid to the Palestinian territories. [47953]

Hilary Benn: This is a time of considerable political change in the occupied Palestinian territories. The Government fully support the recent statements by the Quartet and the European Union on 30 January. We also welcome President Abbas' affirmation that the Palestinian Authority is committed to the Roadmap, to previous agreements and obligations between the parties, and to a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Government will continue to monitor the situation carefully in close co-ordination with the EU and other partners. We support the Quartet in urging measures to facilitate the work of the current caretaker government to stabilise public finances.

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46761]

Mr. Thomas: DFID's diversity policy and practice is overseen by a diversity manager, based in the human resources division.

DFID does not organise official celebrations for the festivals of any religion. The DFID 'Policy on Religious Observance' is available on the Department's intranet; I have also arranged for copies of this document to be deposited in the Libraries of the House.

Kenya

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the decision to grant a loan from the World Bank to the government of Kenya; and what representations his Department made concerning this decision. [47814]

Hilary Benn: DFID Kenya supported the World Bank's Reform and Capacity Building Project loan which is focused on public financial management reform and public sector reform. DFID has been closely involved in the design and development of the programme and are supporting complementary public financial management and public sector reform work.

High-level corruption has long been a feature of Kenyan life and the World Bank and DFID remain very concerned, particularly about the recent corruption allegations by the exiled former anti-corruption official, John Githongo. President Kibaki's Government was elected in 2002 on a zero-tolerance of corruption ticket. It is for Kenyans to decide whether they have lived up to this promise. It is for us to decide whether our assistance can be effective in bringing this about.

Mr. Githongo's report is serious and credible. The Kenyan Government now have a unique opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to implement the recently announced ethical code for Ministers. Swift and determined actions by Ministers and others named in the report would send an important signal of commitment to fighting corruption to the people of Kenya, private investors, and the international community. For example, the unprecedented resignation of the Minister of Finance on 1 February, will allow the allegations against him and his Ministry to be fully investigated.

Mr. Wolfowitz has made it very clear to me that he has raised the bar for project approval in corrupt environments. The World Bank has an integrity team looking at their entire portfolio in Kenya. Like us, the World Bank will not go ahead with any project until they are satisfied that the environment is acceptable and that they can account for the funds. Consequently they have decided to delay their support to projects planned in HIV/AIDS, roads, education, and the financial sector, where some concerns are still to be resolved. Clearly the environment is not yet right for their direct budget support either.

At the same time, the international community cannot just call for the highest standards from the sidelines. We have a duty to help the Government of Kenya and the Kenyan people to improve accounting systems to reduce the opportunities for misuse and corruption. The World Bank loan aims specifically to strengthen the very systems that underpin clean and efficient government: transparent, accountable, and responsive budgetary systems and effective public service. Supporting Government systems that reduce the opportunities for corruption is the only way to ensure that all Government of Kenya spending through this and future administrations delivers for its people.

Palestinian Authority

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary, Department for International Development what measures his Department has in place to maintain accountability for

funds transferred from the UK and the European Union for assistance in the Palestinian Authority; and whether additional measures have been introduced following the increase in monetary aid at the G8 summit. [43195]

Hilary Benn: Both UK and European Union budget support for the Palestinian Authority (PA) is conditional on the achievement of specific benchmarks, intended to ensure value for money and the legitimate use of taxpayers' funds. They cover audit and accounting as well as issues such as pension reform, the wage bill and budget processes. The benchmarks require that the PA submit its annual financial statements to the Palestinian Legislative Council and be independently audited.

DFID, along with the International Monetary Fund and other donors that provide budget support through a World Bank Public Financial Management Reform Trust Fund, undertake twice-yearly reviews of the PA's progress against agreed benchmarks and maintain close contact with the PA at all times. Other forms of DFID assistance to the Palestinian people are channelled through organisations whose accounts are independently audited. All trust fund donors, including the UK, decided in December 2005 to hold back budget support payments due to the Palestinian Authority following the failure of the Palestinian administration at the time to meet agreed benchmarks, notably on pension reforms, the wage bill and external audit.

The agreement reached at the G8 Summit was to support the Quartet Special Envoy for Disengagement, Mr James Wolfensohn, in his intention to stimulate a global financial contribution of up to $3 billion per year over the coming three years. At the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting in December, it was agreed by the international community that a pledging conference could take place in spring 2006, provided that progress had been made on political and economic issues.

This is a time of considerable political change in the occupied Palestinian territories. The Government fully support the recent statements by the Quartet and the European Union on 30 January. We also welcome President Abbas' affirmation that the Palestinian Authority is committed to the Roadmap, previous agreements and obligations between the parties, and a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We will continue to monitor the situation carefully in close co-ordination with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the EU and other partners.

Sexual and Reproductive Health

Chris McCafferty: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what steps the Government has taken with *(a)* UN partners, *(b)* EU Governments, *(c)* the US Administration and *(d)* other donor Governments to ensure comprehensive sexuality education remains part of HIV prevention programmes; [48812]

(2) what steps the Government has taken with *(a)* UN partners, *(b)* EU Governments, *(c)* the US Administration and *(d)* other donor Governments to ensure access to sexual and reproductive health supplies, including condoms, remains part of global HIV programming; [48813]

(3) what steps the Government has taken with *(a)* UN partners, *(b)* EU Governments, *(c)* the US Administration and *(d)* other donor Governments to ensure the linkage between sexual and reproductive health and HIV information and services is promoted as part of HIV programming; [48815]

(4) what steps the Government is taking to raise the profile of linked sexual and reproductive health and rights and HIV/AIDS funding, policies and services to combat HIV/AIDS at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session 2006. [48816]

Mr. Thomas: The UK uses every opportunity to promote the scaling up of comprehensive and evidence based HIV programming. We know that unprotected sex is the most common cause of infection, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. Worldwide less than one in five people have access to basic HIV prevention services (including sexual and reproductive health services). This "prevention gap" is fuelling the spread of HIV. Improving access to a comprehensive range of effective HIV prevention information, services and supplies including sex education for young people and condoms for all those who are sexually active, is therefore important and this is what our programmes supports.

The UK led the support for the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) prevention policy "Intensifying HIV prevention" at its June 2005 Programme Coordination Board, which I attended. This policy clearly emphasises the importance of evidence-informed prevention and we took the opportunity in negotiating and agreeing this policy to engage in dialogue with UN partners, European Governments, the US Administration and other donor Governments on the importance of comprehensive sexuality education, linking sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and HIV programmes and access to SRH supplies including female condoms.

Building on this, as EU president, we steered and secured agreement on the first EU wide policy Statement on HIV Prevention launched on World AIDS day 2005. This affirms the commitment of all 25 European member states to comprehensive and evidence based HIV prevention programming including:

- Universal access to SRH health information and services
- Reliable access to essential SRH supplies including condoms
- Universal access to education and life skills and sexuality education
- Action to confront and address gender-based violence

We are co-chairing the Universal Access steering group with UNAIDS. This group is helping to ensure that the commitments made at Gleneagles and at the World Summit to develop and implement a package for HIV prevention, treatment and care with the aim of as close as possible to universal access to treatment for all those who need it by 2010 are turned into action. Within this process we continue to emphasise the importance of integrating comprehensive SRH information, services and supplies, including female and male condoms, and sex and sexuality education into HIV programming.

We believe that SRH services should play a more effective role in efforts to prevent HIV, but recognise that more resources are needed to do this. DFID has recently commissioned some work to explore how

the way we work helps or hinders the linkages between HIV and SRH policy, programming and funding arrangements. The forthcoming United Nations Special Session (UNGASS) in June 2006 will be an important opportunity to highlight the importance of SRH to HIV programming.

The US does have different policies from the UK in a number of areas related to international development. This is particularly so in HIV prevention and SRH. We have, for example, different positions on issues promoting sexual abstinence and ensuring availability of safe abortion services as well as access to clean needles and syringes as harm reduction measures. There has been discussion of these differences in global and bilateral meetings. We will continue our dialogue with the UN, European Governments, the US Administration and other donors; but we will, as we always have, continue to work with US colleagues to promote country-led evidence-based and effective approaches to tackling the HIV epidemic and we will continue to promote the importance of access to a full range of sexual and reproductive health information, services and supplies.

Chris McCafferty: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department's total bilateral aid spending was to reproductive health and HIV/AIDS in 2004-05, broken down by sector. [48814]

Mr. Thomas: In 2004-05, DFID's bilateral expenditure on projects which were targeting effective reproductive health services was £194 million. This figure is reported in the document entitled 'Statistics on International Development' (SID) 2005 (Table 20), (which is available in the Libraries of the House) and reflects all projects that were recorded as having a primary or significant focus on effective reproductive health services. It should be noted that some of these projects will also have had a primary or significant focus on other areas such as education or health systems development.

DFID's overall bilateral spend on reproductive health services is likely to be in excess of £194 million, as further money has been spent on reproductive health by multilateral agencies supported by the UK such as the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Health Organisation, and by partner governments receiving "Poverty Reduction Budget Support" (PRBS) from the UK.

The expenditure figure for all projects that were shown against the tackling HIV and AIDS marker as having a primary or significant focus is also given in SID (Table 20). However, this does not represent DFID's total bilateral expenditure on HIV and AIDS. A methodology for calculating total expenditure on HIV and AIDS related projects has been developed. Figures for HIV and AIDS expenditure in 2004-05 using this methodology will be available soon.

When referring to SID table 20 on DFID expenditure it is important to note that data for different markers cannot be added together. This is to avoid double counting of expenditure.

South-east Asian Tsunami

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the use made of aid allocated following the South East Asian tsunami; and if he will make a statement. [46131]

Mr. Thomas: A study by the National Audit Office of DFID's provision of humanitarian assistance following the tsunami is due to report shortly.

The initial report of the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition found that the relief phase was effective in meeting the immediate survival needs of those affected by the disaster. It also found that the speed with which money was donated and the unprecedented scale of funding allowed an early shift from immediate relief assistance to longer-term recovery. The report highlighted the need for better co-ordination of assistance and improved needs assessment in future disaster response.

An independent evaluation, commissioned by the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) on behalf its member agencies showed that there was rapid and extensive provision of appropriate relief and sensitivity to marginalised groups. Beneficiary surveys show a high level of satisfaction with initial relief work. The report concluded that overall the DEC agencies did a good job. However, there was a need for better co-ordination and greater accountability to beneficiaries.

The World Disasters Report also highlighted weak co-ordination between humanitarian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the response. The Indian Ocean disaster was exceptional in that large numbers of international NGOs were deployed to affected countries and with greater funding than previously experienced.

DFID has also been monitoring its response to the Indian Ocean Disaster. A report will be placed in the Library and published on the DFID website in February 2006.

Statutory Instruments

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State, Department for International Development if he will list the statutory instruments introduced by his Department since 6 May 2005. [46204]

Hilary Benn: None.

Sudan

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what progress has been made in dealing with the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. [47854]

Hilary Benn: There are 1.8 million internally displaced people and 3.4 million dependent on humanitarian assistance in Darfur. The priority is to provide assistance and protection for them, and to find a political solution that will allow people to return home and rebuild their lives.

Recent assessments indicate a major improvement in nutrition in Darfur with malnutrition rates almost half what they were in the previous year. Likewise the recent WHO Darfur survey showed mortality rates have, in

cases, reduced by two-thirds since August 2004. These improvements are due to the massive scale of the humanitarian effort.

The UK is the second largest bilateral humanitarian donor in Darfur (after the US), providing over £96 million since September 2003. These funds have meant that hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people have been provided with shelter, food, water and basic health care.

However, the situation still remains extremely fragile. We are particularly concerned about the impact that deteriorating security is having on humanitarian operations, especially in South and West Darfur. If aid were reduced because of conflict, insecurity or funding shortages, the humanitarian situation would deteriorate very quickly. We are taking every opportunity to call for an improvement in security and to press for a negotiated political agreement in Abuja.

TRANSPORT

A21 Upgrade

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will publish the Regional Transport Board's advice on priorities regarding the proposed A21 upgrade. [49266]

Dr. Ladyman: The south eastern region submitted its advice on priorities to central Government on 31 January. The text of the advice can be found on the regional assembly's website at http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/our_work/advocacy/rfa.html.

Boeing 747–132 (N481EV)

Mr. Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport why was Boeing 747–132, registration N481EV, not diverted to Stansted after encountering engine trouble on 24 April 2004 rather than being allowed to fly over London; and what cargo this aircraft was carrying. [46886]

Ms Buck: The captain of Evergreen 747 N481EV elected to divert to Heathrow rather than Stansted because the weather and visibility were good there and he had identified Heathrow when overflying that airport before the engine trouble occurred. The safety of the aircraft and choice of location for diversion is ultimately the captain's responsibility and air traffic control facilitated his request.

The captain did not notify air traffic control that the aircraft was carrying anything other than normal cargo.

C-385/04 Ruling

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will give details of case C-385/04, Commission of the European Communities *v.* United Kingdom and Northern Ireland; what estimate he has made of the costs of an appeal against the ruling; and if he will make a statement. [48290]

Dr. Ladyman: Case C-385/04 is a case brought by the European Commission against the United Kingdom, pursuant to Article 226 of the EC treaty. The case was brought, because we did not implement Directive 2001/16/EC on the Interoperability of the Trans-European Conventional Rail System within the period prescribed, which ended on 20 April 2003.

The Regulations required to implement that Directive have now been through consultation and are intended to be signed and laid during February 2006. Accordingly, any issue of failure to implement will shortly become otiose and there is therefore no reason to appeal against the Court's ruling.

Commercial Aircraft

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will calculate the statistical probability of a commercial aircraft getting into difficulties in the flight path to Heathrow over London; and if he will make a statement. [46664]

Ms Buck: The Civil Aviation Authority has used its Mandatory Occurrence Reporting Database to review safety events inbound to and departing from London Heathrow, from 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2005. It has identified those reports in which in its opinion the crew experienced or might have experienced difficulties in carrying out normal procedures. In the few cases identified all the flights were completed safely.

Aircraft overfly portions of Greater London on both arrival and departure. Only seven incidents in the period met the chosen criteria, five on approach and two on departure, from 2,817,156 movements. CAA's estimate of the statistical probability of an aircraft getting into difficulties in the flight path to Heathrow is therefore as follows:

Considering approach only, 3.55×10^{-6} events per aircraft landing, or approximately one such event every ¼ million landings.

Considering approach and take off, 2.48×10^{-6} events per aircraft movement, or approximately one such event, every 400,000 movements.

These figures equate to about one event a year.

Concessionary Transport

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many pensioners in Tooting have *(a)* received discounted driving licences and *(b)* qualified for free bus travel in 2005. [47751]

Ms Buck: In the parliamentary constituency of Tooting, over 12,000 people aged 60 or older were eligible for concessionary travel on London's buses in 2005. In the whole of the London borough of Wandsworth, 36,000 people aged 60 or older were eligible. However, the take-up of concessionary travel in the constituency or the borough is not known. In London as a whole, the take-up rate of concessionary travel permits was 85 per cent. in 2004, the most recent year's data available.

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) do not issue discounted driving licences. However, there is no charge for licence renewals either at the age of 70 and over or for medical reasons. The DVLA are unable to provide any information on the number of licence issues that occurred in any particular geographic area.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by his Department in Forest of Dean constituency. [47255]

Ms Buck: The Highways Agency (an Executive agency of the Department for Transport) owns a maintenance depot in the Forest of Dean constituency. The depot is located at Bury Court which is near junction 2 on the M50.

Ece (Loss at Sea)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the environmental consequences arising from the loss at sea of the Ece and its cargo. [49202]

Dr. Ladyman: The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) have consulted extensively with the statutory bodies with responsibilities for the marine environment—primarily Defra for fisheries interests and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee for seabirds and mammals. The cargo of phosphoric acid is not considered to be a significant threat to the marine environment as it will rapidly disperse. The bunker oil already released from the vessel has formed a thin layer of oil on the surface but is expected to disperse naturally. The sea area around the wreck is being monitored on a daily basis. The MCA will respond to any leakage of cargo or bunker oils according to the national contingency plan for marine pollution from shipping and offshore installations.

Eddington Report

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the cost of producing the Eddington report. [43186]

Mr. Darling: Rod Eddington has been asked to provide advice to the Chancellor and myself. He is supported by a team of 10 civil servants drawn from the Department for Transport and HM Treasury. Programme costs are being shared between the Department for Transport and HM Treasury and being met from the existing budgets for those two Departments, with total spend to date totalling approximately £55,000.

European Transport Legislation

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the status is of legislation to establish a *(a)* European highway code and *(b)* vehicle register; and if he will make a statement. [48126]

Dr. Ladyman: I am not aware of any such proposals.

Harbour Revision Orders

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 30 January, to question 43154 on harbour revision orders, why it is not current practice to inform hon. Members about harbour revision orders affecting their constituencies; and if he will make a statement. [47815]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has reviewed its practice in this matter and will be asking applicants to inform hon. Members when applications for Harbour Orders are made affecting their constituencies.

Infrastructure Investment

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made on each of the infrastructure investment projects announced by his Department on *(a)* 2 December 2004, *(b)* 9 July 2003, *(c)* 1 April 2003 and *(d)* 10 December 2002. [43567]

Dr. Ladyman: Tables have been placed in the Libraries of the House which set out the current status of each of the infrastructure investment projects listed in the press releases announced by the Department on *(a)* 2 December 2004, *(b)* 9 July 2003, *(c)* 1 April 2003 and *(d)* 10 December 2002.

M1 (Junction 9)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reasons trees have been felled on both sides of the M1 motorway south of junction 9; and if he will make a statement. [48401]

Dr. Ladyman: The tree and vegetation clearance works currently being carried out adjacent to the M1 motorway between junctions 6A and 10 are part of the advance works for the motorway widening scheme which is due to start construction in March 2006.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* roadworks and *(b)* new road construction is planned in the vicinity of junction 9 of the M1 motorway over the next two years; how long such work will last; whether it will involve M1 lane closures; and if he will make a statement. [48402]

Dr. Ladyman: Construction of the M1 junctions 6A to 10 Widening scheme is due to start in late March 2006 and be completed by December 2008. The works will involve lane restrictions on the motorway, including contra-flow running at times. However, the contractor will be required to keep three lanes open in each direction during the day. Some lane closures will be needed overnight for specific work activities and details of these will be advertised in advance to forewarn motorists. There will also be occasions when this stretch of motorway will have to be closed overnight to allow bridge demolition works to be undertaken safely. The number of such closures will be kept to the absolute minimum and will be widely advertised in advance, along with details of the diversion routes. Advance works including site clearance of vegetation, site fencing and the construction of site compounds began in December 2005.

M181

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action he intends to take to tackle the uneven surface of the M181 motorway; in what timescale; and if he will make a statement. [48404]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency expects to carry out localised repairs on the uneven surface of the M181 in the coming financial year (2006–07). The Agency will also be undertaking a study of the M181 road surface

and depending on the findings of this study, resurfacing on parts of this route may be carried out within the next three years.

Ministerial Meetings

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have had with the five largest bus companies in the last eight months. [48807]

Ms Buck: Department for Transport Ministers and officials have meetings with representatives from bus companies on a regular basis to discuss a range of bus and public transport issues.

Graham Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list meetings he has held with *(a)* passenger transport authorities and *(b)* passenger transport executives in the last eight months. [48808]

Ms Buck: The Secretary of State has met members of the Passenger Transport Authorities and Passenger Transport Executives on several occasions during his programme of visits around the country in the last eight months.

Motoring Offences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will bring forward proposals to make it a criminal offence for the driver of a motor vehicle deliberately to stop at a green traffic light and to refuse to move the vehicle; and if he will make a statement. [48723]

Dr. Ladyman: There is no need to create a new criminal offence. The existing provisions under the Highways Act 1980, the Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 are adequate for dealing with people who drive without reasonable consideration for other road users, and with drivers of stationary vehicles that are causing danger or obstruction at traffic signals.

Off-peak Travel

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to extend free off-peak travel on public transport to all 14 to 19-year-olds. [48219]

Ms Buck: It is already open to individual local authorities to offer concessionary bus travel to people up to the age of 18. There are no plans at present to make such provision statutory.

Park and Ride

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport in which *(a)* cities and *(b)* towns new park and ride schemes have been established in the last five years. [40583]

Ms Buck: Local transport authorities outside London (county councils, unitary areas and, in each former metropolitan county, the passenger transport authority and metropolitan district councils jointly) produced their five year transport plans in 2000 and every year since then have produced progress reports annually. They include forms listing how many schemes have been completed, but not their exact locations. Also the website www.parkandride.net lists most park and ride schemes.

Quiet Lanes

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent guidance he *(a)* has issued and *(b)* plans to issue to local authorities about the implementation of his policy of quiet lanes in rural areas. [47524]

Ms Buck: Quiet lanes are a Countryside Agency initiative that has the support of the Department for Transport.

In June 2004 the Department for Transport issued Traffic Advisory Leaflet 3/04 which described the two Quiet Lanes National Demonstration Projects and their impacts and offers advice for future schemes. Copies of this leaflet have been placed in the House Library.

The Department for Transport is currently finalising work on guidance on issues that local traffic authorities in England must consider when deciding whether or not to designate a road as a quiet lane (or a home zone) and when making use orders and speed orders. It is intended to publish the guidance as a Department for Transport Circular soon, in parallel with the publication of regulations.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent assessment he has made of the implementation of his policy of quiet lanes in rural areas, with particular reference to local authority areas in the south-east of England. [47525]

Ms Buck: Quiet lanes is a Countryside Agency initiative that has the support of the Department for Transport.

The Department commissioned research to examine the impact of the two National Demonstration Projects in west Kent and north Norfolk. The findings of this research were published by TRL Limited in 2004 and are summarised the Department for Transport's Traffic Advisory Leaflet 3/04 which was published in June 2004. Copies of this leaflet have been placed in the House Library.

The Transport Act 2000 gave local traffic authorities the powers to designate roads for which they are the traffic authority as quiet lanes. There is no requirement in the Act for authorities to provide the Department with details of their quiet lanes schemes.

Quiet lanes are identified in LTP guidance and contribute to the measures designed to improve shared priorities and quality of life issues. However, there has, so far, been no specific assessment of the impact they have had.

Railways

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make it his policy that funding for the policing of the railways continues to be provided solely by the railway industry; and if he will make a statement. [48365]

Derek Twigg: The Government remains committed to the principle that the costs of policing the railway should remain largely funded by the industry itself and most recently confirmed this policy when my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced the current review of the British Transport Police (BTP) in his statement to the House on 11 October 2005.

Road Improvements

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the Answer of 24 January 2006, Official Report, column 1994W, on road improvements, how many of the Highways Agency Targeted Programme of Improvements projects are on the basis of *(a)* fixed price, *(b)* time and materials and *(c)* other. [47319]

Dr. Ladyman: Three of the Highways Agency Targeted Programme of Improvements projects are in category *(a)*, 39 of them are in category *(b)* and 17 of them are in category *(c)*.

Three categories have been interpreted as follows:

(a) Fixed price: PFI (private finance initiative) schemes or the pilot fixed price contract for A500 City Road and Stoke Junction

(b) Time and materials: The ECI (early contractor involvement) form of contract where the majority of the payments are made on actual cost against the target cost plus fixed profit and overheads

(c) Other: This has been taken to include ECC (engineering and construction contract) option B (priced contract with bill of quantities) and ECC option C (target price with activity schedule).

Road Maintenance

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department has spent on minor repairs to trunk roads and motorways in the last three years. [47488]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 31 January 2006]*: The motorways and trunks roads of the strategic road network are managed by the Highways Agency, an executive Agency of the Department for Transport. The reporting of the cost of managing these roads is not broken down by category of road. The funding for minor repairs to the strategic network is contained within a wider programme of maintenance, which covers a number of network components such as carriageways, footways, cycle tracks, drainage, street lighting, signs, traffic signals, guard railing, safety fencing and embankment/cutting slopes. It is not possible to report expenditure exclusively for the 'minor repairs' element of a much wider budget. The figures for repairing roads on the network in the last three years are shown in the following table.

£ million

	Maintenance[1]
2002–03	796
2003–04	726
2004–05	732

[1] Resource and capital expenditure.

Road Traffic Accidents

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* fatal and *(b)* serious road traffic accidents occurred in the Tooting constituency in each year since 1997. [47756]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of fatal and serious personal injury road accidents that occurred in the parliamentary constituency of Tooting between 1997 and 2004 (the latest year for which figures are available), is given in the table. The accidents are those which occurred within the 2004 boundary of Tooting constituency.

Fatal and serious personal injury road accidents in Tooting constituency: 1997–2004

	Fatal Accidents	*Serious Accidents*
1997	4	71
1998	2	71
1999	2	38
2000	2	48
2001	1	54
2002	2	48
2003	6	36
2004	3	43

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* young drivers and *(b)* passengers of young drivers have been killed in road accidents in the last five years; and what steps the Government are taking to reduce these figures. [47918]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of young car drivers, and the number of passengers of young car drivers killed in personal injury road accidents between 2000 and 2004 (the latest year for which figures are available) are shown in the following table.

Young car drivers and passengers of young car drivers killed in personal injury road accidents: 2000–04

	Age of driver			
	17 to 21		*22 to 25*	
	Driver fatalities[1]	*Passenger fatalities*[1]	*Driver fatalities*[1]	*Passenger fatalities*[1]
2000	195	158	117	72
2001	210	182	123	79
2002	215	157	132	72
2003	228	182	132	78
2004	214	189	144	84

[1] Deaths within 30 days of the accident.

On measures to reduce these casualties, I refer to my answers to the hon. Member for Tewksbury (Mr. Robertson) on 6 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1118W and to my hon. Friend the Member for Hartlepool (Mr. Wright) on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2023W.

Rotherwas Access Road

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when a decision will be made on the Rotherwas access road in Hereford. [48433]

Dr. Ladyman: We are currently considering advice from the west midland region about the prioritisation of the Rotherwas access road and other schemes in the west midlands area. We plan to make an announcement responding to this advice in the spring.

School Transport

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to *(a)* subsidise and *(b)* facilitate independent travel to school by pupils. [48217]

Ms Buck: It is already open to individual local authorities to offer concessionary bus travel to people up to the age of 18. There are no plans at present to make such provision statutory.

Facilitating independent travel to school is a key objective of the 'Travelling to School' project which aims to make it possible for as many pupils as possible to walk, cycle or use public transport to travel to school.

Shellhaven Port

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he has taken to ensure that the developers of Shellhaven port make a financial contribution to the development of rail freight infrastructure in the Greater London area and beyond. [48734]

Dr. Ladyman: The Secretary of State will take into account all relevant matters in considering his decision on the proposed London Gateway port at Shellhaven. Interested parties have been invited to comment on representations received on issues, including road and rail access, raised in the Secretary of State's minded approval letter of 20 July 2005.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the revenue was from fines resulting from speed camera convictions in Cambridgeshire in the latest year for which figures are available; and what sums were passed to *(a)* the Consolidated Fund and *(b)* the Cambridgeshire Safety Camera Partnership. [47920]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department only holds this information for offences detected by the Cambridgeshire Safety Camera Partnership within the national safety camera programme. The information is available for financial year 2004-05 and is shown in the following table.

Cambridgeshire: Fixed penalties from offences detected by cameras 2004-05

	£
Total Fine Revenue	1,196,460
Partnership Costs	1,021,261
Passed to Consolidated Fund	175,199

Transport Innovation Fund

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the criteria are for a successful bid to the Transport Innovation Fund. [47895]

Ms Buck: The criteria against which allocations will be made from the Transport Innovation Fund are set out in the paper "Transport Innovation Fund: Guidance: January 2006", which was announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport in a written statement on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 66–67WS.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will place in the Library a copy of the documentation relating to each *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful bid by local authorities for the Transport Innovation Fund. [47898]

Ms Buck: There have been no bids for the Transport Innovation Fund as yet. I have, though, placed in the Library a copy of the decision letters sent to all authorities which bid in October 2005 for pump-priming funds to support the development of schemes including demand management.

My right. hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced details of the winning bidders in November 2005 (28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 3WS) and the bids can be found on the DFT's website at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_foi/documents/divisionhomepage/610460.hcsp

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the written statement of 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 66–67WS, on the Transport Innovation Fund, if he will list the schemes which are expected to make a major contribution to national productivity for which existing sources of funding are insufficient. [48721]

Ms Buck: The basis for allocating funding from the Transport Innovation Fund to schemes expected to contribute to national productivity is set out in the paper "Transport Innovation Fund: Guidance: January 2006" published by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport on 26 January. No view has yet been taken on which schemes may meet the criteria set out in that guidance, as we wish first to seek the views of the regional development agencies.

Transport Projects (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding his Department has provided for transport projects in Tamworth since 1997. [48645]

Ms Buck: Since the introduction of local transport plans in 2000, the local authorities in the Staffordshire local transport plan area have received around £96 million in funding for local transport projects and maintenance schemes. In addition Staffordshire county council has also received £18.5 million in funding for major transport schemes.

Between 1997 and 2000 the local authorities in Staffordshire county council received £27 million in funding for local transport capital investment.

The Department does not have the data to identify a figure separately for local transport investment in Tamworth.

The Highways Agency has also funded major resurfacing and repair work to improve the safety of the A5 Tamworth bypass at a cost of £1.53 million. The

work involved resurfacing both carriageways over a 5 km stretch of the A5 between the Marlborough Way junction and the A453 Mile Oak junction. They have also funded work to improve safety barriers and drainage. The work started in October 2005 and was completed in December 2005.

The Tamworth constituency will benefit from the Trent Valley four tracking scheme on the West Coast main line—19 kms of additional two tracks at a cost of £327 million. The work started in 2003 and will be complete in 2008.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate his Department has made of the costs of redundancies arising from the reorganisation of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. [47298]

Barry Gardiner: I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer given in another place by my noble Friend Lord Bach of Lutterworth to the noble Baroness Byford on 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column WA107.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the annual expenditure on vehicles by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39991]

Alan Johnson: The following figures are those recorded for car hire and leasing over the years in question.

	Actuals		*Budget*	
Entity	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
DTI	214,045	201,694	209,774	96,697
UK Trade and Investment (Admin)	5,569	6,586	24,709	10,682
Employment Tribunals Service	29,059	10,167	7,584	9,483
Insolvency Service	54,505	23,480	16,165	0

The Insolvency Service have not used the Department's finance system since April 2005 and we therefore have no budget information for them for this year.

The regional split of this expenditure cannot be supplied without incurring disproportionate cost. Information on the Department's other agencies, public bodies and sponsors is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

For details of expenditure on ministerial vehicles provided to the Department by the Government Car and Despatch Agency I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 20 December 2005 from the chief executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker). Copies of this letter are available in the Libraries of the House.

Employers Liability Assurance

Jon Cruddas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether it is a requirement for companies to record details of their employers' liability insurance on their annual returns to Companies House. [46346]

Barry Gardiner: It is not a requirement for companies to include details of their employers' liability insurance on their annual returns to Companies House.

Employment

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people have been employed in the manufacturing sector in each year since June 2001. [48093]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The table shows the number of people employed in the manufacturing sector from summer quarters of the Labour Force Survey. These figures are from the Office for National Statistics.

Manufacturing sector employment[1]
United Kingdom: summer quarters[2] *2001 to 2005, not seasonally adjusted*

	Number of people employed
2001	4,433,317
2002	4,297,866
2003	4,022,643
2004	3,841,459
2005	3,731,802

[1] Employment includes: employees; self-employed; Government employment and training programs; and unpaid family workers.
[2] Summer quarters cover June, July and August.
Source:
Summer quarters[2] of Labour Force Survey

European Commissioner for Trade

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what dates he held meetings with the European Commissioner for Trade since October 2004. [47301]

Alan Johnson: My predecessor, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health, and I have met the European Commissioner for Trade on the following occasions since October 2004.

	Occasion
20 October 2004	Bilateral dinner, London
14 June 2005	Bilateral meeting, Brussels
18 July 2005	Informal EU Trade Ministers' dinner, Brussels
5 and 7 September 2005	EU-China and EU-India summits
21 November 2005	General Affairs Council and informal EU Trade Ministers' dinner, Brussels
11 to 17 December 2005	Regular meetings throughout the WTO Ministerial, Hong Kong

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what telephone conversations he has held with the European Trade Commissioner since October 2004. [47302]

Alan Johnson: My predecessor, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and I have been in regular contact with the European Trade Commissioner by telephone during this period.

First-class Letters

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of first-class letters posted in the Peterborough city council unitary authority area met Royal Mail's online delivery target in the last year for which figures are available. [48668]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Royal Mail Plc. The chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Flexible Working Hours

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the likely impact on South Swindon of a 24-hour economy; and if he will make a statement. [31659]

Alun Michael: DTI has made no specific assessment of the likely impact of a 24-hour economy on South Swindon. The Department sponsors the South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA), which has a statutory purpose to further economic development in its area. The economic and physical regeneration of Swindon town centre is a key project for SWRDA.

Local authorities have an important role in assessing and responding to local economic need. I understand that Swindon borough council is considering how to take forward the findings of a recent review of the town centre night time economy, and is working to establish a new partnership which will, with SWRDA and the New Swindon Company (Swindon's urban regeneration company), take forward development of Swindon's economy.

Freepost Operators

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will introduce legislation to make illegal the deliberate imposition of costs upon a freepost operator through campaign mail. [46736]

Barry Gardiner: Misuse of the 'Freepost' product is an operational and contractual matter for the attention of the product's owner. Royal Mail have procedures for managing potential misuse of the service and these ensure that freepost operators are not penalised by systematic abuse.

Marine Bill

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the written answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1767W, on the Marine Bill, when the Government will undertake the public consultation on the Bill. [47529]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have been asked to reply.

The Government are planning to undertake the public consultation on the Marine Bill over a period of 12 weeks commencing in March 2006.

National Minimum Wage

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the number of employees in Wales who have been affected by the minimum wage since 2003. [48563]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI estimates that approximately 70,000 people in Wales stood to benefit from the October 2003 uprating of the national minimum wage, based on the ONS' spring 2003 central estimates of low pay, the labour force survey and the 2003 new earnings survey.

The DTI estimates that approximately 70,000 people in Wales stood to benefit from the October 2004 uprating of the national minimum wage, based on the 2004 annual survey of hours and earnings and taking into account earnings inflation from spring and October 2004.

The DTI estimates that approximately 50,000 people in Wales will be covered by the October 2005 uprating of the national minimum wage, based on the 2005 annual survey of hours and earnings and taking into account earnings inflation from spring and October 2005.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the number of employees in Scotland whose wage has been affected by the minimum wage since 2003. [48564]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI estimates that approximately 140,000 people in Scotland stood to benefit from the October 2003 uprating of the national minimum wage, based on the ONS' spring 2003 central estimates of low pay, the Labour Force Survey and the 2003 New Earnings Survey.

The DTI estimates that approximately 130,000 people in Scotland stood to benefit from the October 2004 uprating of the national minimum wage, based on the 2004 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings and taking into account earnings inflation from spring and October 2004.

The DTI estimates that approximately 100,000 people in Scotland will be covered by the October 2005 uprating of the national minimum wage, based on the 2005 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings and taking into account earnings inflation from spring and October 2005.

Personal Debt Advice

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what personal debt advice services are funded by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [48736]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department actively supports services that provide free and impartial personal debt advice. We have committed £1 million a year to National Debtline, a telephone debt advice service, funded jointly with industry and other Government Departments. This is helping to fund the recruitment of 30 additional trainee advisers and assisting with progress towards increasing their adviser resource to 84 by 2007.

The Department is also responsible for administering £45 million of the Treasury's £120 million Financial Inclusion Fund in grants for Face-to-Face debt advice providers in England and Wales. This funding, scheduled for distribution over the coming two financial years, is aimed at increasing the capacity and availability of Face-to-Face debt advice across the most financially excluded communities and vulnerable social groups.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he was first informed by the Department for Work and Pensions that its contract with Post Office Ltd. for the provision of the Post Office card account would cease in 2010. [48674]

Barry Gardiner: It was made clear from the outset that the contract for the Post Office card account was an interim measure and would end in 2010.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the likely impact on the post office network of abolishing the Post Office card account after 2010. [48678]

Barry Gardiner: The Post Office card account is only one of a large number of ways that people can access benefit and pension money form the Post Office. Post Office Ltd. is looking to develop new banking and savings products, which might offer still further options for card account customers who want to keep getting their money from the Post Office.

Benefits payments through post offices are just one of several issues which affect the future role of the Post Office and will need to be considered in that wider context.

Post Office Network

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action the Government have taken in response to the conclusions and recommendations of the Cabinet Office Performance and Innovation Unit report, Counter Revolution: Modernising the Post Office Network, published in 2000. [48672]

Barry Gardiner: The Performance and Innovation Unit report was helpful in identifying the issues facing the post office network in 2000. Government accepted all the report's recommendations.

We have committed around £2 billion in support of the introduction of a range of measures aimed at creating an efficient and sustainable post office network. The network still faces significant challenges and we are considering what further measures may be required.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the Government funding arrangements provided in respect of the post office network since 1997. [48673]

Barry Gardiner: There was no significant funding for the Post Office Corporation prior to 1999, but since then Government support of almost £2 billion in total has been made available to Post Office Ltd. including:

	£ million
Horizon IT project	480
Contribution to "Your Guide" project	25
Support for the rural network to 2006	450
Community post office support	2
Support for urban network reinvention	210
Deprived urban schemes in England	15
Repayment of historic debt to Royal Mail[1]	726

[1] To April 2003.

The Government have also decided to extend support to the rural network for two further years to 2008, worth another £300 million. This is subject to state aid clearance.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many rural post offices in *(a)* England, *(b)* Yorkshire and *(c)* Beverley and Holderness have closed in the last 12 months. [48483]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. (POL). The chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Postal Services

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total number of sub post offices in each county council and metropolitan borough area was in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2005. [46678]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. The Chief Executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total number of sub-post offices in the Milton Keynes unitary authority area was in *(a)* 2001 and *(b)* 2005. [47305]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. (POL). The chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the minimum number of post office branches required by the Royal Mail to fulfil the terms of its universal service obligation. [49198]

Barry Gardiner: This is a matter for the postal services regulator, Postcomm.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* sub-post offices and *(b)* post offices there were in (i) Peterborough city council unitary authority area and (ii) Peterborough constituency in each year since 1997. [49290]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. (POL). The chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Royal Mail

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with

ministerial colleagues in the Treasury on the tax treatment of employees of Royal Mail arising from a distribution of shares in Royal Mail to those employees. [46912]

Barry Gardiner: There have been no such discussions.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many bicycles each Royal Mail delivery office has for their work, and if the Royal Mail will increase the use of bicycles for delivery. [47369]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Royal Mail Plc. The chief executive has been asked to reply direct to my hon. Friend.

State-owned Enterprises

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment the Government have made of the extent to which new investment has been withdrawn as a result of the EU ban on investing in state-owned enterprises. [48889]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There is no ban on investment in state-owned enterprises. State investment in any company whether publicly or privately owned must comply with the European state aid rules.

Statutory Instruments

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the statutory instruments introduced by his Department since 6 May 2005. [46207]

Alan Johnson: The OPSI (HMSO) SI Registrar (siregistrar@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk) can provide a list of statutory instruments issued by individual Departments. Statutory Instruments which have been originated by Departments but eventually made by the Privy Council Office, are only listed under the Privy Council Office.

During the period 6 May 2005 to 2 February 2006 my Department registered 68 Statutory Instruments with the SI Registrar (one of which was a Privy Council Order). These are listed as follows:

2005 3524 Insolvency Practitioners and Insolvency Services Account (Fees) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order

2005 3469 Communications Act 2003 (Maximum Penalty and Disclosure of Information) Order

2005 3175 Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Commencement No 2) Order

2005 3525 Noise Emission in the Environment by Equipment for Use Outdoors (Amendment) Regulations

2005 3558 Enterprise Act 2002 (Merger Fees) (Amendment) Order

2005 2483 Energy Administration Rules

2005 1871 Employment Appeal Tribunal (Amendment) Rules

2005 1865 Employment Tribunals (Constitution and Rules of Procedure) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations

2005 2464 Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) (Amendment) Order

2005 3153 Renewable Energy (Designation of Area) (Scottish Ministers) Order

2005 2001 Dangerous Substances and Preparations (Nickel) (Safety) Regulations

2005 2471 Patents Act 2004 (Commencement No. 3 and Transitional Provisions) Order

2005 2496 Patents (Amendment) Rules

2005 3135 Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Overseas Relationships) Order

2005 1803 General Product Safety Regulations

2005 3103 Monopolies and Restrictive Practices (Dental Goods), (Imported Hardwood and Softwood Timber) and (Estate Agents) (Revocation) Order

2005 1788 Community Interest Company Regulations

2005 3098 Films (Exclusivity Agreements) (Revocation) Order

2005 3137 Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Relationships Arising Through Civil Partnership) Order

2005 2340 Enterprise Act 2002 (Bodies Designated to make Super-complaints) (Amendment) Order

2005 2114 Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Amendments to Subordinate Legislation) Order

2005 3346 Cosmetic Products (Safety) (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations

2005 3347 Competition Act 1998 (Public Transport Ticketing Schemes Block Exemption) (Amendment) Order

2005 2055 Offshore Petroleum Activities (Oil Pollution Prevention and Control) Regulations

2005 3352 Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order

2005 2242 Electricity (Exemption from the Requirement for a Generation Licence) (England and Wales) Order

2005 2243 Company Auditors (Recognition Orders) (Application Fees) and the Companies Act 1989 (Recognised Supervisory Bodies) (Periodical Fees) (Revocation) Regulations

2005 2280 Companies Act 1985 (Investment Companies and Accounting and Audit Amendments) Regulations

2005 2281 Companies (Summary Financial Statement) (Amendment) Regulations

2005 2282 Companies (Revision of Defective Accounts and Report) (Amendment) Regulations

2005 3257 Export Control (Uzbekistan) Order

2005 2019 National Minimum Wage Regulations 1999 (Amendment) Regulations

2005 1984 Bank Accounts Directive (Miscellaneous Banks) (Amendment) Regulations

2005 2339 Community Design Regulations

2005 2421 Employment Code of Practice (Access and Unfair Practices during Recognition and Derecognition Ballots) Order

2005 1989 Limited Liability Partnerships (Amendment) Regulations

2005 1987 Partnerships and Unlimited Companies (Accounts) (Amendment) Regulations

2005 1985 Insurance Accounts Directive (Miscellaneous Insurance Undertakings) (Amendment) Regulations

2005 2364 Compromise Agreements (Description of Person) Order

2005 2467 Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations

2005 2365 Specified Body (Consumer Claims) Order

2005 3129 Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Overseas Relationships and Consequential, etc. Amendments) Order

2005 3442 Companies Act 1985 (Operating and Financial Review) (Repeal) Regulations

2005 2417 Companies (Disclosure of Auditor Remuneration) Regulations

2005 2418 Enterprise Act 2002 (Part 8 Community Infringements Specified UK Laws) (Amendment) Order

2005 2419 Employment Relations Act 2004 (Commencement No.4 and Transitional Provisions) Order

2005 2420 Employment Code of Practice (Industrial Action Ballots and Notice to Employers) Order

2005 2337 Companies Act 1989 (Delegation) Order

2005 2746 Companies (Welsh Language Forms) (Amendment) Regulations

2005 2965 Energy Act 2004 (Commencement No.6) Order

2005 2670 Restriction On Conduct (Specialist Advertising Services) (Revocation) Order

2005 1516 Insolvent Partnerships Amendment Order

2005 1815 Cosmetic Products (Safety) (Amendment) Regulations

2005 2705 Consumer Protection (Code of Practice for Traders on Price Indications) Approval Order

2005 2718 Office of Communications (Membership) Order

2005 1401 Textile Products (Indications of Fibre Content) (Amendment) Regulations

2005 2747 Companies (Forms) (Amendment) Regulations

2005 2748 Restriction of the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations

2005 2751 Supply of Relevant Veterinary Medicinal Products Order

2005 1646 Electricity and Gas Appeals (Designation and Exclusion) Order

2005 1654 Nuclear Industries Security (Fees) Regulations

2005 3041 Electricity (Exemption from the Requirements for a Generation Licence) (Scotland) Order

2005 1677 Export Control (Democratic Republic of Congo) Order

2005 3057 Weights and Measures (Miscellaneous Foods) (Amendment) Order

2006 18 Performances (Moral Rights, etc.) Regulations

2006 35 Copyright (Certification of Licensing Scheme for Educational Recording of Broadcasts and Cable Programmes) (Educational Recording Agency Limited) Order

2006 99 Working Time (Amendment) Regulations

Privy Council Order

2005 3431 European Communities (Definition of Treaties) (WIPO Copyright Treaty and WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty) Order

Telephone Cold Calling

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what further steps his Department is considering to curb telephone cold calling. [48095]

Alun Michael: Under the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003, consumers are offered protection from telephone cold calling through the Telephone Preference Service (TPS) scheme. This has proved to be an effective deterrent with 11.2 million registrations to date. No one is allowed to make an unsolicited marketing call to a subscriber who has either previously notified the caller that they do not wish to receive such calls or has been registered with the TPS scheme for at least 28 days. We have no evidence of any need to consider further measures. We have no evidence of any need to consider further measures.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Leader of the House what total sum has been received by his Office for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48494]

Nigel Griffiths: No money has been specifically received by the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Compensation Bill

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the likely impact of the Compensation Bill on collective conditional fee arrangements. [47948]

Bridget Prentice: The Government considers that part two of the Bill, which introduces the statutory regulation of claims management services, will have no impact on collective conditional fee agreements. Statutory regulation will ensure that those who provide claims management services must abide by rules and a code of practice, providing much needed consumer protection. This will not affect the various methods available for funding claims.

Family Law Act

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what average time it has taken for proceedings to be concluded under the new provision 42A of the Family Law Act 1996, as amended by the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004. [45696]

Bridget Prentice: This information is not collated centrally. Part of our places for the implementation of the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims and Victims Act 2004 is the better collection of statistical information. We are planning to research the impact of breaches and the implementation of the provisions of the Act.

Land Registry

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will take steps to ensure that the Land Registry holds details of the titles of all land in England; and if she will make a statement. [45940]

Bridget Prentice: Land Registry holds about 21 million registered titles to land in England and Wales. Most urban land is registered but much rural land remains unregistered. Registration is compulsory after certain specific events, for example, a sale of land or a transfer on death. Land Registry cannot otherwise compel registration but has a long term strategy of working towards a comprehensive register by persuading landowners of the benefits of voluntarily registering their holdings.

Office Equipment

Mr. Weir: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines (i) her Department, (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) Executive agency and (C) other public body for

which her Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each English region and (4) Northern Ireland owned in (x) 2003-04 and (y) 2004-05. [40092]

Ms Harman: Most of the Department's IT equipment is provided under service supply contracts with service providers. Details of the equipment owned by the Department, its Executive agencies, and its non-departmental public bodies, for which records are held, is provided in the following table.

Hardware	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Department of Constitutional Affairs		
PCs/Desktop Machines	4,449	3,568
Laptops	710	556
Servers	43	57
Printers	2,166	1,878
Scanners	—	4
Law Commission		
PCs/Desktop Machines	11	11
Laptops	1	1
Printers	2	2
Printer/Fax Machine	1	1
Printer/Scanner	1	1
Fax machines	2	2
Scanners	1	1
Photocopiers	1	0
HM Land Registry		
PCs/Desktop Machines	224	254
Laptops	64	59
Servers	9	8
Printers	626	679
Scanners	18	18
Photocopiers	650	631
Fax Machines	203	197
Information Commissioner's Office		
PCs/Desktop Machines	—	—
Laptops	—	—
Servers	—	—
Printers	—	—
Scanners	—	—
Photocopiers	8	8
Fax Machines	13	13
Council on Tribunals		
PCs/Desktop Machines	1	1
Laptops	2	2
Printers	1	1
Photocopiers	1	1
Fax Machines	2	2
Office of the Legal Services Complaints Commissioner		
Laptops	1	1
Fax Machines	1	1
National Archives		
PCs/Desktop Machines	946	1,022
Laptops	50	58
Servers	129	172
Printers	264	289
Scanners	38	53
Photocopiers	1	1
Fax Machines	16	16

Northern Ireland Court Service

PCs/Desktop Machines	79
Laptops	28
Servers	5
Printers	21
Scanners	11
Photocopiers	
Fax Machines	
Owned in 2003-04	58
Owned in 2004-05	53

The Information Technology services for the Northern Ireland Court Service are provided through a Private Finance Initiative agreement and as such the majority of IT hardware items remain the property of the Service Provider. The Court Service has however, purchased certain items outside the Agreement and these details are shown above.

Legal Services Commission

Hardware	*Position at 20 December 2005*
PCs/Desktop Machines	1,974
Laptops	334
Servers	131
Printers	251
Scanners	14
Photocopiers	173
Fax Machines	27

[1] The Legal Services Commission inventory reflects the position at 20 December 2005. The Legal Services Commission also has 73 multi-functional devices, which are photocopies/printers. It is not possible to tell which are just used as photocopiers. These 73 are not included in the printer total given above

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Randall: To ask the Solicitor-General how many prosecutions for breaches of antisocial behaviour orders the Crown Prosecution Service has brought in (*a*) Uxbridge and (*b*) the London borough of Hillingdon. [48518]

The Solicitor-General: Police records are kept for the London borough of Hillingdon, which includes Uxbridge. Separate figures for Uxbridge are not retained. These records denote breaches of all antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) granted within the borough of Hillingdon. They also include ASBOs breached in Hillingdon but granted within other boroughs.

Figures for breaches of ASBOs prior to 2004 are unavailable.

In 2004, five adults were prosecuted for breach of an antisocial behaviour order.

In 2005, 42 adults and two youths were prosecuted for breach of an antisocial behaviour order.

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General what representations he has received about the performance of the Crown Prosecution Service in (*a*) Essex and (*b*) Southend in each of the last nine years for which information is available. [47965]

The Solicitor-General: A review of records indicates that neither I nor my predecessors have received representations from any MPs other than the hon. Member concerning the performance of the Crown

Prosecution Service (CPS) in Essex during the last nine years. I am told that three letters have been received from members of the public during this period making complaints about CPS performance in Essex, none of which appear to relate to Southend.

HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI) has recently conducted an "Overall Performance Assessment" of CPS Essex. The report is anticipated to be published during March.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General how much the Director of the Crown Prosecution Service has received in bonuses in each of the last two financial years for which figures are available. [48111]

The Solicitor-General: The salary arrangements for the Director of Public Prosecutions do not provide for bonus payments.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General on how many occasions the Crown Prosecution Service was *(a)* one day and *(b)* one week too late in taking action against a defendant in each of the last five years for which information is available. [48116]

The Solicitor-General: Generally speaking, there are no limitations on the time for taking criminal proceedings for indictable offences. In summary proceedings, the Justices will not try information alleging an offence unless the information was laid within six months from the time the offence was committed. However, the Crown Prosecution Service maintains no central records of occasions when this limitation is breached.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General how many complaints have been made about the Crown Prosecution Service since 1997; how many of those complaints have been upheld in each year; and what action was taken to redress each successful complaint. [48874]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) maintains a record of the number of responses sent to members of the public who make a complaint.

The figures for each year since records began are as follows:

	Number
1998[1]	2,423
1999	2,192
2000	2,793
2001	2,815
2002	3,080
2003	3,624
2004	3,915
2005	4,338

[1] April to December only.

A complaint may be made by any party in a criminal case or by a member of the public with no direct involvement in proceedings. Complaints may relate to a range of issues including the performance of one or more of the agencies involved or to matters of general policy. Therefore, it is not possible for the CPS to divide complaints into those upheld, those rejected, and those where redress was offered.

When responding to complainants, the CPS seeks to explain its role in criminal proceedings, the principles on which its decisions are based and, where there has been an admitted error, what steps it will take to ensure that the error will not happen again. However, it may not be appropriate to enter into a discussion of the evidence in particular cases, particularly with complainants who are not directly involved in a case.

Prosecution Statistics

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Solicitor-General how many and what percentage of prosecutions in Cambridgeshire were aborted in 2004–05. [48664]

The Solicitor-General: CPS Cambridgeshire finalised 15,122 defendant cases in the magistrates courts in 2004–05. A conviction rate of 85.6 per cent. (against a national average of 80.8 per cent.) was achieved. The discontinuance rate in the magistrates court was 9.5 per cent. against a national rate of 12.5 per cent. The rate of unsuccessful outcomes, which includes discontinuances, cases dismissed after trial and other disposals, as a percentage of completed cases in the magistrates court was 14.4 per cent. (against a national percentage figure of 19.2 per cent.).

CPS Cambridgeshire finalised 1,259 defendant cases in the crown court. A conviction rate of 81.2 per cent. was achieved (against a national average of 75.8 per cent.). 9.9 per cent. of Crown court cases resulted in a judge ordered acquittal or discontinuance, compared with a national figure of 14.2 per cent. The rate of unsuccessful outcomes, which includes judge ordered acquittals, acquittals after trial and other disposals, as a percentage of completed cases in the Crown court was 18.8 per cent. (against a national percentage figure of 24.2 per cent.).

The combined unsuccessful outcomes rate for magistrates and Crown courts was 14.7 per cent. (against a national percentage figure of 19.6 per cent.).

DEFENCE

Active Service Prosecutions

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the cases since 1997 in which all proceedings are complete where *(a)* military and *(b)* civil prosecutions have been brought against UK service personnel in respect of actions carried out on active service; what the (i) verdict and (ii) sentence imposed was in each case; and how many cases against UK personnel involving prosecution for actions carried out on active service are underway. [48010]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will make a statement on the degree of liability for prosecution in respect of actions carried out by UK service personnel on active service when hostilities involving the United Kingdom *(a)* have and *(b)* have not been formally declared; [48011]

(2) to what extent and in what respects the applicability of the law on armed forces conflict is affected by whether the United Kingdom is combating *(a)* another country and *(b)* stateless insurgents and terrorists; [48008]

(3) by what means the chain of command in the UK armed forces protects service personnel on active service from prosecution arising from mistakes made in the course of combat; and whether such measures are affected by the existence or otherwise of a formal declaration of hostilities. [48007]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 2 February 2006]*: The chain of command protects service personnel by ensuring that they are properly trained and equipped, understand their duty and are deployed appropriately. Members of HM armed forces are always subject to military law, which comprises the criminal law of England and Wales and specified disciplinary offences. Court-martial proceedings will only take place after a decision to prosecute by the relevant service prosecuting authority who acts independently and objectively, after consideration of the available evidence.

A formal declaration of war or hostilities is not required to bring the law of armed conflict into effect, and whether a situation of armed conflict exists will depend on the facts and circumstances.

Afghanistan

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements *(a)* are in place and *(b)* will be made in future for the embedding of journalists with United Kingdom armed forces in Afghanistan. [48771]

Mr. Ingram: There are currently no "embedded" journalists with UK armed forces in Afghanistan. As with other operational deployments, the Ministry of Defence will put in place appropriate arrangements to facilitate media access as outlined in 2MOD Working Arrangements With The Media For Use Throughout The Full Spectrum of Military Operations", more commonly known as "The Green Book". This access will range from dealing with journalists who have travelled independently to the area, to MOD-organised visits for news and non-news media.

These arrangements agreed between the MOD and representative media organisations, were put in place following the experience of the Falklands Campaign, and have recently been revised in full consultation with the media following the most recent experience in Iraq and elsewhere. The Green Book is available on the MOD website.

http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/CorporatePublications/Reports/OtherPublications/GreenBook/TheGreenBook.htm

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the *(a)* Harmony Guidelines and *(b)* Department public service agreement target 4 related to separated service will be breached as a result of troop deployments to Afghanistan. [47419]

Mr. Ingram: Although it is likely that the United Kingdom's planned deployment to Afghanistan in 2006 will result in a breach of the Harmony Guidelines in some areas, overall we judge that the impact on readiness for future operations is manageable.

As the Ministry of Defence Public Service Agreement makes clear, the Department's ability to achieve Harmony Guidelines, including separated service assumptions, is dependent upon the level of operational activity the armed forces are asked to undertake, and must be taken together with other assessments to provide a comprehensive picture of the Department's performance.

Aircraft

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* C-130 Hercules, *(b)* Tristar, *(c)* VC-10 and *(d)* C-17A, Globemaster aircraft British forces have; and how many of each are fit for purpose. [45164]

Mr. Ingram: The following table shows the number of C-130 Hercules (K and J variants), Tristar, VC10 and C-17A Globemaster aircraft that are planned to be in service with the RAF at the end of the present financial year (financial year 2005–06). Aircraft are deemed Fit For Purpose (FFP) if they are available for tasking within a 24 hour period. Aircraft are not available for tasking if they are undergoing scheduled maintenance, modification programmes or any other unforeseen rectification work that can arise on a day to day basis. The figures do not reflect the fact that an aircraft assessed as not FFP may be returned to the front line at very short notice to meet the operational need.

Aircraft type	*Total fleet*	*Numbers of aircraft FFP (average to date financial year 2005–06)*[1]
C-17AGlobemaster	4	3
C-130K Hercules	25	10
C-130J Hercules	25	13
Tristar	9	4
VC10	16	9

[1] Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average number of operational flying hours an RAF *(a)* C-130 Hercules, *(b)* Tristar, *(c)* VC-10 and *(d)* C-17A Globemaster aircraft was in each of the last 12 months. [45161]

Mr. Ingram: The following table is derived from information held centrally on the number of hours flown by the respective aircraft type divided by the monthly average of aircraft Fit For Purpose.

Hours per FFP aircraft—2005

	January	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*
VC10	71	86	103	105	111	95
C130J&K	75	72	117	99	115	107
C17	191	162	211	192	163	261
Tristar	118	124	160	180	164	162

	July	*August*	*September*	*October*	*November*	*December*
VC10	102	114	116	122	119	72
C130J&K	103	99	88	84	96	114
C17	239	244	177	221	178	236
Tristar	196	137	155	155	118	102

Armed Forces (Family Relationships)

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps his Department has taken to help armed forces members strengthen their family relationships and avoid divorce; and if he will make a statement. [45166]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence pursues a range of policies aimed at helping personnel achieve a better balance between their work and their personal lives, where this can be done without affecting operational effectiveness. Our long term strategies seek to reduce pressure by lengthening tour intervals, improving career development and, through our future basing strategy delivering improved family stability throughout consecutive tours. We also provide access to a wide range of welfare services, where service families can go for advice and support at all times. We maintain close links with mediation and support organisations such as RELATE to help ensure that additional specialist support is made available whenever required.

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on how many occasions his Department consulted citizens' juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens' jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens' jury. [46244]

Mr. Touhig: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Correspondence

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2038W, on departmental staff (relocation), when he will write to the hon. Member for Twickenham. [49159]

Mr. Touhig: I replied to the hon. Member on Thursday 2 February 2006 and placed a copy of the letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Michael Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will reply to the letter of 21 September 2005 from the hon. Member for Worcester, reference 04427/2005, concerning Mr. Robert Smith and military medals for action in the Yemen. [49229]

Mr. Touhig: As was explained in my right hon. Friend the Minister of State for the Armed Forces' letter of 20 August 2005 (reference: D/US of S/DT 35 51/05/A), although British Nationals were involved in military activities on behalf of the Royalist Government of Yemen in the mid-1960s, they were not acting as members of the British Army. Thus the Ministry of Defence was not responsible for the issue raised in Mr. Smith's latest letter. I wrote to the hon. Member on 4 February to explain in more detail the MOD's position regarding this case.

Defence Training

John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will consider inviting the National Audit Office to oversee the bid evaluation process for the Defence Training Review Transformation Programme. [48726]

Mr. Touhig: The Defence Training Review (DTR) Programme already has a senior independent auditor assigned to oversee the evaluation process. I have no doubt, however, that the National Audit Office will keep a watching brief on the DTR Programme as part of its regular business.

Defensive Air Suite

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many C2 aircraft in the Defensive Air Suite were *(a)* operational and *(b)* unserviceable on 31 January. [49117]

Mr. Ingram: On 31 January 2006 two RAF Tristar C2 passenger aircraft were available for operations. A third aircraft was undergoing scheduled maintenance. All three aircraft are fitted with a defensive aid suite and flight deck armour.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the items of his Department's property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47686]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence discloses losses, in accordance with Government Accounting 2000, Chapter 18, within its Annual Report and Accounts. A copy for 2004–05 has been placed in the Library of the House.

The Committee of Public Accounts has agreed a threshold of £100,000 for the detailed reporting of losses in 2004–05. All losses below this threshold are reported within the Annual Report and Accounts, but only as an aggregated number of cases and total value. The MOD only reports losses in exceptional cases during the financial year and, therefore, data are not yet available for FY 2005–06.

For the purpose of responding to this question, it has been assumed that the term property relates to equipment and stores.

Property which is lost is defined as a stores loss and is reported in the Annual Report and Accounts by the following categories:

B1—Loss arising from fraud, theft and arson.

B2—All other losses.

For 2004–05, there were a total of 504 B1 and 8,304 B2 stores loss cases, i.e. an overall total of 8,808 stores losses. Eight were above the £100,000 reporting threshold and are disclosed in detail in Note 29 to the Departmental Annual Report and Accounts 2004–05.

Detailed listings of stores lost below £100,000 are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Breakages are accounted for either as a stores loss written off, as above, or as incurred through normal wear and tear. The latter are recorded at unit level in

accordance with stores accounting regulations, but there is no requirement for formal disclosure within the Annual Report and Accounts. Details of breakages through normal wear and tear are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Depression/Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what criteria are applied when assessing whether service personnel suffering from *(a)* clinical depression and *(b)* post-traumatic stress disorder should (i) continue to be employed on peace-time duties and (ii) be deployed on active service. [48027]

Mr. Touhig: All instances of service personnel who are diagnosed as suffering from a mental health condition are assessed on a case-by-case basis, with input from the appropriate health professionals, including a consultant psychiatrist where necessary. In making a decision as to their deployability, all relevant factors will be taken into account, including the severity of the symptoms, the location and duration of the deployment, and the nature of the duties to be carried out. As a result of this process the individual may be medically downgraded and this in turn may prevent them from deploying on a particular operation or carrying out their normal duties in the United Kingdom.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements are made to ensure that service personnel on deployments have access to the medication required to manage *(a)* clinical depression and *(b)* post-traumatic stress disorder. [48028]

Mr. Touhig: Where an individual is suffering from clinical depression which is being effectively controlled by long-term medication, it is their personal responsibility to ensure that they deploy with sufficient quantities to last for the duration of their deployment. There are systems in place in theatre to re-supply patients who require further supplies of medication. However, sufficient stocks may not necessarily be held in theatre, and it is therefore incumbent on the individual to notify the deployed medical staff of their requirements in sufficient time for further supplies to be obtained.

The treatment of post traumatic stress disorder is not primarily drugs-based. Non-pharmacological intervention is the mainstay of treatment for this condition, and personnel deployed on Operation TELIC have access to mental health professionals at Shaibah Logistics base.

Executive Agencies

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* targets, *(b)* advice and *(c)* guidance his Department has given to executive agencies that fall under the remit of his Department on the reorganisation of their administrative functions on a regional basis; and if he will make a statement. [41647]

Mr. Touhig: Agency key targets are set annually and agreed with the Department and Ministers, taking into account wider government objectives and priorities. The Department has set no specific targets for the executive agencies for reorganisation of their administrative functions on a regional basis. Where potential reorganisation is being considered, advice and guidance on regional aspects are provided in line with the Ministry of Defence's commitment under the Lyons Review.

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 his Department received in the first year of its operation. [47736]

Mr. Touhig: The number of requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) received by the Ministry of Defence in the first three quarters of 2005 was:

	Number
Quarter 1	1,843
Quarter 2	1,039
Quarter 3	851

The Department for Constitutional Affairs is committed to publishing quarterly information about departmental performance under FOI, including the volume and outcomes of requests. The bulletin for the third quarter can be found on the DCA website at http://www.foi.gov.uk/statsjul-sep05.htm and in the Library of the House. Statistics for the fourth quarter and an annual report will be published in March.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's policy is on charging for information requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [47737]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence operates in accordance with the Fees Regulations made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which stipulate that requests should be processed without charge unless the effort involved exceeds the appropriate limit of £600.

Requests whose actual or estimated costs exceed the appropriate limit are not normally processed and there is accordingly no reason to charge for information. In this circumstance the MOD will assist the applicant to focus the scope of the request to bring it within the £600 threshold.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been received by his Department in fees for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [47738]

Mr. Touhig: No fees were collected by the Ministry of Defence for providing information in response to requests for information in the first year of the Act's operation.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's policy is on the time taken to respond to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [47739]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence aims to reply to all requests for information promptly and not later than 20 working days following the receipt of the request unless more time is required to consider the application of a qualified exemption or unless more time is allowed under the provisions of Statutory Instrument 2004 No. 3364.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 were refused by his Department in its first year of the Act's operation. [47740]

Mr. Touhig: The number of requests where information was either partially or fully withheld (and where it was granted in full) during the first three quarters of 2005 were:

	Quarter 1	*Quarter 2*	*Quarter 3*
Partially withheld	127	90	58
Fully withheld	172	96	97
Granted in full	1,146	643	506

The Department for Constitutional Affairs is committed to publishing quarterly information about departmental performance under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI), including the volume and outcomes of requests. The bulletin for the third quarter can be found on the DCA website at http://www.foi.gov.uk/statsjul-sep05.htm and in the Library of the House. Statistics for the fourth quarter and an annual report will be published in March.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 were met within 20 working days by his Department in the first year of the Act's operation. [47741]

Mr. Touhig: The percentage of requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) that were met within 20 working days by the Ministry of Defence during the first three quarters of 2005 were:

	Percentage
Quarter 1	71
Quarter 2	80
Quarter 3	80

The Department for Constitutional Affairs is committed to publishing quarterly information about departmental performance under FOI, including the volume and outcomes of requests. The bulletin for the third quarter can be found on the DCA website at http://www.foi.gov.uk/statsjul-sep05.htm and in the Library of the House. Statistics for the fourth quarter and an annual report will be published in March.

Future Aircraft Carriers

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what safeguards will be put in place to ensure that there is no conflict of interest in the secondment of the Managing Director of VT Shipbuilding to the position of Chief Executive of the Alliance Management Team for the Future Aircraft Carrier project. [47766]

Mr. Ingram: The new Chief Executive of the Future Carrier (CVF) Alliance Management Team (AMT) will be seconded to the civil service for the period of his appointment and will be required to observe the general conditions of conduct applicable to civil servants. He will not be a member of the VT Board; his shares will be held in a trust; and he will require the Ministry of Defence's consent to take up any appointment, other than with his previous employer, within two years of the end of the secondment. Under the CVF governance arrangements, he will report to the Alliance Management Board, consisting of senior company representatives of each of the Alliance participants and chaired by the MOD.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on progress on the future aircraft carrier programme. [44208]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the written ministerial statement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 148WS, which outlines the major steps forward taken in our plans for the future aircraft carriers (CVF).

Subsequently, we also announced, on 24 January, that we will be co-operating with France during the CVF demonstration phase to produce a common baseline design that both countries can further use to develop their own carriers. This will bring savings in design costs, without slowing the tempo of the project and offers the potential of savings on shared procurements. France will make a financial contribution in recognition of the investment UK has already made in the design (comprising £30 million now and £25 million in July with a further £45 million at the end of the demonstration phase if France decides to commit to manufacture) and will contribute one third of the demonstration phase costs of the common baseline design. France's role has been mutually agreed as one of influence rather than control, and as such they will not be able to direct changes to the design or programme.

Having taken these significant decisions, we are on course to provide the UK armed forces with the largest and most powerful warships ever constructed in the UK, and an expeditionary capability unparalleled outside of the US.

Gulf War Veterans

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Gulf war veterans diagnosed with multiple sclerosis have since developed symptoms of Parkinson's disease. [48862]

Mr. Touhig: Medical records of individuals who have left the services, including veterans of the 1990–91 Gulf conflict, are held by each service at individual central locations; however the Ministry of Defence does not hold records of illnesses arising since an individual has left the service. Medical records for those still serving are not normally held at a central location but at their unit medical centre. The information requested cannot therefore be provided.

Harmony Guidelines

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether it is possible to ascertain whether the Harmony Guidelines related to separated service have been breached on an individual basis for each service. [47422]

Mr. Ingram: All three services have procedures in place that monitor individual harmony and are able to report when the guidelines have been breached.

HELEN Laser

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the HELEN laser at Aldermaston; what its future purpose is; and if he will make a statement; [47819]

(2) what the *(a)* role and *(b)* functions are of the proposed new laser at AWE Aldermaston. [47821]

John Reid: In 2001 a review of the capability provided by the HELEN laser identified a requirement to replace it in order to attain, under laboratory conditions, previously inaccessible temperature and pressure regimes akin to those actually obtained in a nuclear weapon. This was deemed essential to underwrite the continued safety and reliability of the Trident nuclear warhead stockpile in the nuclear test ban era.

Accordingly, we shall be replacing HELEN—which has given 25 years of useful service—with the ORION laser, whose primary role will be to enable the safety and reliability of the Trident stockpile to be underwritten through the remainder of its service life. Until its planned decommissioning in 2008, HELEN will continue to be used for worthwhile experiments both in support of Trident and as a test bed for some of the technologies and equipment to be used on the ORION laser.

Helicopters

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average number of operational flying hours undertaken by an RAF *(a)* Chinook, *(b)* Merlin, *(c)* Sea King and *(d)* Puma helicopter was in each month in (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005. [45148]

Mr. Ingram: In answering the question I have assumed that the hon. Gentleman is referring to hours flown on operations. The total number of operational hours flown by aircraft type has been recorded by month since the beginning of financial year (FY) 2005–06. The monthly average[1] for a RAF Chinook, Merlin and Puma, for the period April to December 2005, is shown in the following table:

Average operational hours per individual aircraft type FY 2005–06

	Aircraft type		
	RAF Chinook	*RAF Merlin*	*RAF Puma*
April 2005	0:00	58:41	28:42
May 2005	0:00	62:11	29:23
June 2005	0:00	72:51	31:06
July 2005	3:58	59:38	27:09
August 2005	27:42	54:30	31:24
September 2005	76:20	67:16	27:38
October 2005	20:49	115:12	25:36
November 2005	93:06	68:51	28:40
December 2005	33:10	38:25	23:50

Prior to April 2005, the hours flown on operations were recorded as an annual total per aircraft type. An average monthly total has been calculated[2] and is shown in the following table:

Aircraft type	*Financial year 2004–05*
RAF Chinook	56
RAF Merlin	10
RAF Puma	22

The Sea Kings operated by the RAF are dedicated to the UK Search and Rescue capability and have, therefore, not been included in the figures provided.

[1] This has been calculated by dividing the monthly operational flying hours by the number of aircraft deployed on operations.

[2] The calculation used is: total annual operational flying hours divided by 12 giving an average monthly figure which is then divided by the monthly average number of aircraft type deployed on operations.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 664W, on helicopters, what the current operational status is of each of the Merlin helicopters operated by each of the services. [45296]

Mr. Ingram: On 23 January 2006, of the 24 Merlin helicopters in the RN operational Fleet, 16 were serviceable. Of the 15 aircraft in the RAF's operational Fleet, five were serviceable.

The number of available RAF Merlin helicopters is lower than usual and reflects post-Operation TELIC recovery, pre-Operation TELIC preparation and an industry programme to bring the RAF Merlin helicopters up to the baseline specification.

It is not Ministry of Defence policy to have all its aircraft available at the front line during peacetime. Rather the Department's maintenance and support policies are designed to ensure that the maximum number of aircraft can be made available at the highest readiness state, should the operational need arise.

HMS Sussex

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements he has entered into with the US company Odyssey regarding the salvage of HMS Sussex; and if he will make a statement. [48094]

Mr. Touhig: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Caplin), on 2 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 898W.

Iraq

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the net additional cost of operations in Iraq expressed as a percentage of *(a)* the total defence budget and *(b)* total government spending was in each year since 2002–03. [48024]

John Reid: The costs of specific conflict prevention activities (including security and peace-building tasks) are voted for separately by Parliament, through either the HM Treasury Reserve or the Conflict Prevention

Pools. As such, these funds do not form part of the Defence budget and cannot be expressed as a percentage of it.

The following table sets out the MOD budget, cost of operations in Iraq, and Government's Total Managed Expenditure for the three years 2002–03 to 2004–05.

Financial year	MOD budget (£ billion)	Cost of operations in Iraq (£ billion)	Government total managed expenditure (£ billion)	Cost of operations in Iraq as percentage of Government TME
2002–03	29.3	0.847	417.970	0.20
2003–04	30.9	1.311	455.233	0.29
2004–05	29.7	0.910	487.300	0.19

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what mental health services are available to troops serving in Iraq. [48767]

Mr. Ingram: UK troops in Iraq are supported by a mental health team based at Shaibah Logistics base which is currently staffed by two community psychiatric nurses.

In addition, there is a programme of visits to theatre by a consultant psychiatrist. These are undertaken primarily for clinical governance purposes, but the visiting consultant will also provide advice on particular patients as required.

If further advice or treatment is required that cannot be provided in theatre, the patient will be aero medically evacuated out of Iraq for treatment in the UK or at UK defence community mental health centres in Cyprus, Germany and Gibraltar.

Iraq/Afghanistan

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2342W, on Iraq/Afghanistan, what recent discussions he has had with the central criminal court of Iraq on the incident at Al Majarr Al Kabir on 24 June 2003. [46681]

Mr. Ingram: We are continuing to offer all possible support to help bring the perpetrators to justice. A British liaison officer, stationed in Baghdad, provides assistance to the Central Criminal Court of Iraq as required. Progress is being made, but as this is an ongoing criminal investigation and outside British jurisdiction, it would not be appropriate to comment further.

Nimrod Project

Mark Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the progress of the bid made in July 2005 by BAE Systems for the next phase of the Nimrod project; and when a decision on the bid is likely to be made. [46902]

Mr. Ingram: The bid is under review by the MOD approving authorities. A production decision will be taken as soon as possible once we are in a position to take it.

Mark Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the effect on the work force employed at Woodford of the delay in a decision on the bid for the next phase of the Nimrod project. [46903]

Mr. Ingram: While the long term future of the Woodford site is a matter for BAE Systems, the MOD has funded further low risk production work on the Nimrod programme until the middle of this year. This will preserve the viability of the MRA4 project and the expertise of the work force until a decision is taken on full production.

Nuclear Deterrent

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the basis was for the decision to choose the Atomic Weapons Establishment to provide the warheads for the UK's nuclear deterrent; and if he will make a statement. [47944]

John Reid: The Atomic Weapons Establishment is the sole repository for the UK's nuclear deterrent capability. The Government-owned facilities at Aldermaston and Burghfield were built for that purpose and remain a unique and essential national asset.

Pension Contributions

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39972]

Mr. Touhig: Pension contributions are disclosed at Note 2 within the published Departmental Resource Accounts. Copies of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2002–03 to 2004–05 have been placed in the Library of the House. The table details the total pension contributions incurred by the Department, for all personnel (military and civilian) for the years requested.

	Pension costs (£ million)
2002–03	1,357.7
2003–04	1,442.7
2004–05	1,486.8

The self accounting non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) fall outside the Departmental Boundary of the Departmental Resource Accounts. Pension contributions for employees of these organisations are disclosed as a Note to their published accounts. Copies of the published accounts have been placed in the Library.

The following table details the pension contribution incurred by NDPBs for the years requested.

£

	National Army Museum	Royal Air Force Museum	Fleet Air Arm Museum	Royal Marines Museum	Royal Navy Museum	Royal Navy Submarine Museum
2002–03	249,352	203,035	28,034	38,374	90,476	29,529
2003–04	245,069	180,286	29,533	39,182	90,049	28,968
2004–05	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]

[1] Not yet published.

The Defence Executive Agencies established as Trading Funds fall outside the Departmental Boundary of the Departmental Resource Accounts. Pension contributions for employees of these organisations are disclosed as a Note to their published accounts. Copies of the published accounts have been placed in the Library.

The following table details the pension contributions incurred by Defence Executive Agencies for the years requested.

£ million

	UK Hydrographic Office	Met Office	Defence Science & Technology Laboratory	Defence Aviation Repair Agency	Army Base Repair Organisation
2002–03	3.0	7.6	12.6	12.4	5.7
2003–04	3.0	8.0	13.5	11.3	6.0
2004–05	3.2	7.9	13.9	10.5	6.0

The Oil and Pipeline Agency is a Public Corporation sponsored by the Department, which falls outside the Departmental Boundary of the Departmental Resource Accounts. Pension contributions for employees of this organisation are disclosed as a Note to the published accounts. Copies of the published accounts have been placed in the Library.

The following table details the pension contribution incurred by the Oil & Pipeline Agency for the years requested.

	Pension contribution (£)
2002–03	118
2003–04	128
2004–05	152

For 2005–06, employers' contributions for the majority of civilians are payable to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) at one of four rates in the ranges 16.2 to 24.6 per cent. of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The Scheme Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation; last carried out as at 31 March 2003. The contribution rates reflect the cost of benefits as they accrue (net of employee contributions), not the costs as they are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme. Contributions are also payable to Teachers' Superannuation Scheme, NHS Superannuation Scheme and Defined Benefit Schemes for the Royal Navy Museum (9 per cent.) and the Royal Navy Submarine Museum (12.5 per cent.).

For Service personnel, employers' contributions are made to the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS) based on rates determined by the Government Actuary. The applicable rates for 2005–06 are 33.8 per cent. of pensionable pay for officers and 18.2 per cent. for other ranks.

The Department does not collect information on a regional basis and any analysis could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

QinetiQ

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the extra costs of extending the offer of some QinetiQ shares to the public. [43825]

John Reid: Members of the public may already apply for shares, as is the case in any institutional offer. They can do so through a private client stockbroker. Members of the public will also be able to buy shares in QinetiQ once trading has commenced.

The extra costs of a retail offer based on previous Government flotations, were estimated to be between £5 million (administrative costs only) and £23 million (including associated marketing and retail incentives). Based on advice from our financial advisers, it is the Government's view that a retail offer for QinetiQ would not offer value for money for the taxpayer.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he plans to place restrictions on QinetiQ's acceptance of contracts from foreign governments following its flotation. [44156]

John Reid: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Rutland and Melton (Mr. Duncan) on 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1982W.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will allow private investors to participate in the flotation of QinetiQ. [46897]

John Reid: Yes. As is the case in any institutional offer, members of the public may apply for shares through a private client stockbroker, although there will be no allocation of shares reserved for that purpose. Members of the public will also be able to buy shares in QinetiQ once trading has commenced.

RAF C130 Aircraft

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* highest and *(b)* lowest monitored serviceability readiness rates for RAF C130 aircraft of each type have been in the last three years. [45144]

Mr. Ingram: The term 'Serviceability readiness rate' is not a term used by the RAF. The following table shows, in each calendar year[1], the highest and lowest monthly numbers of RAF C130 aircraft fit for purpose together with total fleet numbers[2]. Aircraft are deemed fit for purpose if they are available for tasking within a 24 hour period. Aircraft are not available for tasking if they are undergoing scheduled maintenance, modification programmes or any other unforeseen rectification work that can arise on a day to day basis. The figures do not reflect the fact that an aircraft assessed as not fit for purpose may be returned to the front line at very short notice to meet the operational need.

[1] Figures are not available for January to June 2003.

[2] Total fleet numbers are those aircraft that are planned to be in service with the RAF at the end of FY 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06 respectively.

Fit for purpose aircraft numbers

	2003		2004		2005	
	Highest	*Lowest*	*Highest*	*Lowest*	*Highest*	*Lowest*
Hercules C-130K	12	8	13	8	11	8
Total Fleet	26	26	25			
Hercules C130J	14	11	15	11	16	11
Total Fleet	25	25	25			

Regulatory Reform Orders

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many regulatory reform orders his Department has laid before Parliament in each of the last five calendar years. [46804]

Mr. Touhig: None.

Rest and Relaxation

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will consider changing the start and finish dates of the rest and relaxation periods of troops from the date on which they leave and arrive in theatre to the date that they arrive in and leave the United Kingdom. [49120]

Mr. Ingram: Rest and Recuperation (R and R) provides service personnel, on mentally and challenging deployments, a respite from a stressful operational environment in order to sustain their operational effectiveness. R and R should not, therefore, be considered as compensation for separation from family and friends. Post Operational Leave (POL) exists to meet this requirement (the entitlement to POL does begin on the day that service personnel leave their permanent duty station). Depending on the exigencies of service, the operational chain of command will authorise the time, location and duration of any period of R and R, basing their decisions on published guidelines. We have recently carried out a review of all leave and absence types in the light of the advent of the new tri-service joint personnel administration (JPA) system, which will roll out on a single-service basis throughout 2006. It was not considered appropriate for the qualifying period of deployment for R and R to begin before personnel arrive in theatre.

Royal Air Force

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* pilots, *(b)* fighter aircraft, *(c)* transport aircraft and *(d)* helicopters are (i) available to and (ii) deployable by the Royal Air Force; and what the equivalent numbers were in 2000. [42629]

Mr. Ingram: Table A gives the fast jet, transport and rotary aircraft operating Fleets available to the RAF for the purposes of deployment, training and exercises in 2005 and 2000. The figures include aircraft piloted by Royal Navy personnel as part of Joint Force Harrier, which for resource purposes falls within the RAF. The figures exclude rotary aircraft piloted by RAF personnel, but which are part of Joint Helicopter Command, which for resource purposes fall outside the RAF.

The figures do not include aircraft in the sustainment Fleet, which comprises aircraft necessary to sustain the operating fleet to the out-of-service date of the aircraft type and aircraft in deep maintenance.

Table A: In-service

Aircraft type	*2000*	*2005*
Fast Jet	328	283
Transport	85	85
Rotary	19	23

Although all of the aircraft in the operating fleet are potentially 'deployable', Table B gives the maximum number of 'force elements' which would have been deployed to meet the most demanding scenarios (short of full scale war) against which we planned in 2000 and 2005. A force element represents a fully capable aircraft available for immediate operational tasking. The actual number of aircraft that would be deployed at any one time would, however, be greater than the figures in Table B in order to provide a margin to take into account reliability and serviceability requirements and operational factors.

Table B: Deployable force elements

Aircraft type	*2000*	*2005*
Fast Jet	107	80
Transport	85	83
Rotary	19	17

The reduction in the number of fast jet force elements in Table B is due to the reassessment of potential scenarios and tasking which was set out in The

Command Paper "Delivering Security in a Changing World: Future Capabilities", published in July 2004. This paper set out the changes necessary to both structure and capabilities to ensure that our armed forces are best placed to meet the principal security challenges of the future: international terrorism, the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, and weak and failing states.

On 1 December 2005 there were 2,130 trained pilots in the RAF. On 1 December 2000 there were 2,180 trained pilots. Subject to their achieving the required medical standards all RAF personnel are potentially deployable.

Royal Ordnance Chorley

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department revalidated outsourced components previously provided by Royal Ordnance Chorley. [43616]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 18 January 2006]:* Yes.

Service Widows/Widowers

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what pension the *(a)* widow and *(b)* widower of a former member of HM armed service personnel is entitled to if they did not (i) work or (ii) pay national insurance contributions. [47983]

Mr. Touhig: I assume that the hon. Member is referring to pension entitlements of the widow or widower in their own right, rather than in relation to the spouse's service in the armed forces. The widow or widower of a former member of the armed forces who has not worked or paid national insurance contributions is entitled to exactly the same pension benefits as a widow or widower with no armed forces connection. The benefits are based on the late spouse's national insurance contribution record.

Sonic Boom Technology

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether any naval vessels equipped with underwater sonic boom radar technology were operating in the vicinity of the Thames *(a)* estuary or *(b)* mouth on (i) 19 and (ii) 20 January; and what assessment he has made of the effect of sonic boom technology on marine wildlife. [46249]

Mr. Ingram: No Royal Navy vessels were using military sonar in the vicinity of the Thames estuary or the mouth of the Thames on either 19 or 20 of January.

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) takes its responsibilities for the environment very seriously. However, there continues to be a vital requirement for the United Kingdom to maintain a maritime capability to protect crucial lines of communication, to participate in operational activities and to be able to address potential mine and submarine threats, now and in the future. To ensure that our military capabilities in these areas are fully maintained, it is imperative that we continue to use active sonar, both now and in the foreseeable future.

Furthermore, sonar is essential to protect UK waters and ensure safe navigation. That said, this certainly does not imply that our sonar activities are undertaken without the fullest possible respect for the environment.

Environmental impact assessments (EIAs) are undertaken for a wide range of our activities in the marine environment, including sonar. Such EIAs cover the marine habitat of the operating area concerned and the species likely to be encountered. The EIAs are used to better tailor the activity and ensure that potentially damaging effects are identified during the planning stage of the exercise and reduced their impact to an absolute minimum. With the same aim in view, we have also issued instructions to all our ships' Commanding Officers for the operational use of sonar in the marine environment. This guidance employs the precautionary principle of 'Plan, Look, Listen and Act'.

While we believe that our operating procedures reflect the best scientific advice and provide a sustainable balance between the need for effective military training and the need to protect our marine environment, we are certainly not complacent. The MOD continues to be closely involved in research, in the UK, with the US and NATO authorities, and in other international forums into the possible effects of sonar noise on marine life. Should any new research provide evidence of a link between our method of using sonar and a detrimental effect on marine life, we would, of course, consider what further mitigation measures might be possible. In the meantime, the current measures reflect the best scientific advice available.

Statutory Instruments

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the statutory instruments introduced by his Department since 6 May 2005. [46197]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence has introduced the following statutory instruments since 6 May 2005.

2005 1388 Unfitness to Stand Trial and Insanity (Royal Air Force) Regulations

2005 1389 Unfitness to Stand Trial and Insanity (Royal Navy) Regulations

2005 1390 Unfitness to Stand Trial and Insanity (Army) Regulations

2005 1470 The Dockyard Port of Portsmouth Order 2005

2005 1471 Naval, Military and Air Forces Etc. (Disablement and Death)(Service Pensions (Amendment) (No2) Order

2005 1534 Standing Civilian Courts (Amendment)

2005 1535 Courts-Martial (Amendment) Rules

2005 1536 Summary Appeal Courts (Amendment) Rules

2005 1639 Personal Injuries (Civilians) (Amendment) (No 2) Scheme

2005 2021 Army, Air Force and Naval Discipline Acts (Continuation) Order

2005 2861 Armed Forces Act 2001 (Commencement) (No.5) Order

2005 3031 Personal Injuries (Civilians) (Amendment) (No.3) Scheme

2005 3032 War Pensions Committees (Amendment) Regulations

2005 3033 War Pensions (Mercantile Marine) (Amendment) Scheme

2005 3040 Pensions (Polish Forces) Scheme (Amendment) Order

2005 3107 Armed Forces (Pensions and Compensation) Act 2004 (Commencement) (No. 3) Order

2005 3118 Reserve Forces (Provision of Information by Persons Liable to be Recalled) (Amendment) Regulations

2005 3184 Navy and Marines (Property of Deceased) (Amendment) Order

2005 3185 Naval Medical Compassionate Fund (Amendment) Order

2005 3186 Service Departments Registers (Amendment) Order

2005 3187 Naval, Military and Air Forces Etc. (Disablement and Death) Service Pensions (Amendment) (No3) Order

2005 3188 Civil Partnership (Armed Forces) Order

2005 3189 Ulster Defence Regiment (Amendment) Order

2005 3447 Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (Designated Sites) Order

2005 3478 Armed Forces Proceedings (Costs) Regulations

2005 3483 Courts-Martial (Army) (Amendment) Rules

2005 3484 Courts Martial (Royal Navy) (Amendment) Rules

2005 3485 Courts Martial (Royal Air Force) (Amendment) Rules

2005 3486 Summary Appeal Court (Army) (Amendment) Rules

2005 3487 Summary Appeal Court (Navy) (Amendment) Rules

2005 3488 Summary Appeal Court (Air Force) (Amendment) Rules

2006 55 The Armed Forces Redundancy Scheme Order

Territorial Army

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the strength is of the territorial army in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales, *(d)* Lancashire and *(e)* Chorley; and how many posts are vacant. [38266]

Mr. Touhig: The information is not held centrally in the format requested. Official strength figures for the Territorial Army (TA) are collated for the United Kingdom and not its constituent nations, counties or towns. As at 1 December 2005, the total strength of the TA was 37,430 against an establishment of 41,610.

Notes:
This figure includes 1,180 mobilized personnel and 5,750 members of the Officer Training Corps but excludes 1,070 Non Regular Permanent Staff. Full Time Reserve Service personnel are also excluded
The figures have been rounded to the nearest 10

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in which units of the Territorial Army the 12,000 fit and deployable personnel are deployed. [43689]

Mr. Touhig: The 13,450 personnel available to be deployed as at 1 January 2006, are from across all units of the Territorial Army.

This figure excludes those who have not completed their mandatory training, those who are in the process of being discharged; all currently mobilized and deployed personnel, those who have exceeded the Ministry of Defence limits[1] on mobilized service of a total of 12 months in every 60; and all members of the University Officer Training Corps.

[1] statutory limits on mobilized service (Section 54 of the Reserve Forces Act 1996) limits mobilization to a total of 12 months in every 36

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many *(a)* drivers and *(b)* clergy in the Territorial Army have been mobilised more than once in the last five years; [46449]

(2) how many *(a)* administrative, *(b)* ammunition, *(c)* construction, *(d)* catering, *(e)* petroleum, *(f)* policing, *(g)* medical, *(h)* logistical, *(i)* legal, *(j)* linguistic and *(k)* electrical engineering specialists in the Territorial Army have been mobilised more than once in the last five years. [46471]

Mr. Touhig: The information requested is contained in the table below. Figures include individuals who may have reported for mobilization but subsequently did not mobilize for medical or other reasons. Information on individuals in this category is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Specialist area	*Number of personnel*
Drivers	145
Clergy	2
Administrative	18
Construction	1
Catering	0
Petroleum	1
Policing	5
Medical	788
Logistical	276
Legal	0
Linguistic	0
Electrical Engineering	3

Unexploded Ordnance

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much unexploded ordnance discovered was *(a)* exploded and *(b)* defused in each of the last 20 years. [48243]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* This information is not held.

Warrior Armoured Fighting Vehicles

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for the use of Warrior Armoured Fighting Vehicles stationed with 4 Armoured Brigade after redeployment of that unit from Germany to Catterick in 2008–09. [47971]

Mr. Ingram: 4th Armoured Brigade becomes 4th Mechanised Brigade during 2006 and will redeploy to Catterick in 2008–09, retaining a single Warrior Battalion. As the hon. Member will be aware, a Mechanised Brigade contains one Armoured Infantry Battalion equipped with Warrior.

In preparation for its re-roling to a Mechanised Brigade, 4th Armoured Brigade has already re-roled its second Armoured Infantry Battalion. The surplus equipment from this re-role will be reinvested back into other elements of the Army to increase capability across the force structure.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Broadcast/Print Media Analysis

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on her Department's policy on the use of broadcast and print media analysis. [45996]

James Purnell: We are undertaking our first evaluation of the effectiveness of our media relations at present. It is a useful tool, which allows us to monitor how effectively we are communicating departmental policies with the objective of ensuring value for money.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether her Department has *(a)* undertaken and *(b)* commissioned research into the presence and reporting in the (i) broadcast and (ii) print media of hon. Members other than Ministers of her Department since 5 May 2005. [46066]

James Purnell: The Department has not undertaken or commissioned any research of this nature.

Casinos

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many local authorities have indicated to the Casino Advisory Panel that they are interested in a *(a)* regional casino, *(b)* large casino, *(c)* small casino and *(d)* a combination of these types of casino. [47949]

Mr. Caborn: The Casino Advisory Panel wrote to all local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales in November 2005, inviting them to give a provisional indication of their likely interest in securing the right to issue one of the 17 new casinos premises licences permitted by the Gambling Act 2005. The information requested is set out in the following table, and includes all responses received by the panel up to 11 January 2006.

Type of casino	*Number of expressions of interest*
Regional[1]	46
Large	7
Small	8
Mixture of large and small	5
One of the above (not specified)	9
Total	75

[1] Where a local authority has not indicated clearly which type of casino it is interested in, or has indicated that it is interested in a mixture of casinos including a regional casino, the panel has included the authority in the regional casino premises licence total.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the local authorities which have informed the Casino Advisory Panel that they wish to be considered for a regional casino. [47951]

Mr. Caborn: The following local authorities have expressed an interest in securing the right to issue the one regional casino premises permitted under the Gambling Act 2005: Birmingham; Blackpool; Brent; Canterbury; Cardiff; Chesterfield; Coventry; Glasgow; Great Yarmouth; Greenwich; Havering; Hull; Ipswich; Leeds; Luton; Maidstone; Manchester; Middlesbrough; Newcastle; Renfrewshire; Sheffield; Solihull; Southampton; Southend-on-Sea; Sunderland; Wakefield; West Dunbartonshire.

The following local authorities have either not indicated clearly which type of casino they are interested in, or have indicated that they are interested in a mixture of new casinos including a regional casino. For the purposes of its scoping exercise, the Casino Advisory Panel has included these authorities in the regional casino premises licence total: Bedford; Bolsover; Bury; Cannock Chase; Dumfries and Galloway; East Lindsey; Havant; Hertsmere; Leicester; Mansfield; North Lanarkshire; North Somerset; Restormel; Salford; Scarborough; Sevenoaks; South Lanarkshire; Stevenage; Tewkesbury.

Chamber Music

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what grants of public money have been made available to chamber music groups in each of the last three years; and how much was granted for the purpose of establishing *(a)* trios, *(b)* quartets and *(c)* quintets. [47734]

Mr. Lammy: Government funding for chamber music is primarily channelled through Arts Council England. Over the last three years, this funding has been in excess of £1.75 million per year and has supported the development, touring and promotion of chamber music throughout England. It is not possible to provide a breakdown of this figure for trios, quartets and quintets.

Cultural Goods (Security)

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will seek to legislate to guarantee the security of national cultural goods on loan from other countries; and if she will make a statement. [48920]

Mr. Lammy: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 1 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 543W.

Database Rights

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what progress has been made in the implementation of the European Court of Justice ruling on database rights in relation to horse racing; [48535]

(2) what assessment she has made of the likely effects on football of the European Court of Justice ruling on database rights. [48536]

Mr. Caborn: Following the EJC ruling on database rights the British Horseracing Board asked Lord Donoughue to report on alternative funding mechanisms for horseracing. Lord Donoughue reported in December 2005 and we are now consulting the industry on his findings.

The professional football leagues report that the ECJ ruling will cost them in excess of £6 million from lost income. The Government are working with the leagues to help them identify sources of replacement funding.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47687]

Mr. Lammy: In the last 12 months the departmental property items reported lost or broken, valued at over £100 were:

(a) Lost items—one PC and one mobile phone

(b) Broken items—two Blackberry devices

Digital Television

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the Government have spent on promoting the take-up of digital television. [44047]

James Purnell *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The Department for Culture, Media and Sport have spent £170,000 in 2004–05 on the promotion of digital switchover. In 2005–06 the total budget will be £320,000.

Disabled Swimmers (London)

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what facilities are being developed to encourage disabled swimmers in London. [48503]

Mr. Caborn: British Swimming (ASA in England) is one of the leading national governing bodies in terms of inclusion and it is encouraging and supporting participation by disabled people at all levels of the sport. They have a disability section with dedicated staff.

ASA is working with pool operators to encourage more people with a disability to swim through the Everyday Swim campaign, funded by Sport England.

ASA is re-launching its "Swim 21" club accreditation scheme in April 2006 with the aim of encouraging its mainstream and disability sections to work together for the benefit of all swimmers. They are also about to enter into a 'service level agreement' with the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) regarding the promotion and development of opportunities for disabled swimmers.

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the 50 metre public swimming pools within London which have facilities for the disabled. [48506]

Mr. Caborn: There are currently two 50 metre swimming pools in London, one at Crystal Palace and one in the London borough of Ealing. A further three 50 metre pools are proposed for London, including one in the London borough of Hillingdon and two at the new Aquatic Centre in Stratford.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) requires that all service providers must take reasonable measures to remove, alter or provide a reasonable means of avoiding physical barriers to accessing and using their premises. In August 2005 I wrote to all local authorities reminding them of their responsibilities under the DDA in the context of leisure and tourism facilities.

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many departmental employees have took retirement due to ill health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46750]

Mr. Lammy: During the past five years there have been less than five ill health retirements in any one year in the Department for Culture Media and Sport, and therefore figures cannot be released on the grounds of confidentiality.

Engagements

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on how many occasions since 2001 the Sports Minister has been a guest at a horse race meeting in the UK; who hosted the Minister on each occasion; and what hospitality he received. [47818]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* As the Minister for Sport I have been a guest at horserace meetings on 11 occasions since 2001 (as detailed in the table). Hospitality has been in the form of access to the racecourse, the use of private box facilities, lunch and refreshments.

Date of meeting	*Racecourse*	*Hospitality provided by*
15 September 2001	Doncaster	Ladbrokes
14 March 2002	Cheltenham	The Horserace Totalisator Board
5 April 2003	Aintree	The racecourse management
10 July 2003	Newmarket	The racecourse management
26 July 2003	Ascot	The racecourse management
20 August 2003	York	The Horserace Totalisator Board
16 March 2004	Cheltenham	Ladbrokes
3 April 2004	Aintree	The racecourse management
18 August 2004	York	The Horserace Totalisator Board (Tote)
17 March 2005	Cheltenham	Ladbrokes
30 November 2005	Plumpton	British Horseracing Board

English National Opera

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects English National Opera's accounts for 2005–06 to be published. [47835]

Mr. Lammy: I understand that English National Opera must register its audited accounts for the year-end March 2006 with Companies House by 31 January 2007.

Folk Dance and Song

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will promote English folk dance and song; and if she will make a statement. [48859]

Mr. Lammy: Government support for English folk dance and song is primarily channelled through Arts Council England, which funds a number of organisations who promote and develop these art forms.

Furthermore Sport England sponsors the English Folk Dance and Song Society to promote and educate young people in schools about the English folk tradition.

Free Television Licence (Coventry South)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many pensioners over 75 years in Coventry, South are in receipt of a free television licence. [47621]

James Purnell: TV Licensing, who administer free television licences for people aged 75 or over as agents for the BBC, are not able to provide geographical breakdowns of the number of free licences issued. However, the number of households with at least one person aged 75 or over claiming the winter fuel payment in the Coventry, South constituency in 2004-05 was 5,740, according to Department for Work and Pensions records.

Gambling

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what regulations apply to fixed odds betting terminals (FOBTs) in betting shops; and what plans the Government have for (FOBTs); [48865]

(2) what guidance she has issued on permitted locations for fixed odds betting terminals under the *(a)* Gambling Act 2005 and *(b)* Horserace Betting and Olympic Lottery Act 2004. [48866]

Mr. Caborn: Fixed odds betting terminals (FOBTs) are regulated by a code of practice agreed by the Association of British Bookmakers, DCMS and the then Gaming Board of Great Britain (now the Gambling Commission).

Under the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005 (expected to come into force in late 2007), FOBTs will be categorised as B2 gaming machines and regulated accordingly.

There are no provisions in the Horserace Betting and Olympic Lottery Act 2004 relating to FOBTs.

Licensed Opening Hours

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what guidance she has issued to local authorities on whether the extension of a licensed premises' opening hours, without any increase in the licensed premises area or capacity, would count as a material variation for the purposes of a cumulative impact special policy. [47219]

James Purnell: An extension of the hours during which alcohol can be sold might or might not be a material variation, depending upon its effect on the cumulative impact on the licensing objectives being experienced in the area of the special policy.

It is for the local licensing authority, in the first instance, to judge if an application to vary is "material", and, if a decision is subject to legal challenge, for the courts to then rule definitively.

Licensing Act

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will grant an exception from the requirements of the Licensing Act 2003 in relation to an application for a temporary events licence by small musical or dramatic groups performing for charity; and if she will make a statement. [46860]

James Purnell: The definition of regulated entertainment, and exemptions to it, are set out in schedule 1 of the Licensing Act 2003.

We currently have no plans to introduce any further exemptions. The fact that an event is being held for charity does not make it inherently less of a risk to the licensing objectives. Exemptions for charitable events were debated at length during the passage of the Licensing Bill. The temporary event notice regime is very light touch in order to reflect the reduced risk at such small, time limited events and requires no more than a temporary event notice to be submitted to the licensing authority and the police at least 10 working days before the event is due to take place. The fee for giving a notice is set at £21, a level which is sufficient to recover the costs of the regime to licensing authorities.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 18 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 1008W, on the Licensing Act 2003, to the right hon. Member for Maidenhead (Mrs. May), what definition her Department uses of the term material variation. [47043]

James Purnell: Paragraph 3.19 of the guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 refers to, but does not further define, the words "material variations". In that context, a material variation is one which is material to the cumulative impact on the licensing objectives being experienced in the area of the special policy. It is for the licensing authority, in the first instance, to judge if an application to vary is "material", and, if a decision is subject to legal challenge, for the courts to rule definitively.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many establishments have applied for extended opening hours under provisions of the Licensing Act 2003 in *(a)* England, *(b)* West Yorkshire and *(c)* Huddersfield. [48606]

James Purnell: This information is not held centrally.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many premises licensed to serve alcohol have been granted 24 hour licences; and in what local authority areas they are located. [48607]

James Purnell: Based on a DCMS telephone survey of licensing authorities, we estimate that around 1,000 licences have been granted permitting the sale of alcohol for 24 hours. Of these, approximately 330 have been for pubs and nightclubs, approximately 360 for supermarkets, and approximately 130 for off-licences and convenience stores. Information on the number of 24 hour licences held in each licensing authority area is not currently held centrally.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment her Department has made of the change in the levels of *(a)* antisocial and *(b)* violent behaviour following the implementation of the Licensing Act 2003. [48608]

James Purnell: It is too early to draw firm conclusions about the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 on the level of antisocial and violent behaviour.

The Government will continue to monitor the impact of the new legislation closely, including a programme of evaluation being conducted by the Home Office into the impact of the licensing reforms on crime and disorder.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the effects of the Licensing Act 2003 on levels of crime and disorder in Tamworth. [48659]

James Purnell: It is too early to draw firm conclusions about the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 on the level of crime and disorder, either across the country or in any one area.

The Government will continue to monitor the impact of the new legislation closely, including a programme of evaluation being conducted by the Home Office into the impact of the licensing reforms on crime and disorder

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what research the Government have *(a)* conducted and *(b)* commissioned on the effect on noise of the Licensing Act 2003. [47886]

James Purnell: A report entitled 'Implications for noise disturbance arising from liberalisation of Licensing Laws' was produced for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs by MCM Research Ltd. and published in October 2003.

The principal aim of the study was to assess the potential impacts of the reform of the licensing laws on noise disturbance related, directly or indirectly, to the operation of licensed premises. The Report is accessible on: www.defra.gov.uk/environment/noise/research/mcm/index.htm

It is too early to assess the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 on noise, and so the Government have not conducted or commissioned any formal research. However, any issues around noise are likely to emerge from the Scrutiny Council process. We are working closely with a sample of local authorities to monitor delivery of the 2003 Act and assess the extent to which strategic aims are being achieved. This in turn is part of a wider monitoring and evaluation exercise to assess the practical implementation of the Act.

London Olympics

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what assessment she made of the likely effects of the European Court of Justice ruling on database rights on the governance of betting at the London 2012 Olympics; [48537]

(2) how the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games plans to implement the commitments given to the International Olympic Committee on betting in the Host City Contract for the 2012 Olympics. [48538]

Mr. Caborn: The European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruling on database rights will not affect the Government's plans for the governance of betting on the London 2012 Olympics.

The London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games is aware of its commitments under the Host City Contract and has discussed this with Government. We have stated that we do not intend to legislate on this issue. The onus must remain on governing bodies and the organisers of sporting events to protect the integrity of their own events. From September 2007, all betting operators in Great Britain will be regulated by the Gambling Commission, a powerful new regulator with robust powers of investigation and prosecution. The Commission will work closely with sporting and Olympic authorities to minimise potential threats to the integrity of Olympic events.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will place in the Library a copy of the Olympic Tourism Charter announced by the Prime Minister on 15 November 2005; and if she will make a statement. [48586]

James Purnell: I am arranging for copies of the Tourism 2012 Charter to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The Charter outlines the challenges and opportunities of hosting the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games for the tourism sector across Britain, and sets out some of the key areas in which the Government and its partners bodies will work to prepare for the Games and ensure that they leave a lasting legacy for the visitor economy. My Department will, in partnership with VisitBritain and Visit London, shortly begin a wide consultation of the tourism sector, which will inform the Tourism 2012 Strategy before the end of 2006.

Lyons Inquiry

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether her Department has sent a written submission to the Lyons Inquiry on local government finance. [47890]

Mr. Lammy: The Lyons Inquiry is independent of the Government. Sir Michael Lyons will decide what to publish when he makes available his final report.

National Lottery

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which *(a)* village halls and *(b)* community centres in the Uxbridge constituency have received lottery funding since 1997. [48515]

Mr. Caborn: There is no definition on the lottery awards database of village halls or community centres. Buildings with shared community use have benefited thanks to lottery money awarded to the following recipients:

Fountains Mill Youth Centre;

The Uxbridge Community Centre;

Ickenham Village Hall Association Ltd.;

London Borough of Hillingdon (which went to Bishop Ramsey Secondary School; Douay Martyrs School) and

St. Mary's, Northolt.

Punch and Judy Shows

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received from professors of Punch and Judy shows on the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 on such shows. [47822]

James Purnell *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* We have recently received a number of representations about the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 on Punch and Judy shows, including those from the hon. Member, and we have previously considered representations from Equity on this issue.

School Sport (Funding)

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much of the £750 million pledged for school sport at the 2000 Labour Party Conference has been *(a)* committed, *(b)* spent and *(c)* allocated to the Football Foundation. [48534]

Mr. Caborn: The New Opportunities for PE and Sport (NOPES) funding is now fully committed to over 2000 projects.

The Football Foundation's NOPES allocation totalled £30 million.

£250.7 million has been drawn down by local education authorities to date.

Smoking (Public Places)

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what contribution her Department has made to the development of policy on smoking in public places to represent the interests of the *(a)* licensed trade and *(b)* tourism industry; [49372]

(2) what representations she has received from the tourism and hospitality industries regarding policy on smoking in public places. [49373]

James Purnell: My Department has remained in close touch with the tourism and hospitality industries on this issue, before and following the publication of the Department of Health's White Paper, "Choosing Health", in November 2004. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State met representatives of the hospitality industry twice in 2004 to discuss the industry's response to the Government's proposals for restricting smoking in public places. I have, since May 2005, discussed the issue on a number of occasions with representatives of the tourism and hospitality industries. These included the British Hospitality Association, the Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers, and the Tourism Alliance.

Officials in my Department have worked closely with the Department of Health throughout to inform the Government's proposals, and to ensure that the interests of the tourism and hospitality industries have been fully considered. This has included the provision of factual information on these industries, and of advice on definitional issues arising from the Licensing Act 2003.

Swimming Pools

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many public swimming pools there were in each London borough in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2005; and if she will list those that have facilities for the disabled. [48502]

Mr. Caborn: The total number of swimming pools in each of the London boroughs, in 1997 and 2005 together with the numbers with disabled access is as follows.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) requires that all service providers must take reasonable measures to remove, alter or provide a reasonable means of avoiding physical barriers to accessing and using their premises. In August 2005 I wrote to all local authorities reminding them of their responsibilities under the DDA in the context of leisure and tourism facilities.

	2005		1997	
London Borough	*Total pools*	*Pools with disabled access*	*Total pools*	*Pools with disabled access*
Barking and Dagenham	7	6	6	5
Barnet	22	20	14	13
Bexley	10	10	7	7
Brent	7	5	6	4
Bromley	29	23	20	15
Camden	25	23	19	17
City and County of the City of London	14	11	7	4
City of Westminster	39	29	25	17
Croydon	28	24	19	16
Ealing	25	23	14	12
Enfield	16	14	12	10
Greenwich	17	12	16	11
Hackney	5	5	4	4
Hammersmith and Fulham	16	14	9	7
Haringey	16	13	16	13
Harrow	11	10	8	7
Havering	12	10	6	5
Hillingdon	20	18	15	15
Hounslow	16	16	14	14
Islington	13	12	8	8
Kensington and Chelsea	16	15	10	9
Kingston upon Thames	12	11	5	5
Lambeth	11	9	7	6
Lewisham	9	9	7	7
Merton	14	13	10	9
Newham	10	10	6	6
Redbridge	11	7	8	6
Richmond upon Thames	19	16	17	14
Southwark	17	14	12	10
Sutton	11	8	10	7
Tower Hamlets	11	10	8	8
Waltham Forest	11	11	7	7
Wandsworth	20	18	17	15

Television Licence

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will offer a television licence discount for those people unable to receive digital television through their terrestrial aerial. [47512]

James Purnell *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* No. The great majority of households who cannot currently receive digital terrestrial television services can, with the appropriate receiving equipment, receive digital services, including all the BBC's licence fee funded services, via satellite, with or without a subscription.

The Government is committed to ensuring that at digital switchover everyone in the UK who can currently get the main public service broadcasting channels in analogue form can receive them on digital without needing to pay a subscription.

Television Reception (Wales)

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) how many people in Wales are unable to receive analogue television reception; [47648]

(2) if she will make a statement on the liability for the television licence fee of those who cannot receive analogue services. [47649]

James Purnell: Approximately 2.6 per cent. of households in Wales cannot receive analogue television services. Those who receive digital services are subject to the normal television licensing requirements, since a licence is required to install or use a television receiver to receive any television programme service, whether analogue or digital. The level of the television licence fee does not vary according to the type or range of services that can be received.

Tourism

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what plans she has to restructure the delivery mechanism for tourism policy in England; [49361]

(2) whether regional tourist boards have a role under her Department's plans for marketing tourism in England. [49362]

James Purnell: My Department established a coherent structure for tourism in England in 2003. VisitBritain is responsible for marketing Britain overseas, and England to the British. The regional development agencies have strategic responsibility for promoting and developing tourism in their regions, and may nominate tourist boards or other bodies as regional delivery partners.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has no plans to alter the general shape of that structure. I have, however, recently had discussions with VisitBritain, the England Marketing Advisory Board, and representatives of the regional development agencies, with a view to improving the co-ordination of tourism policy and funding at national, regional, and local levels in England. Those discussions will continue, and any proposals which result from them will be subject to full and wide consultation across the tourism sector.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what was the date of each meeting she has had with the Chairman of VisitBritain in 2005; what was the agenda of each meeting; and if she will make a statement. [48587]

James Purnell: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State met Lord Marshall on 17 October and 15 November 2005. Discussion at the first meeting covered the role of VisitBritain in promoting domestic and inbound tourism, and the better co-ordination of tourism funding activities across England. The second meeting was held at Downing Street, where Lord Marshall acted as industry chairman during a tourism breakfast meeting hosted by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. A wide range of tourism issues were discussed on that occasion.

I have held regular meetings with Lord Marshall, and the chief executive of VisitBritain, since May 2005 to discuss VisitBritain's marketing and other activities.

Vehicles (Pollution Targets)

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what reduction her Department has made in *(a)* road transport vehicle carbon dioxide emissions and *(b)* single occupancy car commuting against baseline years of (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05. [46889]

Mr. Lammy: As the Department for Culture, Media and Sport is situated in central London on a site with very limited facilities for car parking, the great majority of staff travel by public transport. We have no plans to increase the very limited number of parking spaces, which are primarily for staff with disabilities. We also encourage those staff who wish to travel by bicycle to do so, and provide showers and changing facilities. Ministerial cars are provided by the Government Car and Dispatch Service. Currently four out of the five cars we use are dual fuelled and thus low in carbon emissions.

Youth Activities

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she is taking to create diversionary activities for younger people to prevent antisocial behaviour. [47745]

Mr. Lammy: Diversionary activities have an important role to play in tackling antisocial behaviour. The Respect Action Plan commits us to

> Working with regional sports, arts and culture bodies to ensure that within target areas current funding is more effectively channelled into community sport and cultural activities that support Respect principles and provide a hook for engaging those young people most at risk of antisocial behaviour.
>
> Providing a new £1 million investment over the next three years to develop and expand the Sports Champions mentoring programme into arts, culture and creative industry sectors.

Our sectors will be working with local providers and Children's Trusts to support outcomes of the kind currently delivered through the Positive Activities for Young People programme. We are also working with the Department for Education and Skills on implementation of Youth Matters, particularly on the Youth Offer.

CABINET OFFICE

Cabinet Procedures

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what assessment he has made of whether the principles set out in *(a)* the Code of Corporate Governance 2003 and *(b)* the Companies Act 1985 are relevant to the conduct of (i) cabinet and (ii) cabinet committees; and what account was taken of such principles in drafting cabinet procedures. [48029]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I have made no such assessment. The work of Cabinet and Cabinet Committees is governed by the Ministerial Code (available at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/propriety_and ethics/publications/pdf/ministerial_code.pdf).

Guidance on working with Cabinet and Cabinet Committees is produced by the Cabinet Office (available at http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/secretariats/cabinet_committee_business/index.asp).

Both documents contain well established rules for the conduct of Cabinet government.

Government Communications

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will publish figures for the total spend by his Department on *(a)* public relations and press offices and *(b)* advertising in each year since 1996–97; and what the estimated spend for 2005–06 is. [47197]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Details of the Cabinet Office's press office staff costs and expenditure on advertising since 1997–98 and estimated spend for 2005–06 are shown in the table.

(£000)

	Press office staff costs	*Advertising*[1]
1997–98	454	206
1998–99	512	166
1999–2000	753	327
2000–01	782	514
2001–02	798	2,776
2002–03	529	423
2003–04	416	345
2004–05	439	443
2005–06[2]	407	480

[1] This includes the National School of Government.

[2] Estimated spend shown for 2005–06 is based on actual expenditure incurred up to and including December plus an estimate of expenditure from January to March 2006.

Financial information prior to 1997–98 is not held on the Department's accounting system and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The increase in advertising expenditure from 1998–99 to 2000–01 is due to expenditure on recruitment advertising for posts within the Department. These posts ranged from administration and junior management level through to the senior civil service. Also included are expenditure on recruitment advertising for specialist placements within the Government Information and Development Centre.

The advertising figure for 2001–02 includes expenditure of £2,491,000 incurred by the Office of the E-Envoy (now known as the e-Government Unit) for the UK Online advertising campaign, offering help to people wanting to use the internet.

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what changes have been made to the structure of *(a)* the Government Communications Group, *(b)* the Government Communications Network, *(c)* the Government News Network and *(d)* the Central Office of Information since May 1997. [47198]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Government Communication Group (GCG) and the Government Communication Network (GCN) were set up in 2005 as part of implementing the recommendations of the independent Phillis Review of government communications.

The GCG is a small strategic team within the Cabinet Office, headed by the Permanent Secretary Government Communication. It focuses on cross-government co-ordination, strategic communication, standards and professional development. It absorbed the former Government Information and Communication Service (GICS) centre, which focused more on recruitment and promotion of government communicators. Both GCG and GICS include the Media Monitoring Unit.

The GCN is a professional network which differs from its predecessor, the GICS (established in 1997) in that it includes all those working in communication across government. GCN provides them with personal, practical and professional support to enable them to do their jobs better.

The structure of COI was unchanged between 1997 and 2002, when the GNN was transferred to the GICS (from 1 April 2002). In April 2005 the GNN was transferred back to COI to enable the delivery of a more strategic and coordinated communications function in the regions.

Apart from these GNN moves, COI created a Client Account Team on 1 April 2004 to provide a more focused approach to overall client needs and policy themes and to facilitate cross-departmental communication activity.

Some specialist publishing activities were transferred to COI from the Home Office (September 2004), the Department of Health (October 2004) and NHS Estates (September 2005) in order to reduce duplication across government, in line with the Gershon agenda.

Press Complaints

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 he has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* his Department; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47082]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I am not aware of any complaints from the Cabinet Office to the Press Complaints Commission during this period.

Regulatory Reform Act

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many regulations have been *(a)* amended and *(b)* removed under the Regulatory Reform Act 2001 in each year since the Act was passed. [49148]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Changes to regulations are usually made via the statutory instrument powers used to create them.

The main provision of the Regulatory Reform Act 2001 is to allow for the reform of burdensome primary legislation by Regulatory Reform Orders (RRO). Detailed records are not kept of any ancillary changes to regulations.

Twenty-seven Regulatory Reform Orders ("RROs") have been made since the Regulatory Reform Act 2001 was passed. These have delivered benefits to a range of sectors, including businesses, charities and local authorities. Details of the changes made by these orders are available in the supporting documentation accompanying these orders on the Cabinet Office Better Regulation Executive's website at: http://www.cabinet office.gov.uk/regulation/regulatory_reform/act/reform_orders.asp.

PRIME MINISTER

Congressional Medal

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister when he will collect his Congressional Medal. [48032]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Louth and Horncastle (Sir Peter Tapsell) at Prime Minister's questions on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1301–02.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the items of his Office's property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47677]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) to reply. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Library of the House.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Heald: To ask the Prime Minister how much was spent on his *(a)* Private Office, *(b)* Political Office, *(c)* Press Office, *(d)* Strategic Communications Unit, *(e)* Policy Unit, *(f)* Delivery Unit, *(g)* Office of Public Services Reform, *(h)* Forward Strategy Unit and *(i)* other associated units, in each year since 1996–97; and what the estimated spend for 2005–06 is. [47201]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Southend, West (Mr. Amess) on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1935W.

The Delivery Unit, the Strategy Unit and the Office of Public Service Reform do not form part of my Office.

The staffing and associated costs for my Political Office are met by the Labour Party. As has been the case under successive Administrations, marginal costs associated with the Political Office are met from within the overall budget for 10 Downing Street.

Honours

Mr. Blizzard: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the honours that have been awarded to players, and former players, of rugby union football since 1997. [47623]

The Prime Minister: This is a matter of public record. The Honours Lists are published in *The London Gazette* on the occasion of the Queen's birthday in June and at new year.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Prime Minister whether he discussed with President Bush, prior to the onset of hostilities against Iraq in 2003, a proposal that the UK should not take part in war-fighting, but would undertake a subsequent peacekeeping mission. [46125]

The Prime Minister: The decision to resort to military action to ensure that Iraq fulfilled its obligations imposed by successive UN Security Council Resolutions was taken only after other routes to disarm Iraq had failed. I decided to commit UK forces after securing the approval of the House in the vote on 18 March 2003.

Torture

David Howarth: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 64W, on torture, and his oral answer of 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 862, whether his statement that the US does not condone torture was intended to exclude other acts of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment set out in Article 16 of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. [48437]

The Prime Minister: The US Secretary of State made clear in her public statement of 5 December 2005 on the treatment of detainees that "it is US policy that authorised interrogation will be consistent with US obligations under the Convention Against Torture, which prohibit cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment".

The US Detainee Treatment Act, enacted on 30 December 2005, provides that no individual in the custody or under the physical control of the US Government, regardless of nationality or physical location, shall be subject to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. This legislation makes a matter of statute what President Bush has made clear was already US Government policy.

Vandalism

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of his Office's buildings in the last 12 months. [49500]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I have therefore asked my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) to reply. A copy of the reply will be placed in the Library of the House.

Wilson Doctrine

Lynne Jones: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his written statement of 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 173WS, on the Wilson Doctrine, when he expects the Government to have finished considering the advice from the Interception of Communications Commissioner on the possible implications for the Wilson Doctrine of the regulatory framework for the interception of communications. [49256]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to my written ministerial statement of 15 December 2006, *Official Report*, column 173WS, and my answers at Prime Minister's questions on 18 and 25 January.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Financial Inclusion

11. **Lyn Brown:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent measures he has taken to promote financial inclusion. [48329]

Margaret Hodge: The Government is committed to improved access to banking and the supply of affordable credit. We have made great progress since 1997 by implementing many of the recommendations of the Policy Action Team Report. However, we recognise that there is more to be done.

We continue to promote financial inclusion through improved access to banking and the supply of affordable credit. Two specific initiatives in our Department are the £36 million allocated to the Growth Fund which will result in more affordable credit becoming available to tens of thousands of people and the improvements to simplify and expand the interest free Social Fund Budgeting Loans scheme.

Incapacity Benefit

15. **Richard Ottaway:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which organisations he plans to consult on his proposals to reduce the number of people claiming incapacity benefit; and if he will make a statement. [48334]

Margaret Hodge: We have been consulting with key stakeholders about the detail of incapacity benefits reform since 2002, when we published our Pathways to Work proposals.

We have now published our new proposals in our Green Paper and formal consultation will run until 21 April 2006.

During this period I will engage with all our stakeholders, including claimants, employers, health professionals, local authorities, providers, disability organisations, welfare rights organisations and hon. Members.

19. **Paul Farrelly:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many incapacity benefit claimants there are in Newcastle-under-Lyme. [48338]

Mrs. McGuire: As at August 2005, there were 4,800 people in Newcastle-under-Lyme claiming incapacity benefit or severe disablement allowance.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost is of an incapacity case cleared by scrutiny. [35713]

Mrs. McGuire: This information is confidential and cannot be disclosed as to do so may prejudice the commercial interests of the Department and/or its suppliers.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people claimed incapacity benefit in Beverley and Holderness in each year since 1997. [44316]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants, in the Beverley and Holderness parliamentary constituency: May 2005

	Number of claimants
May 1997	4,300
May 1998	3,900
May 1999	3,600
May 2000	3,200
May 2001	3,300
May 2002	3,300
May 2003	3,300
May 2004	3,300
May 2005	3,300

Notes:

1. The parliamentary constituency figures for the years 1997 to 1999 have been produced using the 5 per cent. data and have been rated up proportionally using the Great Britain WPLS 100 per cent. IB/SDA totals.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. 'Claimant' figures include all IB and SDA, including IB credits only cases.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples from 1997 to 1999 and Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data thereafter.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of how many people are affected by incapacity benefit reductions relating to the receipt of an occupational pension. [44510]

Mrs. McGuire: As at May 2005 there were 30,600 incapacity benefit recipients whose benefit had been reduced by the receipt of an occupational pension. This does not include those whose benefit is reduced to nil; information on such claims is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people received incapacity benefit in Elmet constituency in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* the most recent year for which figures are available. [46271]

Mrs. McGuire: In August 1997, there were 3,500 people, and in August 2005, there were 3,000 people in the Elmet parliamentary constituency claiming incapacity benefit or severe disablement allowance.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average time was between the start of a claim for incapacity benefit and the first personal capability assessment in the last year for which figures are available. [46320]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 22 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1073W.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many incapacity benefit claimants have failed a personal capability assessment in each of the last four years in *(a)* Pathways to Work areas and *(b)* non Pathways to Work areas; and for what reasons in each case. [46322]

Mrs. McGuire: The personal capability assessment uses a scoring process to assess an individual's incapacity. Where an individual's score is below the threshold for incapacity benefit or disability living allowance, the benefit will be withdrawn. It is not possible to give a further breakdown of reasons.

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance terminations due to a personal capability assessment score being below the benefit threshold

As at August each year	*Pathways areas*	*Non-Pathways areas*
2002	1,800	20,900
2003	1,800	22,700
2004	3,100	21,300
2005	2,600	25,900

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

2. Figures for the latest quarter do not include any late notifications and are subject to major changes in future quarters. For illustration purposes, total terminations for May 2004 increased by 33 per cent. in the year following their initial release.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate 5 per cent. sample.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of incapacity benefits claimants have undergone a medical examination in each year since 1990. [46329]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people claimed incapacity benefit in 2004–05, broken down by medical condition. [46372]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave the hon. Member for Bristol, East (Kerry McCarthy), on 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1824W.

New Deal

20. **Keith Vaz:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the new deal in Leicester. [48339]

Margaret Hodge: The new deal has been successful in helping 2,620 people into work in my hon. Friend's constituency. This includes more than 1,350 young people through New Deal for Young People, 84 per cent. of whom have gone into sustained employment.

Pensions Regulator

22. **Sir Peter Soulsby:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the work of the new Pensions Regulator. [48341]

Mr. Timms: The Pensions Regulator opened for business in April 2005 with a new regulatory approach placing greater emphasis on identifying and tackling real risks to members' benefits and a proactive, risked-based style of regulation.

It is clear that this approach is already making itself felt. The regulator is collecting and analysing a wide range of scheme data, enabling it to build a clearer picture of the current pensions landscape.

The Pensions Regulator is required to assess and monitor the extent to which it is meeting its statutory objectives and targets, submitting an annual report to the Secretary of State. This report is then laid before Parliament. In addition, I meet with the chair of the Pensions Regulator on a quarterly basis and officials in my Department regularly monitor to ensure that the regulator is meeting its statutory objectives and pursuing its business activities effectively.

Welfare-to-Work Green Paper

23. **Mr. Leigh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the contribution that the proposals set out in the welfare to work Green Paper will make to the Government's goal of 80 per cent. employment. [48342]

Margaret Hodge: The proposals in the Green Paper will be a key role in achieving an employment rate of 80 per cent. of the working age population. To achieve our aim we will reduce the number of people on incapacity benefits by a million, help 300,000 more lone parents into work and increase by a million the number of older workers.

Benefit Fraud

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on his Department's strategy to tackle benefit fraud. [47107]

Mr. Plaskitt: Our strategy for tackling benefit fraud was published in "Reducing Fraud in the Benefit System: Achievements and Ambitions" on 13 October 2005. Copies are available in the Library.

Since 1997, we have reduced fraud in income support and jobseeker's allowance by nearly two thirds. We now estimate that we lose around £0.9 billion to fraud each year—under 1 per cent. of total benefit expenditure, and the lowest estimated levels ever recorded. However, we realise that there is more to do and will continue to drive this down further.

Benefit Payments/Provision

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of telephone calls for benefit claims to Jobcentre Plus offices in Wales *(a)* received the engaged tone, *(b)* disconnected during the IVR process and *(c)* were abandoned by the caller in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [39559]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 6 February 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning how many and what proportion of telephone calls for benefit claims to Jobcentre Plus offices in Wales *(a)* received the engaged tone, *(b)* disconnected during the IVR process and *(c)* were abandoned by the caller in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

When a customer calls a Jobcentre Plus contact centre to make a claim for benefit, their call is either answered immediately or is placed in a queue until either their call is answered or they choose to abandon the call. They are not connected to an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and customers do not get an engaged tone. We do know however that customers make the choice to abandon their call and that Jobcentre Plus does not terminate calls. I suspect that customers may abandon calls because of domestic interruptions or simply that they do not wait for even a short time to speak to an adviser.

We have three contact centres in Wales: Pembroke Dock, Bridgend and Cwmbran that take calls from customers wishing to claim benefit. I have set out below the available information on calls offered and abandoned for those sites based in Wales.

	Calls offered	*Calls abandoned*	*Percentage*
2004 (June to December)	249,028	44,217	17.8
2005 (January to w/e 16 December)	692,317	139,601	20.2

Note:

Prior to June 2004 information was not collected centrally.

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people received *(a)* housing benefit, *(b)* council tax benefit, *(c)* income support and *(d)* incapacity benefit in the constituency of South Swindon, in each year since 1997. [47015]

Mr. Plaskitt: Housing benefit and council tax benefit figures are not available broken down by parliamentary constituency. The available information is in the table.

Housing benefit (HB), council tax benefit (CTB), income support (IS), incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants in the areas shown

	Swindon borough council		*South Swindon constituency*	
	HB	*CTB*	*IS*	*IB/SDA*
August 1997	10,400	12,700	3,500	3,300
August 1998	10,200	12,000	3,500	3,700
August 1999	10,000	11,800	3,100	3,300
August 2000	8,600	10,600	2,900	3,300
August 2001	8,100	9,300	2,900	3,300
August 2002	8,300	9,700	2,900	3,400
August 2003	9,200	11,000	3,000	3,400
August 2004	9,700	11,900	3,000	3,600
August 2005	10,300	12,500	2,900	3,500

Notes:

1. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. CTB figures exclude any Second Adult Rebate cases.
4. HB figures exclude any Extended Payment cases.
5. For consistency, income support figures exclude minimum income guarantee (MIG) claimants. Pension credit replaced MIG on the 6 October 2003; pension credit cases are not included in the table.
6. IB/SDA figures include IB credits only cases.
7. IS and IB/SDA figures prior to May 2000 have been derived by applying 5 per cent. proportions to 100 per cent. totals.

Sources:

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Quarterly 100 per cent. caseload stock-count taken in August 1997 to August 2005; DWP Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS); Information Directorate 5 per cent. samples.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what action he is taking to improve *(a)* the efficiency of delivery and *(b)* comparability of control systems of benefits paid to British citizens resident overseas. [45194]

Mr. Timms: The Pension Service International Pension Centre applies the normal departmental security rules and law to prevent both external and internal fraud and abuse. It has recently upgraded its telephony systems to improve the level of service to customers overseas. Work in the centre has now been organised by country. This is to ensure there are specialist areas covering the European Union, countries with which the Department has Reciprocal Agreements and countries where non-uprated pensions are paid.

In addition The Pension Service has a team of specialists who determine if marriages and divorces that take place under foreign legislation meet the requirements of UK Social Security legislation and we carry out a programme of certification to ensure that benefit payments continue to be appropriate. There is also technology in place that allows us to authenticate foreign documents.

The Pension Service has achieved direct payment into bank accounts for over 97 per cent. of residents where it is possible to pay benefits via the BACS system.

Following a comparison with the Dutch System The Pension Service is implementing a new approach to programme protection work based on the amount of expenditure, the number of residents and age of residents by country.

Other benefits administered by the Department for Work and Pensions, for non United Kingdom residents are entirely dependant on the entitlement conditions for each individual benefit. These conditions may be modified for EU nationals moving within the EU by the EU Regulations on Social Security for Migrant Workers and in other cases by reciprocal social security agreements between the United Kingdom and other countries.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was owed to the Department in overpaid benefits in each quarter of the past three years; how much was received in each quarter; and if he will make a statement on progress in recovery of the outstanding balance. [30081]

Mr. Plaskitt: Benefit overpayment balances outstanding and recoveries for the last three years are as follows:

£ million

	Q1	*Q2*	*Q3*	*Q4*
2002-03				
Balance owed at quarter end	1,087	1,101	1,116	1,145
Recoveries	49.3	48.9	45.7	44.8
Total recovered 188.8				
2003-04[1]				
Balance owed at quarter end	1,124	1,122	1,121	1,157
Recoveries	54.7	46.6	50.9	29.1
Total recovered 181.4				
2004-05				
Balance owed at quarter end	1,161	1,174	1,187	1,230
Recoveries	46.1	50.4	55.6	35.5

Total recovered 186.6

[1] The reductions in both the debt stock (Q1) and recoveries in 2003-04 were due to the transfer of child benefit from DWP to Inland Revenue.

[2] Recoveries figure reduced in quarter to reflect accounting adjustments required to balance out incorrectly posted transactions in previous three quarters.

Within the Department, Debt Management was established in April 2001 to provide greater focus and expertise to the management and recovery of benefit overpayments within the Department. Since then, the bulk of benefit overpayment recovery work has been centralised from over 100 sites to 10 dedicated debt centres, and £750 million of overpaid benefits has been recovered up to March 2005.

Since April 2004, where DWP has been unsuccessful in seeking recovery from those no longer in receipt of benefit, the debt has been referred to our private sector partners under the Enforcement Initiative.

From August 2005, a new computer system was introduced to the debt centres to assist with the recovery and accounting processes.

These improvements will see enhanced management and recovery in future years. However, due to the circumstances of many of our customers, recovery of a debt can take several years.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recorded job entries there have been in the United Kingdom excluding pathways to work pilots for incapacity benefit claimants who have been claiming benefit for *(a)* nought to three months, *(b)* three to six months, *(c)* six to 12 months, *(d)* 12 to 24 months and *(e)* 24 months and over since 1997. [38946]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The specific information requested is not available

Bowback House, Milton Keynes

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* compulsory and *(b)* voluntary redundancies are expected as a result of the development of Bowback House in Milton Keynes. [48798]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 6 February 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking how many *(a)* compulsory and *(b)* voluntary redundancies are anticipated as a result of the development of Bowback House in Milton Keynes. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

We are not anticipating any compulsory or voluntary redundancies as a result of the development of Bowback House in Milton Keynes. Currently we are recruiting staff at this location.

I hope this is helpful.

Child Support

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many non-resident parents are paying child support under *(a)* the old system and *(b)* the new system; and if he will make a statement. [45017]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is the matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many non-resident parents are paying child support under *(a)* the old system and *(b)* the new system; and if he will make a statement.

In the quarter to December 2005, the latest period for which figures are available, just over 400,000 cases were in receipt of maintenance via the Agency's collection service or had a Maintenance Direct arrangement in place. This equates to over half a million children.

The table attached breaks down this figure with respect to cases under the old and new schemes across both the old and new child support IT systems according to whether or not a case is on the collection service, or has a maintenance direct arrangement in place.

I hope you find this helpful.

Number of cases where maintenance was collected via the Agency's collection service or a Maintenance Direct arrangement was in place by Child Support Scheme and IT system—Quarter ending December 2005

Thousand

	New Scheme (New IT system)	*Old Scheme (New IT system)*	*Old Scheme (Old IT system)*	*Total*
Number of cases receiving maintenance via the collection service	111,000	33,000	158,000	302,000
Number of cases with a maintenance direct arrangement in place	36,000	8,000	62,000	106,000
Total	147,000	41,000	220,000	408,000

Notes:

1. Numbers above exclude old scheme cases with a punitive interim maintenance assessment in place, as well as new scheme cases being progressed clerically.

2. Old scheme child supports cases a largely processed on the old IT system, but are also processed on the new IT system where they have been migrated due to links with new scheme applications.

3. Maintenance Direct cases are those in which the Agency has carried out a maintenance calculation or assessment, and the non resident parent has subsequently agreed to pay the parent with care directly. There will then be no further involvement from the Agency unless requested by either party (for example in the event of a change of circumstances requiring recalculation or non compliance by the non resident parent). The existence of such an arrangement does not guarantee that payment of maintenance occurs, as it could cease upon mutual agreement of both parties without the Agency being informed.

4. A case is counted as having been compliant on the Agency collection service if it is open at the end of December, and any money has been both requested and received via the Agency's collection service in the preceding three months.
5. Volumes are rounded to the nearest thousand.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the strategic review of the Child Support Agency will be published. [48337]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Secretary of State will make an announcement shortly.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many times the Child Support Agency has used its powers to withdraw the driving licences of non-compliant non-resident parents in each year from 2000–01; and if he will make a statement. [41345]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many times the Child Support Agency has used its powers to withdraw the driving licences of non-compliant non-resident parents in each year from 2000–01 to 2005–06; and if he will make a statement.

The legislation to disqualify non-resident parents from holding or obtaining a driving licence came into effect in April 2001.

The Child Support Agency does not have the power to withdraw the driving licences of non-compliant non-resident parents, this is a decision which may be made by the courts.

Once all possible means of civil recovery of the debt have been exhausted the Secretary of State will make application to the courts for non-resident parents to be committed to prison or disqualified from holding or obtaining a driving licence. If the non-resident parent is found guilty of wilful refusal or culpable neglect, it is the court who will decide which of the sanctions available is the most appropriate. The table below therefore details the number of non-resident parents who have had their driving licences withdrawn by the courts and the number of non-resident parents who have received a suspended withdrawal sentence and additionally those who have received suspended and actual committal sentences.

	Number of cases referred to court for committal or disqualification orders	*Driving licence—withdrawn*	*Driving licence—suspended sentence*	*Committal to prison—suspended sentences*	*Committal to prison—sentences served*
2001–02	—	0	3	21	0
2002–03	—	1	7	35	4
2003–04	240	1	9	95	8
2004–05	662	5	31	224	8
April 2005 to November 2005	554	4	13	212	8
Total	—	11	63	587	28

Notes:
1. The fact that the number of suspensions and actual penalties is less than half the number of referrals is explained by the number of debtors who enter into agreements to pay rather than attend court. Similarly, only a very small number of debtors actually go to prison or lose their driving licences, in our experience, because the courts normally seek to suspend a sentence on condition that the defendant commits to pay.
2. We do not have accurate data for the number of cases referred to court for the periods 2001–02 and 2002–03.

I hope this is helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on progress in *(a)* securing improved management information and *(b)* resolving information technology problems at the Child Support Agency. [41405]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 6 February 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on progress in *(a)* securing improved management information and *(b)* resolving information technology problems at the Child Support Agency.

(a) As a result of an Agency instigated independent review of its Data Warehouse and the subsequent Select Committee recommendations, an independent review of the Agency's management information service was commissioned and a project set up.

The project has made significant progress in recent months, providing audit assured information going back to March 2003 in respect of:

new scheme applications intake

volume and age of clearances and

volume and age of work in progress.

Further management information improvements covering change of circumstances and non-compliant non-resident parents are currently being developed.

(b) There have been a number of IT releases over the last year and as a result of this work the new computer system stability, availability and performance are much improved, in most cases now achieving and maintaining agreed technical service-level standards.

Improvements included the correction of a number of internal system defects and various system infrastructure improvements. Call Manager improved the telephony system by routing customer calls more quickly and effectively. Freetext provided the ability for staff to note down more detailed and specific information about individual cases directly onto the system that resulted in more efficient casework handling. The national roll out of Voice Recording provided the ability to record telephone conversations between Agency staff and new scheme clients and is now used for quality monitoring/learning and development purposes.

Work to improve the new computer system is continuing with additional IT releases planned for 2006 to deliver further improvements.

I hope you find this response helpful.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions under what powers the Child Support Agency pays compensation for errors it makes; and who decides *(a)* when and *(b)* of what quantums such payments should be. [44229]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive and he will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 6 February 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, under what powers the Child Support Agency pays compensation for errors it makes; and who decides *(a)* when and *(b)* of what quantums such payments should be.

The Department for Work and Pensions operates a discretionary, non-statutory scheme providing financial redress for maladministration under delegated authority from HM Treasury. Agency officials have authority to make payments up to £15,000. Payments exceeding that limit are referred to the Department for Work and Pensions' central team for authorisation.

Each case is treated individually. The Agency aims to deal with such cases within 30 working days of referral.

I hope this is helpful.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what representations he has received on financial hardship caused by Child Support Agency maintenance assessments; and if he will make a statement. [44603]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1560, on the Child Support Agency, whether there have been reductions in *(a)* back office and *(b)* support staffing at the Child Support Agency since January 2005; and if he will make a statement. [45754]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 6 February 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his Answer of 19th January 2006 Official Report column 1560 on the Child Support Agency whether there have been reductions in *(a)* back office and *(b)* support staffing at the Child Support Agency since January 2005; and if he will make a statement.

There have been reductions in both *(a)* back office and *(b)* support staffing at the Child Support Agency since January 2005. Over this same period there has been an increase in the numbers of staff employed in Frontline Services.

I hope you find this helpful.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much the Child Support Agency (CSA) has raised under the Attachment of Earnings Act 1971 and the Child Support Act 1991 as a result of empowering employers to collect an additional fee of £1 to help defray the costs of administering each CSA order; and if he will make a statement. [48717]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is not available.

Child support legislation allows employers to collect up to £1 towards administrative costs, whether they do so is up to them. The employer does not notify the agency when they do this, as it is a matter for them.

Crisis Loan Applications

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many crisis loan applications have been received *(a)* in each of the last five years and *(b)* in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available. [46821]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the tables.

Crisis loan applications in Great Britain

Calendar year	*Number received*
2001	1,313,000
2002	1,405,000
2003	1,383,300
2004	1,348,000
2005	1,361,100

Crisis loan applications in Great Britain

2005	*Number received*
January	120,800
February	114,000
March	118,000
April	114,200
May	108,200
June	115,400
July	109,000
August	114,200
September	116,400
October	109,700
November	119,500
December	101,700

Note:
Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.
Source:
DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

Child Support Agency

David Mundell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much the Child Support Agency has received but not yet passed on to the parent with care. [25235]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 6 February 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much the Child Support Agency has received but not yet passed on to the parent with care.

The Agency collection service deals with significant sums passing through its bank account (in excess of £600 million in each of the last two years). As a consequence the Agency bank balance is continually turning over with receipts from Non Resident Parents and employers which need to be assigned and be paid out to Parents with Care or the Secretary of State (where the Parent with Care is in receipt of benefit). At 30 November 2005 an amount of £4.2 million had been received, cleared, and was in the process of being passed on to the Parent with Care via their preferred Method of Payment, which is in the main directly into their bank account. At this date there was also an amount of £9.5 million in the bank account awaiting fund clearance and assignment between the Parent with Care and the Secretary of State.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39990]

Mr. Timms: Such information that is available is in the table. Planned expenditure for 2005–06 is based on actual costs to November 2005, extrapolated for the full year. Contribution rates were consistent between 2002–03 and 2004–05 but have increased substantially with effect from 1 April 2005, accounting for the acute rise in costs.

£ million

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Department for Work and Pensions	291.6	303.7	312.2	427.9
Executive Agencies:				
Child Support Agency	20.5	21.6	22.1	32.8
Jobcentre Plus	175.3	171.6	178.3	245.5
Disability and Carers Service (established 1/11/04)	n/a	n/a	6.0	20.0
The Pension Service	25.3	37.2	35.1	43.9
The Appeals Service	1.8	3.5	3.6	4.2
The Rent Service	1.8	2.2	2.5	2.9
Health & Safety Executive	17.0	17.0	17.1	24.0
Non-departmental public bodies:				
Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (The Pensions Regulator from 6/04/05)	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.3
Disability Rights Commission	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.9
Pensions Compensation Board	0	0	0	0

For 2005–06, employers' contributions are payable to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) at one of four rates in the ranges 16.2 to 24.6 per cent. of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The Scheme Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation; last carried out as at 31 March 2003. The contribution rates reflect the cost of benefits as they accrue (net of employee contributions), not the costs as they are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

Departmental Jobs

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many of his Department's jobs are located in Tamworth constituency. [35675]

Mrs. McGuire: As at 31 October 2005, a total of 40 (full-time equivalent) staff were employed by the Department in the Tamworth constituency.

Departmental Leaflets

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what response his Department is making to the recent National Audit Office Report on its leaflets. [46668]

Mrs. McGuire: In the "Using Information to communicate with the public about services and entitlements" report the NAO acknowledges the recent work the Department has already undertaken in this area. The Department has already made progress against a number of the NAO's recommendations and will carefully monitor implementation of the remainder.

Departmental Staff

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what strategy he proposes to adopt to address the conclusion of the departmental working paper number 21, Review of Existing Research on the Extra Costs of Disability, that disability living allowance and attendance allowance are not sufficient to meet costs associated with disability; and if he will make a statement. [38246]

Mrs. McGuire: Working paper no. 21 reviewed the existing research evidence about the extra costs of disabled people. It concluded that although most studies estimate that disability living allowance and attendance allowance are not sufficient to meet all the extra costs of disability, they have produced no clear and robust evidence on the actual size of those costs in relation to benefit levels. All of the different approaches so far adopted by researchers are methodologically and conceptually difficult and have produced widely differing results. Some have also tended not to take account of the full range of statutory services and benefits available to help meet the needs and costs associated with disability, amongst which disability

living allowance and attendance allowance make a non-income-related and tax-free contribution of around £12.5 billion a year towards the disability related extra costs of over 4 million disabled people.

Disabled People

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many disabled people are seeking employment, as measured by the number of people consulting a disability employment adviser; and how many of these have been seeking employment for *(a)* six months or more, *(b)* one year or more and *(c)* 18 months or more. [30944]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available in the format requested.

Industrial Injuries Scheme

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what assessment he has made of the costs and benefits of replacing the industrial injuries scheme with a no-fault compensation scheme fully funded by employers; [40472]

(2) what assessment he has made of the *(a)* cost and *(b)* other effects of abolishing the Industrial Injuries Disablement Pension and transferring responsibility to employers; and if he will make a statement. [44761]

Margaret Hodge: I have asked officials to carry out a review of our Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit Scheme. As the scheme was introduced in 1948, we need to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of our modern society. While I expect officials to look at all aspects of the scheme, we have not yet looked in any detail at any particular component and have not made any assessment of the costs and benefits of transferring responsibility for industrial injury compensation to employers. We will, however, be looking at all options for the future.

We intend to publish a discussion document later this year when we will engage fully with stakeholders and other interested parties.

Internal Fraud

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost of internal fraud has been to *(a)* his Department and *(b)* its agencies in each year from 2000–01. [41330]

Mr. Plaskitt: Details of estimated cost of internal fraud to the Department are presented in table 1.

Table 1: Cost of fraud (£)

Agency	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06[1] (to December)
Jobcentre Plus	44,309[2]	208,823[2]	557,007	71,100	36,670	212,014
The Pension Service	n/a	n/a	n/a	600	876	25,735
Child Support Agency	9,200	4,111	0	1,812	3,338	1,565
Disability and Carers service	n/a	n/a	0	40	11,913	7,875
Appeals Service	0	203	0	24	0	2,879
War Pensions Agency	[3]3,583	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Employment Service	[4]3,023	[4]1,045,977	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Departmental Headquarters and Shared Directorates	14,019	620	8,595	0	60	8,467
Contractors	n/a	n/a	n/a	765,526	559,959	324,129
Total	74,134	1,259,734	565,602	839,102	612,816	582,664

[1] Year to date figures for 2005–06 are based on investigations completed since 31 March 2005.
[2] Jobcentre Plus—a new agency created in 2002 merging parts of the Benefits Agency and the Employment Service. Figures up to 2001–02 relate to losses within the Benefits Agency.
[3] War Pensions Agency transferred to the Ministry of Defence in 2002.
[4] Employment Service—figures to 2001–2002 include contractor fraud.
Source:
This information has been compiled from annual returns detailing fraud losses.

The Department has a robust approach to the detection, prevention and deterrence of internal and contractor fraud. This approach is consistent with Treasury guidance.

The Department has a Fraud Response Plan and an Anti-Fraud Policy in place. Investigations into suspected internal or contractor-related frauds are conducted by a professional and dedicated team.

In addition to investigations staff, there is a network of security advisers in place across the Department. Their role includes promoting internal security throughout businesses, reporting and initial investigation potential security incidents, and providing security awareness training to staff.

The Department has a Whistleblowers Hotline to enable staff to report suspicions of internal fraud outside of management structures.

The Department also has in place a comprehensive set of management checks and procedures to ensure that financial transactions are protected from the risk of internal fraud and abuse.

Jobcentre Plus

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in which parts of the Jobcentre Plus *(a)* network and *(b)* contact centres the Customer Management System has been implemented; and what the implementation dates are for the rest of the (i) network and (ii) contact centres. [44594]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply to your question asking in which parts of the Jobcentre Plus *(a)* network and *(b)* contact centres the Customer Management System has been implemented; and what the implementation dates are for the rest of the (i) network and (ii) contact centres. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

We are implementing the Customer Management System (CMS) in all Jobcentre Plus customer facing offices, benefit processing offices and contact centres.

Currently CMS has been deployed evenly throughout Jobcentre Plus in over 75 per cent. of the total network. We expect the introduction of CMS across the network to be completed by July 2006.

Annex 1 indicates those districts where CMS deployment is fully complete and those sites where CMS is still to be deployed. Annex 2 lists all 22 Contact Centres where CMS has been deployed.

I hope this is helpful.

Annex 1—Jobcentre Plus deployment of the Customer Management System Region and District

Region	*District*	*CM Deployment Full or Partial*
East of England	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	Partial
	Cambridgeshire	Partial
	Norfolk	Partial
	Essex	Partial
	Suffolk	Full
East Midlands	Derbyshire	Full
	Leicestershire	Full
	Lincolnshire and Rutland	Partial
	Northamptonshire	Full
	Nottinghamshire	Partial
London	Brent, Harrow and Hillingdon	Partial
	Central London	Partial
	City and East London	Partial
	Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth	Partial
	North London	Partial
	South East London	Partial
	South London	Partial
	North East London	Partial
	West London	Partial
North East	City of Sunderland	Full
	Durham	Partial
	Gateshead and South Tyneside	Full
	Northumbria	Full
	Tees Valley	Full
North West	Cheshire and Warrington	Full
	Cumbria	Full
	Lancashire East	Partial
	Greater Manchester East	Partial
	Greater Manchester West	Partial
	Greater Mersey	Full
	Lancashire West	Partial
	Liverpool and Wirral	Full
Scotland	Ayr, Dumfries, Galloway and Inverclyde	Partial
	Edinburgh, Lothians and Borders	Partial
	Forth Valley and Fife	Partial
	Glasgow	Partial
	Highlands, Islands, Clyde Coast and Grampian	Partial
	Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire	Partial
South East	Buckinghamshire, Oxen and Berkshire	Partial
	Hampshire	Partial
	Kent	Partial
	Surrey and Sussex	Partial
South West	Devon and Cornwall	Partial
	Dorset and Somerset	Partial
	Gloucester	Partial
	Wiltshire and Swindon	Partial
	West of England	Partial
Wales	Bridgend	Full
	Cardiff and Vale	Full
	Eastern Valleys	Partial
	North West Wales	Partial
	South East Wales	Full
	Swansea Bay	Partial
	West Wales	Partial
	Wrexham and North West Coast	Partial
West Midlands	Birmingham and Solihull	Partial
	Black Country	Partial
	Coventry and Warwickshire	Partial
	Staffordshire	Partial
	The Marches	Partial
Yorkshire and the Humber	Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham	Partial
	Bradford	Partial
	Calderdale and Kirklees	Partial
	East Yorkshire and Humber	Partial
	Leeds	Partial
	North Yorkshire	Partial
	Sheffield	Full
	Wakefield	Partial

Annex 2—Jobcentre Plus deployment of the Customer Management System

Contact Centres

Blackburn

Bootle

Bridgend

Coventry

Derby

Dundee

Garston

Grimsby

Halifax

Hastings

Lincoln

Lowestoft

Marton Mere

Middlesbrough

Newcastle

Paisley

Pembroke Dock

Poole

Sheffield

Taunton

Telford

Torquay

Jobseekers

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps are taken by the staff of Jobcentre Plus to support working age claimants with special needs, with particular reference to people with *(a)* English language difficulties, *(b)* learning disabilities and *(c)* chronic physical and mental health problems. [45237]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 6 February 2006:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply to your questions asking what steps are taken by the staff of Jobcentre Plus to support working age claimants with special needs, with particular reference to people with *(a)* English language difficulties, *(b)* learning disabilities and *(c)* chronic physical and mental health problems. This as something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus provides additional help for those people who face particular disadvantage in the labour market. This is provided primarily through personal advisers who provide information, advice and guidance to help people identify and overcome barriers to employment. Alongside this, there is a range of employment and training related opportunities to help overcome specific issues such language and learning difficulties, and physical and mental health problems.

By way of context it is worth mentioning that the Government published a Green Paper on Welfare Reform—"A New Deal for Welfare : Empowering people to work" on 24 January 2006. In that Green Paper the Government re-emphasised its commitment to provide opportunity for all saying

"Ensuring that all our citizens have both the right and the opportunity to join the world of work is a fundamental responsibility of any modern government. The Government will help people achieve success for themselves and their families."

The Green Paper sets our proposals for reforms which build on recent successes which Jobcentre Plus have been a part of and we are continue to take a leading in role in delivering better services to the people we serve.

On the specific issue of language difficulties, our policy is to ensure interpreters are provided when conducting business with customers who do not speak English or Welsh, or who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. Interpreters can be provided in a number of ways, e.g. through:

multi-lingual members of staff;

local interpreters providing services voluntarily or under contract;

the Department of Work and Pensions telephone-interpreter service, which is currently provided by Language Line.

In some instances customers may also use their own interpreters, e.g. a family member or friend, though for formal interviews, e.g. benefit appeals and tribunals, only independent and qualified interpreters may be used.

People for whom English is a second language (ESOL) also have access to work focused provision through our Work Based Learning for Adults programme and the New Deal. These ESOL programmes provide full-time help for up to 26 weeks, 780 learning hours (26 weeks at 30 hours a week). Participants follow a varied and innovative approach to learning and are encouraged to take part in project work and work placements to consolidate their learning, which is designed to improve skills by at least one level.

Jobcentre Plus also has a range of support and labour market advice for those customers receiving Incapacity benefits. This is available to a range of customers with health conditions and disabilities including those with learning difficulties and chronic physical and mental health conditions.

A key, new, element of our service are the Pathways to Work Pilots, which are currently operating in 11 Jobcentre Plus Districts. Specialist advisers are given enhanced interviewing skills to enable them to deal specifically with this customer group. Pathways to Work have also introduced a more intensive mandatory regime of work-focused interviews for all new Incapacity benefit customers, with access to a wider range of support. IB customers with the most severe conditions are not expected to take part in the full Pathways regime but can volunteer to participate. The support includes a Choices Package, which includes the Condition Management Programme (CMP) delivered through a partnership between Jobcentre Plus and the NHS. The CMP is delivered by health professionals and has been designed to help people better understand and cope with their health condition. Through these pilots we are engaging significantly greater numbers of customers and substantially improving their prospects for work.

Incapacity Benefit Personal Advisers (IBPAs) have been introduced into all Jobcentre Plus offices. The aim of the IBPA is to provide support to customers in receipt of Incapacity Benefit move closer to the labour market and into sustainable employment.

Additionally, more specialist support is available via the Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) who works closely with employers, employees and customers with a health condition or disability, offering advice and practical support to enable the person find and sustain employment. DEAs are also a route for obtaining support through the specialist programmes provided by Jobcentre Plus.

There are a number of programmes that are specifically designed to help people with a disability or health condition return to work:

Access to Work is a specialist disability programme, which provides practical advice and support to help disabled people enter or stay in paid employment;

Work Preparation is an individually tailored, work-focused programme that enables disabled people to address barriers associated with their disability and prepare for working with the confidence necessary to achieve and sustain their job goal;

WORKSTEP provides support in jobs for disabled people who have more complex barriers to finding and keeping work but who, with the right support, can work effectively and develop in their job. Longer-term support continues to be available for those who need it and is a major element of the programme;

people with a disability or health condition may also receive help through the New Deal for Disabled People programme. NDDP is a voluntary programme which gives customers on qualifying disability or health-related benefits in England, Scotland and Wales access to a network of Job Brokers. Job Brokers work with customers to help them compete in the labour market and support them in finding and keeping a job;

the Job Introduction Scheme (JIS) aims to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities by offering a weekly grant to employers during the first six weeks of their employment;

Residential Training provides a unique service to unemployed disabled adults whose needs are not met through any other government funded programmes. Although other programmes can fund training aimed at helping disabled people into work, the Residential Training courses are unique in that they deliver specific training and programmes for disabled people with complex needs who cannot enter into employment or a work-based environment without the appropriate preparation; and

other New Deal programmes such as New Deal for Young People, New Deal 25 plus, New Deal 50 plus and New Deal for Lone Parents are also available to this customer group.

I do apologise for the length of this response, but I hope it has helped in detailing the wide range of services available.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average *(a)* time taken, *(b)* cost of and *(c)* number of public officials involved was in handling a fresh claim for jobseeker's allowance in the last period for which figures are available. [45234]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what the average *(a)* time taken, *(b)* cost of and *(c)* number of public officials involved was in handling a fresh claim for Jobseeker's Allowance in the last period for which

figures are available. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus measures how long it takes to clear a claim to benefit to the date of decision. This is expressed as the Actual Average Clearance Time (AACT).

In the operational year 2004/2005, the AACT for Jobseeker's Allowance was 12.1 days and, for the same period, an estimate of the average direct cost (excluding overheads) of processing a new claim for Jobseeker's Allowance was £21.97.

We do not keep information on the number of officials involved in handling individual new claims for Jobseeker's Allowance.

Learning Disability

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he takes to ensure that people with a learning disability are given the right support to find jobs they *(a)* wish to do and *(b)* are capable of doing; and if he will make a statement. [47248]

Mrs. McGuire: Jobcentre Plus provides additional help for those people who face particular disadvantage in the labour market and who wish to move into a job. This is provided primarily through personal advisers who provide information, advice and guidance to help people identify and overcome barriers to employment. Alongside this, there is a range of employment and training related opportunities to help overcome specific issues such as language difficulties, and physical and mental health problems, including help for people with a learning disability.

Maintenance Arrears

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects payment for maintenance arrears for *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06 to be made to Miss Jones of Birkenhead. [48441]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the right hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty, dated 6 February 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when he expects payment for maintenance arrears for *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06 to be made to Miss Jones of Birkenhead.

As details about individual cases are confidential I have written to you separately about this case.

National Insurance Number Hotline

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will increase the number of staff answering calls on the national insurance number hotline. [45684]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Leslie Strathie, dated 6 February 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking if he will increase the number of staff answering calls on the national insurance number hotline. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

It may be helpful if I outline the way in which customers apply for a National Insurance number. We do not currently operate a National Insurance number hotline. We are, however, presently introducing a new centralised computerised appointments booking process in order to reduce the time it takes for customers to receive a National Insurance number. We are implementing this new process on a phased timetable. This means that at the moment two systems are in operation.

The new process introduces the use of a national contact centre with a single 0845 number for customers wishing to book an interview to apply for a National Insurance number. Appointments for interviews are made and confirmation of the appointment is sent to the customer immediately. Evaluation in those regions where this new process has been implemented has shown that 97% of all calls are answered, of which 92% of calls are answered within 20 seconds. The average speed of answer is 8 seconds.

This new system will be introduced shortly in your constituency. In the meantime, customers in Shropshire needing a National Insurance number should contact the Jobcentre Plus office at Telford, using the dedicated telephone number.

I hope this is helpful.

Pathways to Work

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average cost per participant is in Pathway to Work pilots. [49302]

Margaret Hodge: The latest estimate for the average cost of the funding per person on the Pathways to Work programme is around £400, excluding the return to work credit.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been paid to voluntary sector providers under the Pathways to Work pilots schemes since their establishment. [43283]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is not available.

Both voluntary and private sector organisations deliver a number of different programmes which support Pathways to Work. Some of these programmes are specific to Pathways to Work (in-work support and condition management programmes), while others are delivered nationally across Jobcentre Plus, for example WORKSTEP and new deal for disabled people.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list his Department's contracts with *(a)* private sector and *(b)* voluntary sector providers of services outsourced by Jobcentre Plus in (i) Pathways to Work areas for each of the last two years and (ii) non-Pathways to Work areas for each of the last five years; and what the value was of each contract. [44427]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking if he will list his Department's contracts with *(a)* private sector and *(b)* voluntary sector providers of services outsourced by Jobcentre Plus in (i) Pathways to Work areas for each of the last two years and (ii) non-Pathways to Work areas for each of the last five years, and what the value was of each. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

We do not currently have available the requested breakdown of these providers between private and voluntary organisations. This information could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. However, Jobcentre Plus is currently implementing a new system which will enable information on programmes and providers to be obtained and collated more readily for contracts in the future.

Pension Protection Fund Levy

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the likely impact of the pension protection fund levy on small businesses. [48803]

Mr. Timms: The regulatory impact assessment (RIA) that accompanied the Pensions Bill 2004 addressed the effect of the pension protection levy on businesses, and was agreed by Parliament when the Bill was passed.

The RIA specifically considered the impact on businesses with fewer than 50 employees. It identified that impact on small businesses (i.e. those with fewer than 50 employees) will be limited overall by the fact that few such businesses run defined benefit pension schemes, and so are unlikely to be affected by the pension protection levy. The RIA estimates that less than 2.2 per cent. of the total cost of the Pension Protection Fund would be met by small businesses.

Responsibility for consulting on and setting the level of the pension protection levy rests with the board of the Pension Protection Fund. Following 17 weeks of consultation two consultation documents were produced plus one update. The aim was to strike a balance between affordability and security. Representatives from small business were consulted as part of the process. This all resulted in a report on 16 December 2005, including an estimate of the pension protection levy amount. This is available on the Pension Protection Fund's website.

Pensions

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many occupational pension schemes have fully wound up since 1997; and how many are in the process of winding up. [44507]

Mr. Timms: Information in the following table was provided by the Pensions Regulator and shows the number of schemes that are currently in the process of winding up and the number of schemes that have wound up, for each year since 2 April 1997.

	Scheme status winding up		*Scheme status wound up*	
Effective date scheme status was changed on register	*Number of schemes*	*Total membership*	*Number of schemes*	*Total membership*
2 April 1997 to 31 March 1998	57	2,648	8,248	54,439
1 April 1998 to 31 March 1999	128	4,118	7,708	71,351
1 April 1999 to 31 March 2000	2,909	52,051	8,462	64,608
1 April 2000 to 31 March 2001	1,035	29,760	6,720	65,510
1 April 2001 to 31 March 2002	1,443	43,015	5,822	128,060
1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003	1,129	54,528	6,250	145,039
1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004	1,171	51,549	6,316	127,839
1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005	564	59,767	4,328	78,878
Total	8,436	297,436	53,854	735,724

Notes:

1. A winding up scheme is one which has notified the Pensions Regulator (or its predecessor the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority) that it has commenced winding up procedures.
2. A wound up scheme is one which has notified the Pensions Regulator (or its predecessor the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority) that it has completed winding up procedures.
3. Schemes are required to notify the Pensions Regulator of changes in scheme status as soon as is reasonably practical. This means that the data for the year ended 31 March 2005 is provisional.
4. The figures are based on information held on the register as at 11 January 2006. The effective date for the scheme status is based on the last scheme status change date.
5. Figures for 1997–98 commence on 2 April 1997 because, where a scheme commenced or completed winding up procedures prior to 1 April 1997 but the exact date cannot be ascertained, a default value of 1 April 1997 is used as the date on which the scheme commenced or completed winding up procedures. As a result a very large number of schemes are recorded as having commenced or completed winding up procedures with a scheme status change date of 1 April 1997, even if they had commenced or completed winding up procedures at some earlier date. Including schemes with this default date in the table would significantly overstate the number of schemes that commenced or completed winding up procedures during 1997, so a start date of 2 April has been used for 1997–98.
6. Total membership includes active, deferred and pensioner members. It is not possible to provide a breakdown of these numbers.
7. During 2005–06 the Pensions Regulator will continue with its plans to issue all occupational pension schemes that are registered in the UK a scheme return form. This will provide the Pension Regulator with access to enhanced data in future years.

Work-focused Interviews

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate his Department has made of the cost of providing work-focused interviews for incapacity benefit recipients who do not receive them at the moment. [44953]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* Almost all incapacity benefit recipients already receive a work-focused interview at some time during their claim if they remain on the benefit for a significant period. All new claimants are interviewed and existing claimants are interviewed at least once every three years.

However, in the newly published Green Paper A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work, we have said that, as resources allow, we will consider increasing the frequency of work-focused interviews for existing claimants. If every current incapacity benefit recipient were to be interviewed at least once a year, we estimate the cost would be of the order of £80 million annually. The actual costs would be dependent on the numbers joining and leaving the benefit during any one year.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal Welfare

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the transportation of live animals intended for use in food products; and what changes have been made to the regulations relating to the transport of horses since 2004. [47203]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government would prefer a trade in meat to the long distance transport of live animals to slaughter.

New welfare in transport rules take effect in January 2007 under EC Regulation 1/2005. The UK supported the new Regulation as it does much to help improve animal welfare in transport, such as better enforcement of the rules, and new training and authorisation procedures. We regret that it did not lower the maximum journey times to slaughter. But there will be an opportunity for a review of journey times in 2011.

The new rules also contain welfare measures designed to further protect horse welfare. Unbroken horses (not trained to halter) may only be transported up to eight hours and in groups of no more than four. Horses travelling more than eight hours must be in single stalls, as must horses travelling by sea. The hon. Member may also wish to note that there is no evidence of a slaughter trade from this country or any demand for one.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to seek common standards for animal welfare within the EU. [47846]

Mr. Bradshaw: Common standards for many areas of animal welfare already exist within the European Union (EU). These include standards of welfare on-farm, during transport and at slaughter.

The Commission's proposals for the next five years are set out in the EU Animal Welfare Action Plan, published on 23 January. We look forward to continued engagement with the Commission and fellow member states on this.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 922W, on avian influenza, what documentary evidence her Department holds to support the statement that the silver eared mesias suspected of dying from avian influenza in quarantine in Essex were bred in captivity in Taiwan. [46484]

Mr. Bradshaw: The export health certificates issued by the Taiwanese authorities, which accompanied the birds, identify the holding of origin in Taiwan. Representatives of the Taiwanese authorities advised us in a meeting that mesias are bred in captivity on the holding in question.

Beef

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects the European Council of Ministers to consider the proposal to lift the EU export ban on British beef. [46674]

Mr. Bradshaw: The proposal is currently being considered by the Commission's Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCoFCAH). If there is no significant opposition, the Commission have stated that they will put the proposal to a vote at SCoFCAH on 8 March. The proposal would be referred to the Council only if it is not adopted by SCoFCAH. However, the earliest the lifting of the ban could take effect is mid-April.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department has taken to facilitate the lifting of the EU export ban on British beef. [46699]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK Government believe that the lifting of the ban is already overdue and have been working work the Commission to ensure that it is lifted as soon as possible. The Secretary of State has had a number of discussions with Commissioner Kyprianou and has written to member states. The Chief Veterinary Officer has also written to all member states outlining the technical arguments supporting a lifting of the ban. Officials in Defra and in British embassies are in contact with member states and, where necessary, have visited key Government Departments to provide more detailed technical information.

Bovine TB

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will estimate what percentage of skin-tested reacting cattle were subsequently found to have bovine TB when slaughtered. [46349]

Mr. Bradshaw: When used as a routine screening test, the single intradermal comparative cervical test (SICCT) is designed to maximise specificity (identification of uninfected animals), while retaining good sensitivity (identification of infected animals). The sensitivity of the SICCT is between 77 per cent. and 95 per cent. Its specificity is above 99 per cent. It is designed to detect an immune response at a relatively early stage in the infection process. Therefore, in most cases, cattle that react to the skin test are considered to have bovine TB.

Failure to confirm bovine tuberculosis by post-mortem examination at the slaughterhouse, or by culturing Mycobacterium bovis in the laboratory, does not mean that the disease was not present in the animal.

In the early stages of the disease, it is not always possible to see lesions with the naked eye, and, due to the fastidious nature of the organism, it is not possible to culture from samples in every case.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the cost to farmers of the move to table valuations for compensation. [46733]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government's aim is to ensure a fair compensation scheme to cattle owners having animals removed under bovine TB control measures, without it being detrimental to the taxpayer.

From 1 February 2006, compensation for farmers whose cattle are affected by bovine TB, brucellosis and Enzootic Bovine Leukosis will be determined through a new table valuation system. Each month an average sales price (based on one month's data for non-pedigree cattle and six months' data for pedigree animals) will be calculated for the 47 specified cattle categories—and these averages will constitute the compensation payment for animals in the same category.

The effect of the new compensation system on businesses has been considered in the context of a regulatory impact assessment (RIA), available in the House Library. The RIA shows that the new system will reduce the risk of over compensation for bovine TB, and a reduction in total compensation expenditure.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will introduce an appeals system as part of the move to using table valuations for awarding cattle compensation. [46734]

Mr. Bradshaw: Under the new table valuation based compensation system, cattle owners will receive compensation equivalent to the average price achieved, in reported sales across Great Britain, for animals in the same category. As the criteria for determining an animal's category will be clear and objective, we do not believe that an appeals system is necessary.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to increase the level of compensation for reacting cattle; and what assessment she has made of the effect of the existing level of compensation on owners of high value pedigree cattle. [47840]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government want compensation arrangements that are fair to cattle owners and the taxpayer.

On 1 February 2006, we introduced a new table valuation based compensation system for farmers whose cattle are affected by bovine TB, brucellosis or Enzootic Bovine Leukosis. The same system will be introduced for cattle affected by BSE, on 1 March 2006. 47 pre-determined cattle categories are being used; these are based on the animal's age, gender, and type (ie pedigree or non-pedigree).

The effect of the new compensation system on businesses has been considered in the context of a regulatory impact assessment (RIA), available in the Library of the House.

British Farm Produce

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much of the *(a)* bread-making wheat, *(b)* butter, *(c)* cheese and *(d)* beef consumed in the United Kingdom between 2000 and 2004 was produced by British farmers. [46187]

Mr. Bradshaw: The amount of produce available for consumption in the United Kingdom is measured by its total new supply. The following tables show production in the United Kingdom as a proportion of total new supply.

UK production as a proportion of total new supply

Percentage

	Butter	*Cheese*	*Beef*
2000	64	63	79
2001	63	66	72
2002	64	65	71
2003	64	62	70
2004	61	61	70
2005[1]	65	63	74

[1] Provisional

Information specifically on the amount of bread-making wheat consumed in the United Kingdom that was produced by British farmers is not available. However, available data show that the following proportion of home grown wheat was used by United Kingdom millers:

UK proportion of home grown wheat used by millers in the UK

Wheat	*Percentage*
2000	82
2001	85
2002	83
2003	85
2004	86

The data include wheat milled to produce bread, biscuits, other food ingredients and starch, where production of flour for bread making was typically around 60 per cent. of the total flour produced over this time period. No data are yet available for 2005.

Buncefield Oil Depot

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans her Department has to track and evaluate the ongoing environmental effects of the recent oil refinery explosion in Hertfordshire. [39522]

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what environmental studies have been undertaken by her Department in Hemel Hempstead to assess the consequences of the Buncefield oil depot fire and subsequent explosion. [47823]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* The main environmental consequences of concern relate to possible contamination of surface and ground waters, safety of drinking water supplies and gaseous and particulate emissions to the atmosphere.

Efforts to contain contaminated water and fuel were largely successful; firewater on the site has now been removed and is stored in secure off-site storage tanks. The site is still under the control of the Health and Safety Executive and Police and a detailed site investigation is under way. Drinking water sources in the surrounding area continue to be monitored and to date have shown no impacts attributable to the Buncefield incident.

Recent investigations have revealed that a road drain immediately to the north of the site contains a borehole extending into the underlying strata that contains a black liquid, which is currently being analysed. The Environment Agency will continue to monitor the situation and work with the Drinking Water Inspectorate, local water companies, the Health Protection Agency, the site operators and other relevant bodies to carry out these investigations and develop any remedial action necessary. Three Valleys Water have been informed of these findings, but the company is not currently abstracting from the nearby boreholes. More information, results from analysis and further sampling will be needed before the EA can clarify the extent of any groundwater pollution.

Regarding emissions to air, the main air pollutants of concern from hydrocarbon fuel fires are emitted as particulate matter especially those particles of respirable size (referred to as PM10), and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, measured as benzo*(a)* pyrene. In the very high temperatures of the fire (3000°C) however all organic chemicals will be completely destroyed. There is the possibility that in the cooler margins of the fire and during the relatively short period at the end of the fire, some of the products of incomplete combustion at the lower temperatures may be hazardous.

Monitoring undertaken close to the fire when the fire brigade began to attack the blaze did pick up elevated areas of particulates and of hydrocarbon solvents for a short period but this was foreseen and, provided that the warnings given beforehand were complied with, no public health effects are envisaged. None of the data from later air monitoring indicated any values that were outside the normal range of ambient air levels.

There is no ongoing risk to air quality from the Buncefield fire as the pollutants have been widely dispersed through the atmosphere and, in general, have had no discernable impact on background levels of pollution. The following exceptions were consistent with the footprint of the plume and may have been associated with its descent to ground level. On the evening of Sunday 11 and early in the morning of Monday 12 December, monitoring sites in parts of east Surrey and Sussex detected PM_{10} particulate concentrations reaching 'moderate' levels in Horsham and Lewes. Monitoring sites in north London and St. Albans also showed slightly elevated concentrations, but remained in the 'low' air pollution band.

On the evening of Tuesday 13, PM_{10} particulate was detected at the Barnet 2 background sites and on the morning of Wednesday 14, PM_{10} particulate was detected at the Watford 1 site. In both cases concentrations remained 'low'.

Throughout the period of the fire 'moderate' PM_{10} particulate was measured at several roadside sites in London. This was due to road transport sources and was not directly related to the smoke from the oil depot fire. 'Moderate' PM_{10} concentrations at the Chichester 1 site were due to nearby road resurfacing.

Levels of pollution in the UK during the course of the fire were therefore within the normal range of ambient air levels at each location, and are not considered exceptional.

A report of the supplementary air quality monitoring carried out by Defra at the time of the fire is currently in preparation and is planned for publication in March 2006. The Health Protection Agency is currently carrying out an assessment of the impacts on human health of the Buncefield fire. There have been no substantive immediate health effects reported from the areas affected by the fire and plume. A multi-agency surveillance steering group, chaired by the Health Protection Agency, is working on projects to assess whether any long-term effects (physical, psychological and toxic) might occur and work-streams are proceeding.

Regarding emissions of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere, I refer the hon. Member to the Minister of State for Environment's reply to a Question from the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker), published in on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 10W.

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many *(a)* fixed penalty notices have been issued and *(b)* successful prosecutions have been brought in Tamworth constituency under each section of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 that has been brought into force to date. [48652]

Mr. Bradshaw: The fixed penalty provisions contained in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 will not be commenced until April this year. Figures for this coming fiscal year will be available in June 2007.

Climate Change

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what projections she has made regarding UK carbon dioxide figures for each year until 2010; [48019]

(2) what projections she made regarding UK carbon dioxide figures for 2005. [48141]

Mr. Morley: Final UK greenhouse gas emissions for 1990 to 2004 were published by Defra on 23 January 2006. Net carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions (ie emissions from sources minus removals by sinks) were 152.5 million tonnes of carbon equivalent (MtC) for 2004. Provisional estimates of UK CO_2 emissions for 2005 are due to be published by Defra and DTI on 30 March 2006.

The headline figures from the most recent CO_2 emissions projections for 2010 were published in the Government's Energy Review consultation paper, "Our Energy Challenge: securing clean, affordable energy for the long term", on 23 January 2006. These show that,

based on current measures only, CO_2 emissions are projected to be 144.2 MtC in 2010. The revised Climate Change Programme, which we will publish shortly, will contain additional measures to reduce further our CO_2 emissions.

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to reach agreement with the heat treatment sector on eligibility for climate change levy exemption; and if she will make a statement. [47516]

Mr. Morley: Regulations to enact the new eligibility criteria under which the heat treatment sector is able to enter into the Climate Change Agreements came into force on Saturday 21 January 2006. The heat treatment sector's Climate Change Umbrella Agreement was signed on Monday 23 January 2006. On the same day, most of the individual facilities' underlying Climate Change Agreements were also signed and their details notified to HM Revenue and Customs for entry on to their website. This gives access to the 80 per cent. discount from the Climate Change Levy to which these facilities are now entitled. Applications for five heat treatment companies were incomplete. We expect to be able to sign these agreements this week.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the progress of the Climate Change Programme Review. [48002]

Mr. Morley: We are aiming to publish the revised UK Climate Change Programme as soon as possible this year.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has made to other Government Departments regarding the Climate Change Programme review; and what response has been received. [48006]

Mr. Morley: We have been working closely with other Government Departments throughout the Climate Change Programme review. We are aiming to publish the outcomes of this work in the revised UK Climate Change Programme as soon as possible this year.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the steps which need to be taken on an annual basis in order to meet long-term carbon reduction targets up to 2050; [48003]

(2) what measures have been taken to ensure that Government long-term targets on climate change meet emission reduction pathways. [48004]

Mr. Morley: The Government recognise that atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases depend on the amounts emitted, so emissions reduction pathways are as important as the targets themselves.

The Energy White Paper said we would put ourselves on a path to cut the UK's carbon dioxide emissions by some 60 per cent. by about 2050, with real progress by 2020. To achieve the 2050 target we would need to reduce emissions by, on average, about 2 MtC a year. However, some annual fluctuation in emissions is inevitable due to uncontrollable factors such as the weather. The first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, for example, is for five years rather than a single target year to smooth out annual fluctuations in emissions.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received regarding climate change targets based on 550 parts per million; and if she will make a statement. [48005]

Mr. Morley: Various representations on the issues of future action on climate change and stabilisation levels have been received by the Department. The EU, including the UK, has set as an objective to keep global temperatures from rising by more than two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The EU Environment Council in March 2005 noted that in order to have a reasonable chance to limit global warming to no more than two degrees Celsius, stabilisation of concentrations well below 550 parts per million CO_2 equivalent may be needed.

Correspondence

Sir Patrick Cormack: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State will reply to the hon. Member for South Staffordshire's letter of 5 September 2005 on training grants for fisheries officers. [46670]

Mr. Bradshaw: A reply was sent to the hon. Member on 27 January 2006. I will arrange for a further copy to be sent.

Departmental Research

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to review current arrangements for ensuring that departmental research and findings are totally impartial. [45732]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has a varied and wide ranging programme of auditing and peer reviewing the outputs of its research. This relies on using external experts to advise the Department on the robustness and reliability of the research. This programme, on which we receive regular feedback, is continuous and ongoing, examining either individual pieces of research or entire research programmes.

The Department's science quality assurance and peer review processes were reviewed last year by the Department's independent Science Advisory Council. Their report is published on the Department's website.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the research budget of her Department was in each year since its inception. [48455]

Mr. Bradshaw: The research budget for Defra for 2001–05 is as follows:

	£ million
2001–02	144
2002–03	144
2003–04	146
2004–05	152

Energy Policy

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on progress towards meeting Government combined heat and power targets. [48018]

Mr. Morley: The Government target for CHP is to achieve at least 10 gigawatts of Good Quality CHP capacity by 2010. We are not at present on course to achieve the target. Installed capacity at the end of 2004 was 5.6 gigawatts and figures for 2005 will be contained in the annual Digest of UK Energy Statistics, due to be published in the summer. We are analysing potential new support measures as part of the Climate Change Programme Review process.

Fallen Stock

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent guidance she has given to farmers concerning the disposal of fallen stock. [47093]

Mr. Bradshaw: The current rules on disposal of fallen stock have applied from May 2003 and the National Fallen Stock Scheme started in November 2004. Guidance on these can be found on the Defra website at http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/by-prods/fallen/fallen.htm and the National Fallen Stock Scheme website at http://www.nationalfallenstock.co.uk. The National Fallen Stock Company also communicates regularly with its members.

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the level of additional carbon emissions generated between 1 January 2005 and 1 January 2006 through, and ancillary to, the incineration of fallen stock necessitated as a result of the ban on on-farm burial. [47204]

Mr. Bradshaw: None. The ban on burying on-farm fallen stock was introduced by the EU Animal By-Products Regulation 1774/2002. It is there to protect public and animal health from any potential risks associated with the burial of fallen stock.

Fisheries

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the maximum permitted length is of a bottom set gillnet or entangling net used by UK fishing vessels of 12 metres or more in length, operating in ICES areas VII e, f, g, h and j; and what the *(a)* average and *(b)* maximum length is of nets being used by these vessels. [38831]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are no restrictions on the maximum length of bottom set gillnets or tangle nets in ICES areas VII e, f, g, h and j. The length of netting used varies greatly but we do not have data on the average or maximum length s used.

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has made to the *(a)* Government of Ireland and *(b)* EU Commission regarding the use of Irish salmon drift nets in relation to the Habitats Directive; and if she will make a statement. [42966]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* The UK Government regularly impresses upon the Irish Government the need to take steps to reduce and eventually eliminate the impact of the Irish salmon drift net fishery on UK salmon stocks and I have raised the issue directly with my Irish counterparts on several occasions. The issue has also been raised regularly at informal meetings between UK and Irish officials and in discussions with the European Commission and with other EU member states in the context of the EU's commitments to the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO). The Commission is understood to be considering what proposals it might make to the Fisheries Council on the regulation of salmon fishing in EU waters. To that end it commissioned a report (to which scientists from the UK and Ireland contributed) on the impact of coastal salmon fisheries on the conservation of in-river stocks.

We understand that the European Commission has issued a letter of formal complaint to the Irish Government about the effects of drift netting on the conservation status of salmon. This is the first step towards a possible Action in the European Court of Justice against Ireland in respect of its failure to meet obligations towards salmon under the EC Habitats Directive. Unless and until such time as the Commission formally institutes such action, its case against the Irish Government is not a matter of public record, nor is the UK Government given the opportunity to comment.

Operating and Financial Review

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions her Department had with the Treasury before the decision not to proceed with Operating and Financial Review; and if she will make a statement. [46956]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* Discussions were held at various levels, including between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, before the decision was taken to remove the obligation on businesses to publish operating and financial reviews.

Poultry Farmers

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the UK has met the EU directive requirement that all commercial poultry keepers are registered; and what definition of commercial is used for this purpose. [41515]

Mr. Bradshaw: In order to meet the requirements of Directive 2005/94/EC, the Great Britain Poultry Register was launched on 9 December 2005. Commercial premises of 50 birds or more have until 28 February 2006 to register with the Department.

The definitions for poultry and commercial poultry premises are those used in the Avian Influenza (Preventive Measures)(No. 2) Regulations 2005. For the purpose of the Register, "poultry" means all birds that are reared or kept in captivity for the production of meat or eggs for consumption, the production of other commercial products, for restocking supplies of game or for the purposes of any breeding programme for the

production of these categories of birds. "Commercial poultry premises" means premises where poultry are kept for commercial purposes and does not include premises where all poultry (and their eggs) are kept by their owners for their own consumption or as pets.

No formal legal definition exists of the term "commercial". Ultimately it would be for the courts to define, but in principle, the word should be given its ordinary meaning. Having said that, commercial activities typically involve the exchange of money, goods or services. Using an example from the game world, we think that premises rearing and/or releasing gamebirds are likely to be commercial poultry premises, as activities on these premises would involve some level of commercial transaction. The supply of birds/carcases to third parties for services rendered would count as "commercial". It is possible, however, that small private syndicates communally owning, shooting and consuming all their birds would classify as non-commercial premises.

If there is any uncertainty about premises with more than 50 poultry being commercial, we recommend that the premises are registered. Information on the GB Poultry Register can be found at http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/vetsurveillance/poultry/index.htm.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many poultry farmers there are in the United Kingdom who have *(a)* over 50 birds and *(b)* 50 or under birds; and how many have signed up to the National Poultry Register. [43550]

Mr. Bradshaw: Government and various individual poultry organisations hold information separately but currently no central register exists of how many poultry farmers there are in the UK with *(a)* over 50 or *(b)* 50 and under birds.

Defra, the Scottish Executive and the Welsh Assembly Government have developed the Great Britain Poultry Register, which opened on 9 December 2005, to gather essential information about the numbers and location of poultry held on commercial premises. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland is also capturing data about poultry premises but on a separate database. We are liaising closely so information can be effectively collated on a UK level.

The total number of poultry premises registered by 18 January on the GB Poultry Register was 3201. Reports containing a breakdown of the numbers in terms of flock size are currently being developed and will be available shortly.

Further information on the GB Poultry Register can be accessed at http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/vetsurveillance/poultry/index.htm

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what form of registration system there is in place for poultry farmers who keep under 50 birds. [43551]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is no legal requirement for keepers of fewer than 50 poultry to be registered on the Great Britain Poultry Register.

However they can register on a voluntary basis if they wish using the same registration system that is available to poultry keepers with more than 50 birds; either the telephone (to register by freephone using a trained adviser), by post or by e-mail (by downloading a form from the Great Britain Poultry Register web page).

Further information on the GB Poultry Register can be accessed at http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/vetsurveillance/poultry/index.htm

Poultry Imports

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs from which countries *(a)* untreated feathers, *(b)* raw poultry meat, *(c)* uncooked eggs and egg products and *(d)* live poultry and game have been imported in each of the last five years; and what quantity of each product was imported in each year. [45984]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 26 January 2006]*: Details of the imports requested as recorded in the Overseas Trade Statistics are provided in the tables made available in the Library of the House.

Note that China, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Pakistan and South Africa have been banned from exporting unprocessed feathers and parts of unprocessed feathers since January 2004. This is in line with the usual bans in effect on any country affected by, or suspected to have, highly pathogenic avian influenza—HPAI. Only processed feathers have been allowed to be imported from these countries since January 2004.

Sewage

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many tonnes of human sewage sludge was disposed of on *(a)* agricultural land and *(b)* by other means in each of the last five years. [47942]

Mr. Morley: The total number of dry solid tonnes of sewage sludge recycled to agricultural land and disposed of by other means in England and Wales in the years 2000–04 was as follows:

	Agriculture	*Other routes*
2000	556,798	384,326
2001	664,685	365,036
2002	701,249	490,015
2003	802,555	476,781
2004	796,927	424,117

Note:
Under The Sludge (Use in Agriculture) Regulations 1989, "agriculture" means the growing of all types of commercial food crops, including for stock-rearing purposes. Before being applied to agricultural land, sludge from wastewater treatment plants is treated in accordance with the Safe Sludge Matrix.
Source:
Water UK

Sustainable Building

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on Government procurement in relation to sustainable building practices. [48015]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The Government is committed to supporting sustainable building practices through best practice procurement by the public sector. The mandated 'Common Minimum Standards for the procurement of built environments in the Public Sector' (CMS), published by the Office of Government Commerce (OGC), includes a sustainability standard that states:

"Project and programme procurement strategies will take full account of the Government's commitment to sustainable development and of the economic, environmental and social impacts of its decisions."

The CMS and other relevant construction procurement guidance are available on the OGC website www.ogc.gov.uk

UK Food Security

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on UK food security. [46624]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government naturally takes the issue of food security very seriously. Food security is about ensuring that consumers have access to a stable and adequate supply of food, whether domestically produced or imported. The UK has long been a net importer of food and national and international food security is best facilitated through improved trading relationships based on more open international markets and reductions in trade distorting subsidies.

Food supply is robust and resilient because of the high degree of demand and supply-side substitutability of foodstuffs. DEFRA works closely with all parts of the industry to ensure that appropriate support is provided to maintain supply throughout the chain in the event of significant disruption.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment her Department has made of the percentage of *(a)* indigenous food and *(b)* all food consumed in the UK produced in the UK; and if she will make a statement on her Department's policy on amounts of food imported. [46625]

Mr. Bradshaw: The latest published figures for 2004 show the UK was *(a)* 74.2 per cent. self-sufficient in indigenous food and *(b)* 63.4 per cent. self-sufficient in all food. This compares with figures for 2000 of 80.3 per cent. and 66.8 per cent. respectively.

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Waste Management

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which local authorities provide a kerbside collection service for recyclable materials; and which separate materials are collected in each of these local authorities. [45641]

Mr. Bradshaw: All local authorities in England with responsibility for waste collection (except for the Council of the Isles of Scilly) operate some form of kerbside collection service for recyclable materials.

Local authorities have provided information in the Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey. The data for 2003–04 on the materials that are collected separately for recycling is shown in the table—a copy has been placed in the Library of the House. These have been coded as:

A—paper and card, B—glass, C—compost, D—scrap metal and white goods, E—textiles, F—cans, G—plastics.

Where information from the 2003–04 survey is not available, the most recent available information prior to 2003–04 has been used. Data from the 2004–05 survey will be available in spring 2006.

Some authorities have been listed with no separate materials recycled. These authorities will normally provide a form of kerbside waste collection service which will include at least some of the materials listed, but collected in a co-mingled format.

It should be noted that many local authorities are quite active regarding their kerbside recycling services. Authorities sometimes change and update current schemes as well as introduce new schemes. In this respect, listed activity may not reflect recent changes in kerbside collection services.

Water

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the level of debt owed to water companies for non-payment of water rates; what discussions she has had with the water companies on this issue, with particular reference to the policy of non-disconnection except in extreme circumstances; and if she will make a statement. [47845]

Mr. Morley: Customer debt is primarily the responsibility of water companies to manage. Companies still have a range of means to recover payments, including through the courts. The previous power of water companies to disconnect household customers for non-payment of water bills was ended, by the Water Industry Act 1999, without any qualification concerning extreme circumstances. Water companies, in their discussions with Ministers and officials, are not pressing for the power to disconnect to be restored. I am prepared to consider any suggestions for how Government should help companies to tackle customer debt. The industry itself needs to identify and apply best practice in debt management, and I welcome companies' efforts to do so.

The responsibility for the economic regulation of the water industry rests with the Director-General of Water Services (Ofwat). Ofwat monitors companies' debt situation on an annual basis.

The following table presents figures provided by Ofwat on the revenue outstanding to water companies by household customers. This table sets out key indicators for 1998–99, 2003–04 and 2004–05. It also shows the percentage changes between these years.

2004–05 prices	*1998–99*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*Percentage change between 1998–99 and 2004–05*	*Percentage change between 2003–04 and 2004–05*[2]
Household revenue outstanding < 48 months[1]	705	804	828	17	3
Household revenue outstanding < 12 months[1]	381	377	400	5	6
Household revenue outstanding 12–24 months[1]	175	203	204	16	1
Household revenue outstanding 24–48 months[1]	148	224	224	51	0
Household revenue outstanding > 48 months[1]	n/a	120	134	n/a	11
Household revenue outstanding < 12 months as a percentage of household revenue billed in that year	7	7	8	n/a	n/a
Household revenue written off	69	96	114	65	19
Household revenue written off as a percentage of household revenue billed in that year	1.3	1.9	2.2	n/a	n/a

[1] Includes revenue written off.

Notes:

1. All numbers are rounded for ease of reference.
2. Percentage changes are derived from unrounded numbers.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the current level of the water table in the area supplying Peterborough constituency. [48144]

Mr. Morley: Peterborough's water requirements are supplied by Rutland Water whose level is currently 80 per cent. of capacity. The nearest groundwater is to the north of Peterborough where the level is 11.89 metres Above Ordnance Datum (mAOD), which is slightly above the long term average for this time of year of 11.73mAOD.

Wheat Stores

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many days' supply of bread making wheat have been in store in England over the last four years. [48268]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* We do not have information specifically on supply levels of bread making wheat in store in England.

However data on the stock level for all milling wheat are collected under the Defra monthly survey of wheat milled in the UK. This includes wheat milled to produce bread, biscuits, other food ingredients and starch, where production of flour for bread making was typically around 60 per cent. of the total flour produced. Assuming typical utilisation and production levels, it is estimated that UK millers have held approximately 15–25 days supply and on average 20 days supply of all types of wheat for milling in the last four years. The wheat stocks include both UK and imported wheat grain.

Further significant stocks of UK produced and/or imported wheat which may be used for bread making will be held at other points in the supply chain such as on farm, by merchants, at ports or by co-ops. We do not have information on the volume or proportion of these wheat stocks that are of bread making quality.

WALES

Christmas Cards

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will estimate the cost to his Department of sending Christmas cards in 2005. [45921]

Nick Ainger: The Wales Office spent £760 on Christmas cards in 2005.

The postage charges of the Christmas cards were not separately identified from the rest of the Department's mail. This figure can be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Council Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales pursuant to the answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 531W, on council tax, how many of the 1,765 appeals resulted in being moved *(a)* up and *(b)* down council tax bands. [46998]

Nick Ainger: Where, on re-assessment, no reduction in banding is found to be appropriate, the taxpayer is invited to withdraw their appeal.

It follows that the 1,765 appeals referred to by my right hon. Friend all resulted in movement to a lower band.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales whether *(a)* the Valuation Office Agency and *(b)* its contractors took photographs of any domestic properties for valuation purposes during the council tax revaluation in Wales. [47029]

Nick Ainger: The Valuation Office Agency did not use contractors during the council tax revaluation in Wales.

The Valuation Office Agency took external photographs of domestic properties, where required, for banding purposes and to assist the listing officers to arrive at fair and accurate valuations.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47672]

Mr. Hain: None.

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many departmental employees have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46771]

Nick Ainger: None

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what his Office did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46768]

Nick Ainger: The Wales Office is a small Department, and did not host any specific events to mark Hannukah or Yom Kippur. However, Wales Office staff come under the umbrella of the Department for Constitutional Affairs, and in line with their diversity policies, sympathetic consideration is given by managers to any requests for time off to mark religious festivals. Our staff are encouraged to participate in DCA's diversity networks, and we are currently represented on their Faith Forum. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State recently attended the Holocaust Memorial Day Commemorative Event, which was held in Cardiff.

Lyons Inquiry

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will place in the Library a copy of the written submissions from his Department to the Lyons Inquiry into local government. [47901]

Mr. Hain: The Lyons Inquiry is independent of the Government. Sir Michael Lyons will decide what to publish when he makes available his final report.

Probation and Prison Services

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what matters relating to *(a)* the Probation Service and *(b)* the Prison Service in Wales are devolved. [48979]

Mr. Hain: These services are not devolved. However the National Offender Management Service works closely with the Welsh Assembly Government in respect of any activity that touches on devolved matters. Furthermore, under the Children Act 2004 the Assembly will be able, with the consent of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, to issue guidance to local probation boards and youth offending teams on co-operating with other public bodies in their area with a view to improving the well-being of children.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what role the Valuation Office Agency is playing in collating *(a)* value significant code and *(b)* dwellinghouse code data in Wales for council tax valuation purposes. [47884]

Mr. Hain: The Valuation Office Agency has collected and recorded data on dwellings in paper form for a considerable time, initially for domestic rating and now for council tax. This data is currently being digitised to increase the overall cost efficiency of the Agency's operations and deliver further improvements in customer service for the taxpayer in Wales.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what plans the Valuation Office Agency has to introduce *(a)* computer-assisted mass appraisal and *(b)* the automated valuation model in Wales for council tax valuation purposes. [47902]

Mr. Hain: The Valuation Office Agency is currently exploring the potential for the use of the automated valuation model to support work in connection with the maintenance of the current (2005) council tax lists in Wales. The objective would be to increase the overall cost efficiency of the Agency's operations and to deliver further improvements in customer service for the taxpayer in Wales. However, it would be for the Welsh Assembly Government to agree its implementation, scope and application.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what estimate the Valuation Office Agency has made of the number of homes in Wales which will move up a further council tax band in April as the first stage of transitional relief is phased out, broken down by local authority. [47905]

Mr. Hain: The Valuation Office Agency has made no such estimate as calculation of council tax liability and the operation of the transitional relief scheme are not matters for them.

The transitional relief scheme announced by the Welsh Assembly Government remains in place and will ensure that no household will move up by more than one band in year one, two bands in year two, or three bands in year three of the scheme.

The total number of properties showing an increase of two or more bands as at 31 December 2005 is 60,073. The breakdown by Billing Authority is in the table as follows:

Council tax—Wales as at 31 December 2005

Billing authority	*Moved by more than 1 band*
Isle of Anglesey	1,552
Gwynedd	3,477
Cardiff	18,582
Ceredigion	1,738
Carmarthenshire	2,617
Denbighshire	1,938
Flintshire	2,856
Monmouthshire	2,286
Pembrokeshire	2,624
Powys	5,263
Swansea	2,206
Conwy	1,492
Blaenau Gwent	74
Bridgend	776
Caerphilly	1,606
Merthyr Tydfil	132
Neath Port Talbot	540

Council tax—Wales as at 31 December 2005

Billing authority	*Moved by more than 1 band*
Newport	1,624
Rhondda Cynon Taff	1,393
Torfaen	432
Vale of Glamorgan	3,030
Wrexham	3,835
Total	60,073

NORTHERN IRELAND

Accident and Emergency Departments

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many NHS hospitals have *(a)* closed and *(b)* downgraded their accident and emergency departments in each of the last seven years. [48276]

Mr. Woodward: My Department has made significant investment in A&E services in recent years, increasing the number of A&E consultants in post by some 68 per cent. from 19 in 2000 to 32 in 2005. In financial terms total annual investment in A&E services has increased by almost 65 per cent. from just under £34 million in 1999–2000 to over £56 million in 2003–04 (the latest year for which figures are available).

In 2000, following concerns about the safety and sustainability of services, A&E and other acute services were transferred from South Tyrone Hospital in Dungannon to Craigavon Area Hospital. South Tyrone Hospital continues to provide a doctor-led minor injuries service, together with a wide range of other hospital services, including day surgery, outpatients and diagnostics.

More recently, in response to similar safety and sustainability concerns, I announced in December 2005 that full A&E services for the Sperrin Lakeland area would be consolidated on the Erne Hospital site in Enniskillen, with the Tyrone County Hospital in Omagh providing a 24-hour, doctor-led urgent care and treatment centre.

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what training has been provided to local councils on the use of antisocial behaviour orders in Northern Ireland in each of the last two years; and what the cost of the training was in each year. [48718]

Mr. Hanson: The Northern Ireland Office Community Safety Unit, in conjunction with the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, provided five training sessions during January and February 2005 for practitioners from the police, Housing Executive and local councils throughout Northern Ireland on using antisocial behaviour orders. These training sessions cost the NIO £6,009.42.

The Community Safety Unit also assisted councils in running two further training sessions on antisocial behaviour orders in June 2005 specifically for council officers. The total cost of these sessions for the councils was £1,522.70.

Bed Occupancy

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average bed occupancy rate was for each of Northern Ireland's acute hospitals during 2005. [48533]

Mr. Woodward: Percentage bed occupancy rates during 2004–05, for all hospitals that carry out specialties from the acute programme of care, are shown in the following table.

Percentage bed occupancy by hospital for 2004–05

Hospital	*Percentage*
Altnagelvin Area	81.0
Antrim	81.3
Ards	84.9
Bangor	88.2
Belfast City	85.2
Belvoir Park NICCO	86.5
Braid Valley	93.8
Causeway Hospital	80.6
Craigavon Area	81.7
Daisy Hill	79.9
Dalriada	77.8
Downe	87.1
Erne	64.5
Forster Green	70.6
Lagan Valley	87.6
Lurgan	87.4
Mater Infirmorum	91.3
Mid Ulster	83.5
Moyle	81.5
Musgrave Park	71.2
RBHSC	67.9
Robinson Memorial	79.6
Royal Maternity	61.0
Royal Victoria	87.4
Thompson House	95.0
Tyrone County	77.2
Ulster	90.2
Whiteabbey	93.7
Northern Ireland	83.0

Note:
Day case admissions are excluded from the calculation for bed occupancy.
Source:
Departmental Information Return KH03a.

Birthing Centres

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many midwife-led birthing centres are planned for Northern Ireland over the next five years; and where they will be. [48274]

Mr. Woodward: The Government are committed to providing the women of Northern Ireland with a range of choices in their maternity care. High quality, consultant-led maternity services are already available to all of the population of Northern Ireland.

To broaden choice for women we are working towards increasing the number of midwife-led units that are located on the same site as consultant obstetric units. There is currently one such unit in Northern Ireland, at Craigavon Area Hospital. We have plans to develop similar units at other hospitals including Altnagelvin Hospital, the Ulster Hospital and the new Belfast Maternity Hospital.

In addition, boards and trusts, in conjunction with their local communities, are able to consider the development of stand-alone midwife-led units in locations where there is the support of local professionals, where safe and effective emergency transfer arrangements are in place and where the introduction of such a unit would not impact on the viability of any neighbouring consultant-led unit.

The Eastern Health and Social Services Board, working with Down Lisburn Trust plans to locate a stand-alone midwife-led unit in Downpatrick in 2007, subject to approval of the business case. At this time, no other board has indicated an intention to develop a stand-alone unit.

CCTV (Londonderry)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in relation to the request from community representatives to provide CCTV coverage at the Irish Street/Top of the Hill interface in Londonderry. [46793]

Mr. Hanson: The Government continues to support the development of CCTV for town and city centres throughout Northern Ireland

19 city, town and large village centres currently benefit from surveillance by CCTV cameras and a further £2 million has been allocated to build on these systems and provide new systems where necessary. Detailed proposals must be submitted by 31 March and it is hoped that the first new systems will be up and running by late summer 2006.

Londonderry DCU are compiling a proposal to address the concerns of community representatives in the Irish St/Top of the Hill interface in Londonderry. Officials will consider the proposal in consultation with the PSNI when it is received.

Delayed Discharges

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many delayed discharges of elderly patients there are in NHS hospitals because of lack of finance to allocate them beds in nursing or residential homes. [48275]

Mr. Woodward: At 31 December 2005, there were 59 elderly patients who have had their discharge delayed in NHS hospitals because no package of care or placement in institutional care was available. This figure could include those who require funding for domiciliary care as well as funding to allocate patients beds in nursing or residential homes.

Notes:
This figure is provisional and is subject to change.
Patients who were 65 years of age or older at 31 December 2005 are categorised as elderly.

Farm Fed Chickens

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken by Invest Northern Ireland to offer assistance and retraining to the employees at Farm Fed Chickens following the announcement by the company on Friday 27 January. [48529]

Angela E. Smith: Invest NI has no remit to provide assistance to companies making staff redundant, nor to the employees concerned. This role is undertaken by staff of the Department for Employment and Learning.

The Department for Employment and Learning will provide advice and support for all employees who lose their jobs as a result of redundancy. Staff from the local Jobs and Benefits Office will provide advice on alternative job opportunities and access to training courses and will also ensure that those who have lost their jobs are able to access advice on a range of other issues such as benefits and taxation. The Department will also support employers who are expanding their workforce or creating new jobs by providing job brokering services and suitable training programmes where appropriate. Initial contact was made with Farm Fed Chickens on 27 January to offer the Department's services and a further meeting is arranged for Thursday 2 February 2006.

Hare Coursing

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to introduce a ban on hare coursing in Northern Ireland. [44561]

Angela E. Smith: It is acknowledged that the issue of hare coursing in Northern Ireland concerns many people, however, there are no immediate plans to propose specific legislation to ban hare coursing.

Home Start

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the future funding of the Home Start Project. [47643]

Mr. Woodward: DHSSPS allocates approximately £45,000 core funding per annum for Home Start in Northern Ireland to assist its administration. In addition, funding for Home Start services totalled £1.1 million in 2004-05, as detailed in the following table:

£000

	Amount
HSS trusts/boards	503
Sure Start	287
The Children's Fund	175
Childhood Fund	43
Peace II European Funding	31
Executive Fund for Children	20
Total	1,059

The figures for 2005-06 are not yet available.

The future funding for Home Start will be determined within the priorities and resources of HSS boards and trusts and in liaison with Sure Start projects.

Hospice Care

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total cost was to public funds of supporting each institution set up to offer hospice care in Northern Ireland in 2005. [49151]

Mr. Woodward: Four voluntary institutions provide hospice care in Northern Ireland. They each receive funding from the HPSS for the provision of agreed in-patient and community hospice services. The funding provided in 2005–06 is approximately as follows:

	£ million
The Northern Ireland Hospice	1.90
The Marie Curie Cancer Centre	1.60
The Foyle Hospice	0.25
The Southern Area Hospice	0.60
Total	4.35

In addition to the aforementioned funding for services, the NI hospice also receives a core grant from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety towards its administration costs. In 2004–05 a grant was made of £117,000.

Hospital Stays (Duration)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average length of stay in hospital in the Province was in each of the last 10 years. [49383]

Mr. Woodward: Figures for average length of stay in Northern Ireland hospitals from 1994–95 to 2004–05 are provided in the following table.

Days

	Average length of stay in hospital
1994–95	9.9
1995–96	9.4
1996–97	9.1
1997–98	8.7
1998–99	7.9
1999–2000	7.8
2000–01	7.7
2001–02	7.8
2002–03	7.8
2003–04	7.8
2004–05	7.6

Note
Day cases are excluded from the calculation of average length of stay.
Source
Departmental Information Return KHO3A.

Inward Investment

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answers of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 632W, and 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 328W, on inward investment, what assessment he has made of what further steps should be taken to increase the level of foreign direct investment into Northern Ireland. [46468]

Angela E. Smith: I would refer the hon. Gentleman to the answers given on 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 632W, and on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 329W, on this and closely-related subjects.

Each year Invest NI assesses the foreign direct investment market and outlines the strategy and targets for the year ahead in an International Sales and Marketing Plan that is presented to the Invest NI Board for discussion and approval. This plan analyses performance across all geographical locations and sectors in which Invest NI actively promotes Northern Ireland as an attractive location where new investors can profitably and successfully do business.

M2 (Daily Usage)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what the average daily number of vehicles using the M2 Motorway outbound between Belfast and *(a)* Sandyknowes junction, *(b)* Sandyknowes junction and the A26 junction and *(c)* the A26 junction and the Toome bypass was in the latest period for which figures are available; [48531]

(2) what the average number of vehicles using the Londonderry/Limavady main road through Ballykelly village was in each of the last five years. [48532]

Mr. Woodward: The chief executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to these questions.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 6 February 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland two Parliamentary Questions:

(i) The average daily number of vehicles using the M2 Motorway outbound between Belfast and *(a)* Sandyknowes junction, *(b)* Sandyknowes junction and the A26 junction and *(c)* the A26 junction and the Toome bypass was on the latest date for which figures are available; and

(ii) What the average number of vehicles using the Londonderry/Limavady main road through Ballykelly village was in each of the last five years.

I have been asked to reply as the issues raised fall within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

By way of background I should explain that Roads Service collects traffic volume data by means of 270 automatic census points strategically located throughout the Northern Ireland road network. The information is recorded for one week in each quarter during the year and an annual average calculated. The results are published in Roads Service's annual Traffic and Travel Information Report, which presents the traffic volumes in a variety of formats for each site.

The latest data on the average daily number of vehicles using the M2 Motorway outbound from Belfast is shown in the table below.

Location	Average daily flow
M2 Between Belfast and Sandyknowes	32,230
M2 Between Sandyknowes and A26	15,520
M2 Between A26 and Toome Bypass	9,130

The available data on the average volume of vehicles per day recorded in each of the last five years on the A2 through Ballykelly, is shown in the table below.

	A2 Limavady-Londonderry at Greysteel
2001	13,870
2002	14,130
2003	14,290
2004	14,270
2005	14,534

I hope this information is helpful.

Mobile Phone Tracking

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether technology is available to the Police Service for Northern Ireland to allow it to use mobile phone tracking to pursue investigations into *(a)* missing persons and *(b)* missing persons believed to be underwater. [46817]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland utilises the same technology as is available to law enforcement agencies in the rest of the United Kingdom and deploys that technology in accordance with the provisions of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 in investigations, including missing persons investigations, where appropriate. Mobile phones under water are highly likely to be inoperable; and even if operable the signal would not transmit effectively.

Ophthalmology

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time is for a routine initial ophthalmology *(a)* outpatient and *(b)* inpatient assessment at each health trust in the Province that offers the service. [49385]

Mr. Woodward: Waiting list information is collected by time band. It is therefore not possible to calculate the arithmetic mean (average) length of time waiting. It is however possible to identify the median or mid-point waiting time band.

latest available waiting list statistics show the position at 30 September 2005. It is not possible to identify routine ophthalmology cases. However, the median waiting time for all initial ophthalmology *(a)* outpatient appointments and *(b)* inpatient admissions at each health trust in Northern Ireland for applicable trusts, at 30 September 2005 is shown in the table.

Median waiting time for ophthalmology assessment at 30 September 2005

Health trust	*(a)* Outpatient	*(b)* Inpatient
Royal Group of Hospitals HSS Trust	3–5 months	3–5 months
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	0–2 months	[1]
Ulster Community and Hospitals HSS Trust	9–11 months	[1]
Down Lisburn HSS Trust	3–5 months	0–2 months
Mater Infirmorium HSS Trust	3–5 months	3–5 months
Craigavon Area Hospital Group HSS Trust	6–8 months	3–5 months
Newry and Mourne HSS Trust	0–2 months	[1]
Armagh and Dungannon HSS Trust	6–8 months	[1]
Altnagelvin Group HSS Trust	3–5 months	0–2 months
NI	3–5 months	3–5 months

[1] Not applicable.

Source:
Departmental Information Returns CH1 Parts A and B and CH3 Parts 1 and 2.

Organised Crime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on levels of organised crime in Northern Ireland. [49365]

Mr. Woodward: The 2005 Organised Crime Task Force Annual Report has made clear that the overall levels of organised criminal activity remain high. The fact remains that all organised criminality, from whatever source, is unacceptable and it must come to an end. Good progress is being made—last year 28 top level organised crime gangs in Northern Ireland were disrupted or dismantled and assets totalling £12 million were restrained or confiscated by the partner agencies of the Organised Crime Task Force.

Paramilitary-style Attacks

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many paramilitary-style attacks have taken place by *(a)* Republican and *(b)* Loyalist sources in each of the past 18 months. [48281]

Mr. Woodward: The information is as follows.

Paramilitary style attacks (shootings)

	Loyalist	*Republican*	*Total*
2004			
August	9	4	13
September	9	1	10
October	11	0	11
November	4	0	4
December	2	1	3
2005			
January	4	4	8
February	6	2	8
March	4	0	4
April	5	2	7
May	11	0	11
June	3	0	3
July	6	2	8
August	7	0	7
September	9	0	9
October	9	0	9
November	4	0	4
December	6	0	6
2006			
January	6	0	6

Note:
The total number of shootings for the last 18 months is 131.

Paramilitary style attacks (assaults)

	Loyalist	*Republican*	*Total*
2004			
August	2	1	3
September	8	1	9
October	4	4	8
November	5	6	11
December	2	3	5
2005			
January	5	4	9
February	5	5	10
March	5	5	10
April	3	3	6
May	9	5	14
June	13	3	16
July	4	1	5
August	6	0	6
September	2	0	2
October	3	0	3
November	3	0	3
December	3	0	3
2006			
January	4	2	6

Note:
The total number of assaults for the last 18 months is 129.

The total number of attacks for the last 18 months is 260. Loyalists were attributed to 201 attacks (115 shootings and 86 assaults). Republicans were attributed to 59 attacks (16 shootings and 43 assaults).

Police

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many applications to join the Police Service of Northern Ireland have been received from *(a)* the Irish Republic, *(b)* Great Britain and *(c)* Northern Ireland in each year since the implementation of the Patten Report; and how many have been successful in each case. [44747]

Mr. Woodward: I am advised that the breakdown of applications to PSNI trainee constable competitions, which are held on a central database, is as follows:

	Year				
	One	*Two*	*Three*	*Four*	*Five (C9 only)*[1]
NI	11,116	8,271	10,223	9,115	5,079
ROI	856	636	902	700	379
GB	377	160	269	631	368

[1] C9 refers to campaign 9 launched in March 2005.

As at 31 January 2006, a total of 2,123 appointments have been made from these competitions. I am advised that it is not possible to provide information relating to the number of successful applicants from NI, ROI and GB. This information is not held on a central database, and would therefore require a manual trawl which would incur a disproportionate cost.

Public Sector Dwellings

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many public sector dwellings are planned to be built in each district council area over the next three years. [48277]

Mr. Hanson: The social housing development programme operates on a five-year time frame and is continually updated to take account of changing circumstances, needs and priorities.

The following table shows the gross programme proposed in each of the next three years. This will be netted down by slippage to the target of 1,500 as each year progresses.

Planned social housing starts

District council	*2006–07*	*2007–08*	*2008–09*
Antrim	58	10	25
Ards	48	6	36
Armagh	7	0	6
Ballymena	0	53	20
Ballymoney	0	11	0
Banbridge	0	32	12
Belfast	607	1,030	915
Carrick	15	18	16
Castlereagh	80	17	22
Coleraine	41	0	7
Cookstown	0	0	0
Craigavon	35	3	10
Derry	254	165	88
Down	93	26	37
Dungannon	27	21	32
Fermanagh	48	14	48
Larne	0	11	12
Limavady	0	10	0
Lisburn	173	230	269
Magherafelt	0	10	10
Moyle	10	10	10
Newry and Mourne	81	34	88
Newtownabbey	88	38	18
North Down	133	105	42
Omagh	8	1	8
Strabane	37	2	8
Total	1,843	1,857	1,739

Research Projects

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what research projects commissioned by his Department are being undertaken; and what the publication arrangements are in each case. [32999]

Mr. Hain: The following table shows what research projects commissioned by his Department are being undertaken; and what the publication arrangements are in each case.

Research project	*Publication arrangements*
Evaluation of Bail	Final report will be published as part of the NIO Research and Statistical Series and released on the NIO website in spring 2006.
Evaluation of Offending Behaviour Programmes	Final report will be published as part of the NIO Research and Statistical Series and released on the NIO website in winter 2006.
Evaluation of Youth Conferencing	Final report will be published as part of the NIO Research and Statistical Series and released on the NIO website in spring 2006.
Evaluation of Bail Supervision and Support Scheme	Final report will be published as part of the NIO Research and Statistical Series and released on the NIO website in summer 2006.
Evaluation of PSNI Youth Diversion Scheme	Final report will be published as part of the NIO Research and Statistical Series and released on the NIO website in summer 2006.
Evaluation of Community Service and Reparation Orders	Final report will be published as part of the NIO Research and Statistical Series and released on the NIO website in spring 2006.
Self Reported Offending Behaviour Study	Final report will be published as part of the NIO Research and Statistical Series and released on the NIO website in summer 2006.
Feasibility Study for Establishment of a Domestic Violence One Stop Shop	Final report will be published as part of the NIO Research and Statistical Series and released on the NIO website in summer 2006.
Self-Classified Equity Monitoring Pilot	Arrangements concerning publication will be considered by the Criminal Justice Board once the pilot is completed.

Research project	*Publication arrangements*
Report on the conduct of the Northern Ireland local elections held in May 2005. Carried out by the Electoral Commission.	Published on 15 December 2005.
Pathways from care to justice—research around the reasons why children in the care system are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system.	Yet to be finalised. Report will be published jointly by DHSSPS and NIO early in 2006.
Research on the remanding of children into custody	Yet to be finalised. Report will be published in the NIO Research and Statistical series in the second quarter of 2006.

Note:
The NIO and DHSSPS have jointly commissioned research into children from a Care background who enter the criminal justice system. This is known as the Pathways research. Decisions on the publication arrangements for this report will be taken jointly by NIO and DHSSPS. Final decisions on publication remain within the NIO, but there is a presumption that research commissioned from the Research and Statistics Programme will be published. All statistics and research publications are available on the NIO website. Usually a small number of printed copies of each publication are made available for those without internet access.

Restorative Justice

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his policy is on the involvement of individuals associated with paramilitary organisations in community based restorative justice projects. [49303]

Mr. Hanson: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Beverley and Holderness (Mr. Stuart) on 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1421W.

Sex Offenders

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many convicted sex offenders have been working in *(a)* schools and *(b)* hospitals in Northern Ireland in each of the past five years. [44562]

Angela E. Smith: I asked the employing authorities (that is, the Education and Library Boards, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools, and voluntary grammar, Irish medium, grant-maintained integrated and independent schools which employ their staff directly) to check their records and inform me whether there is any person currently in employment in any capacity in a grant-aided school who is required to notify their details to the Police Service as a sex offender, or who has a history of sex offending. They have confirmed that there are three persons, none of them teaching staff, with a conviction for a sexual offence who are currently working in schools; none of these persons is on a sex offenders register as all the offences were committed over 15 years ago. In one case the offence was against a minor and involved a girl who was just under age; in the other two cases the offence was against an adult female. In each case the employing authority knew of the conviction through the pre-employment check and took professional advice. The advice was, in each case, that the person was not a risk to children, and so employment was offered. The employing authorities remain satisfied that these persons do not pose a risk to children.

In Northern Ireland vetting against all sources is done by a single agency, the PSNI Criminal Records Office (CRO). The CRO checks individuals who apply to work with children, either as employees or those engaged as volunteers, against both List 99 and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's list of people who are disqualified from working with children, as well as carrying out a foil criminal background check. Employers are informed of all convictions, including cautions and bind-over orders, no matter when the offence was committed, and non-conviction information which CRO considers to be reliable. The CRO has also confirmed that their pre-employment checks on persons applying to work in schools have not identified any individual on a sex offenders register since the introduction of registration in 1997.

I have been advised by my hon. Friend the Member for St. Helens, South, that not all posts in hospitals are vetted or would involve working with children or access to children. It is impossible to say definitively whether or not sex offenders have ever been employed in one of our hospitals over the past five years.

However, since September 2001, when a person is convicted of a sexual offence, he/she is subject to assessment of their individual level of risk under the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Process.

When that individual is employed in a range of specified occupations e.g. medical, health etc. the agencies (including PSNI) will consider carefully the relevance of the offence in relation to the occupation/employment and decide whether to bring this to the attention of the relevant employer as part of the risk assessment.

My hon. Friend would not tolerate any decision by a HSS Trust or other employer within the statutory sector to ignore this multi-agency advice and DHSSPS cannot identify any instance where this has happened.

Smoke Alarms

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he plans to take to ensure that as many households as possible in Northern Ireland have working smoke alarms. [49154]

Mr. Woodward: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I provided to him on this matter on 24 June 2005. In addition, the Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service is planning to introduce a Home Fire Safety Check Programme whereby every householder in the Province will be offered the opportunity to have their home assessed in terms of risk of fire and protection against such an occurrence. This will include a check on the suitability, operation and provision of smoke alarms.

It should be noted that the 2005 Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey reported a 98 per cent. ownership of smoke alarms, an increase of 2 per cent. on the previous year. Of these, 73 per cent. reported that they check their smoke alarms regularly.

Social Exclusion

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to address social exclusion in Northern Ireland; what assistance has been given to address pockets of socio-economic deprivation in deprived areas in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [44918]

Angela E. Smith: New Targeting Social Need (TSN) is Government's current high level policy aimed at tackling poverty and social exclusion in Northern Ireland by targeting effort and available resources at people, groups and areas in greatest objective need.

Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI) is a key component of New TSN policy, and involves Departments working together and with partners outside Government to develop strategies aimed at tackling a range of issues impacting on vulnerable groups such as older people and people with disabilities. Future policy and priorities will continue to focus on preventing social exclusion, and it is hoped to make an announcement on these shortly.

As well as initiatives targeting groups at risk of social exclusion, many government programmes are focused on the issues impacting on areas and communities. Currently the Rural Development Programme is aimed at tackling rural disadvantage throughout the region, and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, targets the worst areas of urban disadvantage in Northern Ireland.

Government's programme of equality legislation also contains provisions which contribute to reducing social exclusion of vulnerable groups and plays an important role in supporting policies. In October 2006 legislation will be introduced to prohibit unjustified age discrimination in employment and vocational training. This will give individuals new rights not to be discriminated because of their age and will place new responsibilities on all employers of vocational training.

Threats to Safety

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* members of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, *(b)* members of the Royal Irish Regiment, *(c)* prison officers and *(d)* members of the general public in Northern Ireland have been advised of a threat to their safety from Republican sources in each of the last 12 months, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [48278]

Mr. Woodward: The PSNI does not have a central record containing the information requested. Much of the information relating to threats is held at DCU level and to obtain it would require a manual trawl at disproportionate cost.

PSNI has provided figures for threats recorded by location relating to police officers only for 2005.

	Number
Antrim DCU	2
Ards	13
Armagh	3
Ballymena	2
Ballymoney	1
Banbridge	2
Carrickfergus	6
Castlereagh	3
Coleraine	8
Cooks Town	2
Down	3
Dungannon and South Tyrone	2
Belfast East	8
Fermanagh	11
Foyle	2
Larne	3
Lisburn	8
Magherafelt	2
Newtownabbey	6
Newry and Mourne	2
Belfast North	1
North Down	9
Omagh	5
Belfast South	6
Strabane	1

The Northern Ireland Prison Service has provided the following statistical information in response to this question:

	Republican
2005	
January	8
February	—
March	—
April	—
May	—
June	1
July	1
August	—
September	2
October	1
November	—
December	—
2006	
January	—
Total	13

Note:
As staff are not required to register details of their home address, it has not been possible to break down this information by parliamentary constituency.

Treatment-related Complaints

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many treatment-related complaints have been made to the Northern Ireland Ombudsman by people suffering from *(a)* mental health-related illnesses and *(b)* general medical health-related illnesses in each Health and Social Services trust area in Northern Ireland in the last five years; and what percentage of those complaints have been upheld by the ombudsman, broken down by health trust area. [47003]

Angela E. Smith: The Northern Ireland Ombudsman has written to the hon. Gentleman. A copy of the letter has been placed in the Library.

Youth Tennis (Funding)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what publicly-funded assistance is available for young tennis players based in Northern Ireland. [49150]

Mr. Hanson: The Sports Council for Northern Ireland (SCNI) is responsible for the development of sport in Northern Ireland, including the distribution of public funding to sport. SCNI offers a range of publicly funded assistance programmes through which young tennis players based in Northern Ireland can receive support. These include an Athlete Support Programme, an Investing in Sport Programme and a Regional Squads Programme.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Barker Review (Hammersmith and Fulham)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many new residential dwellings will be built in each of the next 20 years in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham following the Government's response to Kate Barker's review of housing supply. [45258]

Yvette Cooper: The London plan sets a minimum target for housing provision in Hammersmith and Fulham of 400 additional homes per year for the 20-year period 1997 to 2016. A draft alteration to the London plan proposes to increase this minimum target to 450 additional homes per year, for the 10-year period 2007–08 to 2016–17, following the results of a London-wide study of housing capacity. Adoption of the revised target will depend on the outcome of public consultation, now closed, and public examination of the alteration in June this year. Housing targets beyond 2016 will be set through the process of regional and local plan review. The London plan targets will be reviewed by 2011.

Cash Incentive Scheme Grants

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many cash incentive scheme grants to enable tenants to buy the home of their choice were made by each local authority in London in 2004–05; and what the total value of these grants was in each local authority. [47180]

Yvette Cooper: The figures requested for 2004–05 are:

	Total number of grants	*Total expenditure (£ thousand)*
Barnet	30	750
Brent	11	275
Camden	19	695
Croydon	27	562
Ealing	13	385
Enfield	21	600
Haringey	24	487
Harrow	23	53
Hillingdon	9	174
Kingston upon Thames	8	150
Lewisham	24	542
Merton	7	159
Newham	1	45
Tower Hamlets	62	1,119
Waltham Forest	8	223
Wandsworth	42	908
Westminster	16	432

Those London boroughs not listed did not make any payments under the Cash Incentive Scheme in 2004–05.

Certified Home Inspectors

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the new home inspectors will be required to have Criminal Records Bureau checks. [46981]

Yvette Cooper: The Housing Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister to be satisfied, before approving a certification scheme, that the scheme contains appropriate provision to ensure that home inspectors are "fit and proper persons". The intention is that the procedure for deciding whether a person is fit and proper for this purpose will involve a check of the Criminal Records Bureau.

Civil Servants (Overseas Visits)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what costs were incurred by his Department as a result of sending civil servants on overseas visits in each of the last 10 years. [46286]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) was created following the machinery of Government changes on 29 May 2002. The ODPM's financial system records the combined costs on overseas visits for both Ministers and civil servants. A breakdown of costs for civil servants alone could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

All travel by civil servants and Ministers is conducted in accordance with requirements of the Civil Service Management Code and the Ministerial Code and Travel.

Council Tax

Grant Shapps: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 967W, to question 41876, how many dwellings are occupied only by students in exemption class N as shown on the 21 October 2005 CTBI (supplementary) form for England and Wales. [43733]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not yet available. CTBI (supplementary) forms for 21 October 2005 for some authorities have not yet been received by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Information from returned forms will be made available on the ODPM website in due course.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much the Valuation Tribunal Service has spent on the council tax revaluation including related appeals to date in England. [47142]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member on 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 585W.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 23 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2063W, on council tax, if he will break down the number of properties with *(a)* dwelling house codes and *(b)* value significant codes, by billing authority. [47474]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested has been made available in the Library of the House.

Grant Shapps: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many Class N exemptions were recorded in total on the CTB1 form returned on 21 October 2005 by local authorities in England and Wales. [47619]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is not yet available. A breakdown of Class exemptions is collected on the CTB1 (Supplementary) form, some of which have still to be received by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Information from returned forms will be made available on the ODPM website in due course.

Coventry City Council

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* revenue and *(b)* capital funding his Department has allocated to Coventry City Council in each of the last 10 years. [45658]

Mr. Woolas *[holding answer 30 January 2006]*: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) was established following the Machinery of Government changes on 29 May 2002. The table sets out payments made by ODPM to Coventry City Council since 2002-03. For earlier year, the table shows the amount paid by ODPM's predecessor Departments from the programmes which are now administered by ODPM. Information prior to 1999-2000 could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Funding (£ million)

	(a) Revenue	*(b) Capital*
1999-2000	214.900	3.541
2000-01	221.331	4.512
2001-02	229.369	2.477
2002-03	231.435	5.299
2003-04	276.185	7.387
2004-05	292.262	9.309
Total	1,465.482	32.525

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* his Department and previous Departments with his Department's responsibilities, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997. [39109]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed in May 2002. The cost of external consultancies is as follows and relates to ODPM C and its Agencies. A breakdown for non-departmental public bodies, independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by his Department could be obtained only at disproportionate cost:

£

	2002-03	*2003-04*	*2004-05*	*2005-06*[1]
ODPM Central	76,000,000	47,000,000	79,831,087	38,248,314
Planning Inspectorate	3,222,478	2,892,751	2,824,751	2,102,703
Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre	11,016	68,861	79,635	84,379
Fire Service College	43,306	152,279	320,484	258,887

[1] To date.

Falling Trees

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what information he collects from local authorities on the number of people *(a)* killed and *(b)* injured as a result of falling trees and branches. [48986]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not collect information from local authorities on the number of people killed or injured as a result of falling trees and branches, and such information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Fire Services

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the likely effect on the performance of combined emergency services control rooms of proposed mergers of fire services. [47800]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not expect there to be any negative impact on the performance of the two pilot tri-service control centres as a result of the merger of fire and rescue service control rooms into regional controls. There are no plans to regionalise the fire and rescue service.

The tri-service pilots are not combined emergency service control rooms, but three separate controls located in the same building. This is because the different business needs of the three services are a key implementation barrier to delivering fully integrated tri-service centres. In terms of performance, the fire and rescue service accounts for fewer than 10 per cent. of calls in the tri-service centres, so combined centres will still be able to function much as they do now as bi-service controls without fire. The valuable lessons that have been learnt from the pilots, especially in terms of closer working between emergency services, can still be built on after the introduction of regional fire control centres.

First-time Buyers

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the number of first-time

buyers entering the housing market in *(a)* England and *(b)* the UK in each year since 1996. [42806]

Yvette Cooper: The Council of Mortgage Lenders produce estimates of the number of mortgages for house purchase made by first-time buyers in the UK. Estimates are not available for England or for the number of first-time buyers purchasing without a mortgage.

Figures available from 1991 tabled as follows:

Number of mortgages for house purchase to first-time buyers: UK 1991–2004

	Number (thousand)
1991	332
1992	306
1993	524
1994	528
1995	424
1996	465
1997	503
1998	527
1999	593
2000	499
2001	568
2002	532
2003	367
2004	358

Source:
Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML)

Hillingdon Council

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the additional costs falling upon Hillingdon council from Heathrow airport. [47070]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not routinely assess the costs falling on Hillingdon council from Heathrow airport. To make such an assessment on a one-off basis would require extensive research which would incur disproportionate cost. The economic effects arising from Heathrow were considered as part of the Inquiry into the Terminal 5 proposal, and findings are set out in Topic Report 2, which supplements the main Inspector's Report, but the findings are not reported in a way that is specific to Hillingdon.

Home Information Packs

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether those who put together home information packs will be required to obtain negligence or indemnity insurance; and what arrangements have been put in place to deal with the production of packs for more complicated properties in rural areas. [41468]

Yvette Cooper: Home information packs will bring together at the start of the home buying and selling process documents and information that are already an established part of the existing system but which currently become available later in the sale. There will be no legal requirement for persons performing the role of collecting documents together to compile packs to have negligence or indemnity insurance. This will be a matter for consideration by estate agents and others who may commission packs on behalf of sellers. The only new component in home information packs will be the home condition report. Only home inspectors who are members of an approved certification scheme will be able to provide home condition reports. Before approving a certification scheme the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister must be satisfied that the scheme contains appropriate provision for ensuring that its members have suitable indemnity insurance.

Homebuy Schemes

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 256W, on Homebuy schemes, whether the Government are providing subsidy for Open Market Homebuy. [47017]

Yvette Cooper: Yes. The Government are providing subsidy via the Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing Programme in 2006–08 for equity loans provided by registered social landlords under Open Market HomeBuy. A decision on the overall programme is expected in March 2006 when the amount of subsidy for Open Market HomeBuy will be confirmed.

From October 2006 Government funding will be enhanced by the private financing of equity loans from three lenders. This will enable us to help an additional 20,000 households into home ownership by 2010, bringing the total assisted to over 100,000.

Housing

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many families in each London local authority area were living in overcrowded conditions in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2000 and *(c)* 2005. [43164]

Yvette Cooper: There are two measures of overcrowding—the statutory definition and the bedroom standard. Information on compliance with the statutory standard is not collected systematically and estimates at local authority level are not available.

Estimates based on the bedroom standard are available—but generally not at local authority level. However, some local authority estimates were made for 2002 and may be referenced in the following report:

"Overcrowding in England, the Sub-Regional picture: Statistics"

This can be accessed at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index. asp?id = 1152920

Then scroll down and click on:

'Table 1: Overcrowding by sub-regional area'.

Results at a sub-regional level are not available for any other period.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate the Government have made of the number of first-time buyers completing a house purchase in each year since 1997. [47343]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given earlier today.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many households will benefit from *(a)* Social Homebuy and *(b)* New Build Homebuy in each year of the proposed schemes, in (i) England and (ii) each government office region. [47346]

Yvette Cooper: Information on the number of households who will benefit from the Social and New Build HomeBuy schemes from April 2006 is not yet available.

Numbers will depend on the participation of social landlords and the successful bids funded through the Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing Programme in 2006–08 products. The bids are currently being evaluated and decisions will be announced early this year.

Four registered social landlords are currently piloting Social HomeBuy ahead of the main two year pilot programme. The early pilots involve 400 potential sales at locations across the Government Office regions, except the West Midlands.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria he applies in considering whether to approve a local authority's application to extend its mandatory licensing scheme to smaller houses in multiple occupation. [44541]

Yvette Cooper: In considering schemes made by local housing authorities in England to extend the scope of licensing of houses in multiple occupation (HMO) in their area, or part of their area, the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister must be satisfied that the local housing authority:

has identified the management problems arising from the types of HMOs in the area for which it intends to make the scheme;

has considered whether there are other courses of action available to it that might provide an effective means of dealing with the issues which the scheme is intended to address and whether the scheme will significantly help them in dealing with those issues;

is satisfied that the scheme would be consistent with its overall housing strategy and will be co-ordinated with its approach to dealing with homelessness, empty properties and anti social behaviour in the private rented sector;

has consulted, having regard to the above criteria, on the proposed additional licensing scheme with those persons who are likely to be affected by it, including landlords, tenants and local resident associations, and that it has properly considered representations it has received.

These criteria are provided in sections 56 and 57 of the Housing Act 2004.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what steps he is taking to enable first-time home buyers in West Lancashire to buy a home locally; [45127]

(2) what steps he is taking to provide affordable housing in West Lancashire constituency. [45137]

Yvette Cooper: West Lancashire has recently carried out a housing needs survey, and their emerging new local plan should set out policies for the provision of affordable housing. The Housing Corporation is also considering bids from registered social landlords to fund affordable housing across the north west, which will include first-time buyers.

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to make an announcement on the number of affordable homes expected to be built or procured through the National Affordable Housing Programme in Oxford in 2006–08. [44560]

Yvette Cooper: The Housing Corporation is currently assessing bids for affordable housing schemes planned to start in 2006–08. A decision on the overall programme, and its regional components is expected to be announced in March 2006 and announcements on individual allocations will be made subsequent to that.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what plans the Government have to introduce a national register of social housing; and if he will make a statement; [42916]

(2) whether the National Register of Social Housing will include properties which are *(a)* in shared ownership and *(b)* have been sold under the right-to-buy and are no longer owned by the public sector; [42955]

(3) if he will list the types of property attribute data and field definitions that are part of the National Register of Social Housing. [43029]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has been working with the Housing Corporation, and representatives of local authorities and housing associations to establish a national record of each unit of social housing in England; the National Register of Social Housing (NROSH).

The working principle is that data will be uploaded direct from the landlord's administrative systems and that updating will be automated. The register will eventually, possibly by April 2007, replace a substantial amount of the form filling currently required by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Housing Corporation, and will thus reduce the burden of data provision on local authorities and housing associations. It will provide data which is more accurate and timely and which is very flexible in terms of the geographical areas which can be analysed.

Piloting which has been carried out in partnership with over 40 local authorities and housing associations during 2005 is drawing to a close and national roll out of the data collection software began in December 2005.

The register will include properties in shared ownership with social landlords. Once a property has been recorded in the register a record of it will be retained after it is sold into the private sector whether through right to buy or otherwise.

The register contains a range of fields the full descriptions of which can be found on the ODPM website along with other background information at: www.odpm.gov.uk/nationalregisterofsocialhousing. The fields cover the following types of information:

Reference or data management, such as property address or data provider identification.

Physical attributes of the dwelling such as size, type and age.

Housing management information such as rent, tenure and whether or not the property is occupied.

The Decent Homes Standard and its components.

Disabled access standards.

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many council houses in *(a)* England and *(b)* Leeds (i) have been brought up to decent homes standards and (ii) remain to be brought up to such standards. [46002]

Yvette Cooper: The information is as follows.

(a) The number of local authority owned non-decent homes in England has decreased from 1,869,000 in 1996 to 972,000 in 2003 (source: English House Condition Survey).

(b) Leeds has reported that their number of local authority non-decent homes has decreased from 33,728 in 2002 to 31,185 in 2005 (source: Business Plan Annual Monitoring returns).

Kettering General Hospital

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions his Department's growth areas directorate has had with the Department of Health about the expansion of Kettering General Hospital to accompany local housebuilding growth up to 2021. [48362]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has been working closely with the Department of Health to ensure that health funding takes account of planned housing growth. The discussions have been at a strategic level and have not touched upon the specific plans for Kettering General Hospital.

Significant extra resources are being provided for health services in the growth areas. Already an extra £20 million of revenue funding per annum has been provided for primary care trusts in the growth areas (2004–05 and 2005–06) and an extra £20 million of capital resources allocated to strategic health authorities in the growth areas (2005–06).

Kettering General Hospital National Health Service (NHS) Trust has benefited from extra resources. In May 2005 the trust was granted some £7.4 million (£5 million from the primary care trust and £2.4 million in capital from the strategic health authority) to tackle the growth in demand for services. This has enabled the trust to employ 164 extra nurses and 32 extra doctors. The trust has invested £2 million in a 40-bed ward and five-bed Accident and Emergency observation ward. The trust is building a £16.5 million treatment centre and an ambulatory care centre is currently in development.

Future health funding will also take into account planned housing growth. The Department of Health's announcement on primary care trust revenue funding on 9 February 2005 included a growth area adjustment. Amongst other factors, this will lead to the primary care trusts in the growth areas receiving funding increases of £860 million in 2006–07 and £970 million in 2007–08 (increases over the two years of 20.8 per cent. compared to a national average of 19.5 per cent.). Government is also giving priority to growth areas for future LIFT (local improvement finance trust) schemes. This private finance initiative programme will create long-term public/private partnerships to secure continued investment in health care in local areas.

Living Spaces Grant

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to reinstate the living spaces grant. [48699]

Yvette Cooper: Living Spaces was set up as an innovative approach to helping communities make tangible and lasting changes to their local environment. Living Spaces is a three-year programme with funding due to end in 2005–06. Due to the large demand from community groups for support from Living Spaces, funding for the programme has been exhausted and, therefore, there are currently no plans to re-open the scheme for fresh applications or extend the scheme.

The lessons learnt from the success of Living Spaces will help to inform future policies and programmes that seek to involve local people in improving the quality of their local communities. For example, a priority of the Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme will be to increase the capacity of communities to plan, develop and run projects that improve their local environments.

Local Government Reform

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which Government Department is responsible for Government policy on the potential introduction of parish councils in London. [47873]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister would be responsible for the removal of the barrier in current legislation to the creation of parish councils in London.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate his Department has made of the *(a)* set-up costs and *(b)* running costs of parish councils in London. [47888]

Mr. Woolas: None. The costs of setting up and running parish councils in London will be a matter for the London boroughs and any new parish councils established.

Lyons Inquiry

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 585W, on the Lyons Inquiry, from which public sector organisations the Lyons Inquiry has received submissions. [47866]

Mr. Woolas: Sir Michael Lyons published an interim report and consultation paper on 15 December. This report lists organisations who have responded to the inquiry. Links to representations are on the inquiry's website at: www.lyonsinquiry.org.

Migrants (Accommodation)

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what provision has been made in housing targets for homes for migrants from outside the United Kingdom over the next 20 years. [46075]

Yvette Cooper: There is no specific provision for international migrants. Assessments of future housing requirements are informed by demographic projections that take account of international migration as one of several factors influencing the growth in numbers of households.

Mobile Telephone Masts

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the planning applications which have been *(a)* refused and *(b)* granted on appeal for mobile phone masts in West Lancashire. [45135]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

However, during September and October every year the mobile network operators write to every local authority with details of their network rollout for the year ahead. When they write to the local authority they also provide details of their existing sites within the local authority area. You may want to contact the network operators for copies of their plans.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many new mobile telephone masts have been erected under permitted development rights in each year since 1997 in each London borough; and if he will make a statement. [47406]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested on the numbers of mobile phone masts erected under permitted development rights is not held centrally, and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

However, during September and October every year the mobile network operators write to every local authority with details of their network rollout for the year ahead. When they write to the local authority they also provide details of their existing sites within the local authority area. You may want to contact the network operators for copies of their plans.

New Deal for Communities

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has for future funding for the Kensington new deal for communities project. [47670]

Mr. Woolas: Kensington Regeneration is a 10-year new deal for communities (NDC) programme to deliver transformational change to residents. The Government remain committed to the long-term investment in the NDC programme and the Kensington NDC area will benefit from £61,908,490 between 2000–01 and 2010–11. The NDC has already made good progress across the key thematic areas and I am sure this work will be sustained in the future.

Pensions (Local Authority)

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of council tax was allocated to pay local authority employee pensions in each local authority in 2005–06. [47562]

Mr. Woolas: It is not possible to say how much of council tax income can be attributed to pay for local authority employee pensions. This is because it is not possible to say whether any item of revenue expenditure is funded from council tax or from the Government grants and business rates that also finance revenue expenditure.

Pension costs for local authorities in England in 2004–05 are estimated at £5.3 billion. This is 6.6 per cent. of total revenue expenditure by local authorities in England.[1,2]

These proportions are not available for every local authority individually as the SAR is a sample survey of authorities.

[1] *Note:* Both figures are presented on a non-Financial Reporting Standard 17 (FRS17) basis.
[2] *Source:* 2004–05 Revenue Out-turn (RO) forms, 2004–05 Subjective Analysis Returns (SAR) submitted by local authorities to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Planning (Helicopters)

Dr. Fox: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what restrictions can be placed under planning regulations on the use of helicopter landing pads within or adjacent to *(a)* residential areas and *(b)* defined bridleways. [44123]

Yvette Cooper: It is for local planning authorities to impose whatever planning conditions they consider appropriate to protect residential areas and defined bridleways when granting planning permission for helicopter landing pads.

Private Gardens (Hammersmith and Fulham)

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the *(a)* number and *(b)* total area of privately owned gardens in Hammersmith and Fulham that has been developed in each year since 1997. [45273]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Land use change statistics record the amounts of residential land developed but do not record whether it was privately owned or how much of the land was occupied by any garden.

Regional Reorganisation

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2068W, on regional reorganisation, what guidance and support his Department provides to Government departments on inter-regional communication on policy matters. [47155]

Jim Fitzpatrick: All sponsor departments of Government Offices, and Government Offices themselves, work closely to ensure effective inter-regional communications on policy matters. The new Government Office websites also enable effective communications, within and across regions, on a range of policy issues.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Wills: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what national target he has set to encourage renewable energy projects to be included as part of all new *(a)* domestic, *(b)* public, *(c)* commercial and *(d)* industrial developments. [45404]

Yvette Cooper: There are no separate targets for particular types of new developments. The Government have an overall target of 10 per cent. of the UK's electricity supply should come from sources of renewable energy by 2010, with an aspiration to double

that by 2020. Planning Policy Statement 22 encourages the appropriate development of renewable energy schemes in England. The prospective amendment to the energy efficiency provisions in the Building Regulations for England and Wales includes enhanced performance standards that will also encourage developers to consider the benefits of renewable systems.

Rents

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average monthly rent for a *(a)* one-bed, *(b)* two-bed, *(c)* three-bed and *(d)* four-bed (i) social landlord and (ii) local authority property was in (A) each Essex borough, (B) London and (C) each London borough in (1) 1990, (2) 1992, (3) 1994, (4) 1998 and (5) each of the last five years. [42384]

Yvette Cooper: Average weekly rent by local authority district and region are published for the local authority sector for 1996 to 2005 and the registered social landlord sector for 1997 to 2005 on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website in tables 702 and 704 respectively for those properties for which such a breakdown is available. The links for these tables are given as follows:

Table 702: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?id=1156266

Table 704: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?id=1156268

Average weekly rent in Essex in 2005 was £71.94 for a registered social landlord property and £58.66 for a council property. The respective rents in London were £74.67 and £69.37 per week.

Repossessions

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many repossessions were made in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland in each year since 1997. [45108]

Yvette Cooper: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Tamworth on 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1695W.

Right to Buy

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many council houses have been sold in Hartlepool under the Right To Buy scheme in each year since 1980. [47322]

Yvette Cooper: The requested information can be found on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?id=1156373. There have been no Right to Buy sales in Hartlepool since 2004–05 following the large scale voluntary transfer of all local authority stock to a registered social landlord.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of council housing stock in each London borough has been sold under the right-to-buy scheme since 1980; and if he will make a statement. [47381]

Yvette Cooper: The proportion of council housing stock in each London borough that has been sold under the Right to Buy scheme since its introduction in 1980 can be found on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?id=1156373

Survey of English Housing

Mr. Khan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of *(a)* African, *(b)* Afro-Caribbean, *(c)* Bangladeshi, *(d)* Chinese, *(e)* Indian, *(f)* Pakistani, *(g)* Somali, *(h)* white, *(i)* other black groups and *(j)* mixed and other ethnic groups households are estimated by the Survey of English Housing 2004–05 to be living in overcrowded housing conditions. [42919]

Yvette Cooper: There are two measures of overcrowding—the statutory definition and the bedroom standard. Information on compliance with the statutory standard is not collected systematically and reliable estimates for separate ethnic groups are not available.

Estimates of overcrowding by ethnic group and based on the bedroom standard can be derived from the Survey of English Housing. In order to ensure reliable estimates of overcrowding by ethnic group it has been necessary to combine data from the seven-year period of 1998 to 2005. Over this period it is estimated that *(a)* 15 per cent. of black African households were overcrowded; *(b)* 7 per cent. of black Caribbean households; *(c)* 29 per cent. of Bangladeshi households; *(d)* 8 per cent. of Indian households; *(f)* 21 per cent. of Pakistani households; *(g)* 2 per cent. white households; and *(h)* 10 per cent. of households from other ethnic minorities and mixed ethnic groups. Separate figures for Chinese and Somali households are not available.

Estimates for individual years cannot be provided because sample sizes for individual ethnic groups are too small.

Thames Gateway

Mr. Godsiff: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment has been made of the merits of designating Thames Gateway as a national park. [47193]

Yvette Cooper: National park designations apply to extensive areas of countryside and contains England's most beautiful, spectacular and dramatic landscapes. They include stronger planning restrictions and a series of special protection arrangements appropriate to areas of beautiful countryside. We do not believe those levels of planning restrictions would be appropriate in the Thames Gateway. However the Government have asked the Commission for Architecture and the Build Environment (CABE) to look at ideas for creating a world class landscape including urban development and green spaces along the Thames Gateway.

Warehouses (Planning Regulations)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on what plans the Government have to amend planning regulations for warehouses near transport hubs. [47342]

Yvette Cooper: Planning Policy Guidance note (PPG) 13 "Transport" advises that, in preparing plans and determining planning applications, local planning authorities should, where possible, locate developments generating substantial freight movements such as distribution and warehousing away from congested central areas and residential areas and ensure adequate access to trunk roads. It goes on to say planning authorities should promote opportunities for freight generating development to be served by rail or waterways. The Government have no plans to amend this policy guidance nor to make any regulations.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what occasions he has referred matters to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs. [47804]

Paul Goggins: Since becoming Home Secretary in December 2004, I have referred three matters to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD).

1. In March 2005, I asked the Council to review the classification of cannabis products that are controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. The Council's report was published on 19 January 2006.

2. In March 2005 the then Ministes responsible for drugs, Caroline Flint asked the ACMD on my behalf to consider evidence relating to khat, including two pieces of research commissioned by the Home Office and carried out by Turning Point and NACRO respectively. The Council's report was also published on 19 January.

3. In January 2006 I asked the ACMD to review the classification of the so called 'date rape drugs', including GHB and Rohypnol. A time frame for reporting on these drugs is in the process of being agreed with the ACMD.

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders were issued in each London borough in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [46738]

Hazel Blears: A table giving a breakdown by the criminal justice system area and local government authority area in which prohibitions are imposed within antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) is available on the crime reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk. This table gives data by year since ASBOs were introduced up to 30 June 2005 (latest available).

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what methodology his Department uses to measure the effectiveness of antisocial behaviour orders. [48577]

Hazel Blears: In 2002 we published a research paper entitled "A review of antisocial behaviour orders" (commonly referred to as the Campbell review) which followed a commitment made during the passage through Parliament of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. ASBOs have now reached sufficient numbers to necessitate further research.

The Home Office is conducting an evaluation of ASBOs, the findings of which will be available in spring 2006 and will provide information on the effectiveness of ASBOs in tackling antisocial behaviour within our neighbourhoods and communities. In addition, the Home Affairs Select Committee, in their report on antisocial behaviour published last year, recommended that research was necessary to establish the reasons for any inappropriate issuing of ASBOs or the issuing of ASBOs with inappropriate conditions. We are currently considering the best way to meet this recommendation. The Youth Justice Board has also commissioned research and we are awaiting the findings.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many appeals against antisocial behaviour orders there have been in the last 12 months; and what the outcome was in each case. [45720]

Hazel Blears: From 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 (latest available) the Home Office has been notified of 37 cases, in which an antisocial behaviour order had been issued, going to appeal. As a result, 32 orders were varied, four discharged and one appeal was dismissed.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what services are available for victims of antisocial behaviour where an order is subsequently made in *(a)* the community and *(b)* court. [47975]

Hazel Blears: The Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 introduced special measures for witnesses in proceedings for antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs). These measures were introduced to address concerns about the protection of vulnerable and intimidated witnesses. The measures include screening witnesses from the defendants, giving evidence through video link or in private, and the use of video recorded evidence. This makes it easier for witnesses to give evidence in the Crown and magistrates court during an ASBO hearing. Antisocial behaviour response courts have been established in magistrates courts sitting in their civil capacity to ensure that witness issues are addressed and the respect action plan announced plans to establish similar arrangements for county courts. There are also plans to introduce the same measures for ASBO victims in civil hearings as for victims in criminal cases. The Home Office has issued a good practice guide to practitioners on how best to support a witness.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the conditions attached to antisocial behaviour orders issued during 2004. [47976]

Hazel Blears: We are notified by the courts of the numbers of ASBOs issued and these data are published quarterly. However information is not collected centrally on the conditions attached to antisocial behaviour orders. The Home Office is conducting an evaluation of ASBOs, the findings of which will be available in spring 2006 and will provide information on the effectiveness of ASBOs in tackling antisocial behaviour within our neighbourhoods and communities.

Asylum Applicants

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum applicants have

been returned to the UK from other EU countries under the terms of the Dublin Regulations since their introduction. [47490]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 31 January 2006]*: A total of approximately 300 asylum seekers have been returned to the UK from other EU countries under the provisions of the Dublin II Regulations since its introduction on the 1 September 2003.

Analyses of these totals are based on internal management information and as such are not of sufficient quality to be published as national statistics.

Cannabis

Mr. Burrowes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his oral statement on the regulation of cannabis of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 982–4, what evidence he relied upon in his statement that cannabis use among 16 to 24-year-olds has fallen by four per cent. since 1998; and what sample *(a)* size and *(b)* range was used in making the calculation. [47238]

Paul Goggins: The figures used in the Home Secretary's statement come from the British Crime Survey (BCS) which, as stated, shows that use of cannabis in the past year was reported by 28 per cent. of 16 to 24-year-olds in 1998 and 24 per cent. of the same age group in 2004–05, a decrease of four percentage points.

The BCS is a large nationally representative survey of adults living in private households in England and Wales. It has included a comparable set of self completion questions on drug use since 1996. In 1998, 1,295 16 to 24-year-olds answered the drugs questions, while in 2004–05, 6,287 16 to 24-year-olds did so. More details of the survey methods and findings are available in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin No. 16/05 "Drug Misuse Declared: Findings from the 2004/05 British Crime Survey" which is available on the Home Office website and in the Library of the House.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs recommended that cannabis be reclassified to a Class C drug prior to 1999. [47805]

Paul Goggins: In the period prior to 1999, the Chair of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) did not put any firm recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Home Department that cannabis be reclassified to a class C drug. However, in December 1978 the ACMD produced a report on a review of the classification of controlled drugs and of penalties under schedule two and four of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. This covered a number of recommendations on classifications and penalties, including one that cannabis and cannabis resin should be transferred to class C.

However, in the then chair's covering letter to the Home Secretary he points out that there was a division of opinion within the council and no endorsement, or otherwise, of the recommendation was offered. In November 1981 the ACMD's Report of the Expert Group on the effects of Cannabis Use maintained that the recommendations of the 1978 Report, including that on cannabis classification, remained valid. But again, the chair's covering letter to the Secretary of State did not offer a clear recommendation on cannabis classification.

Cash-in-transit Crime

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1422W, on cash-in-transit crime what criteria are used when assessing the *(a)* harm and *(b)* the impact that the Serious Organised Crime Agency can make by preventing them. [47288]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office assesses the overall harm caused by different types of crime as described in the White Paper "One Step Ahead—A 21st Century Strategy to Defeat Organised Crime". In assessing the impact of its own activity, SOCA will apply a range of qualitative and quantitative criteria, drawing on the Home Office work on harm and its own developing understanding of the threat from different forms of organised crime. It will consider the capacity, capability and intent of criminals and their enterprises and seek to contribute to harm reduction through disrupting their activities, reducing profit incentives, and increasing the risks they take.

Cautions and Convictions (Notification)

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) which *(a)* professional bodies and *(b)* Government Departments police are required to notify of the (i) convictions and (ii) cautions of members of their relevant professions; [47126]

(2) how many *(a)* cautions and *(b)* convictions were reported by the police to his Department, in accordance with Annex A, Schedule 2 of Home Office Circular 45/86, in each year since 1997. [47476]

Hazel Blears: In accordance with paragraphs 11 and 12 of Home Office Circular 45/86 the police are requested to notify details of convictions and cautions as set out in Schedule 2 of the annex to the circular. A copy of Schedule 2 has been placed in the Library.

These arrangements are currently under review.

With regard to the number of convictions and cautions reported by the police HOC45/86 does not require this information to be reported to the Home Office.

Child Abuse

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers the police have to place a person found guilty of a sexual offence against a child committed prior to the commencement of the Sexual Offences Act 1956 on the register of sexual offenders; and if he will make a statement. [42236]

Hazel Blears: The notification requirements of Part two of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (which are known as the sex offenders register) automatically apply to all offenders who have received a conviction, caution or finding for a relevant sexual offence from 1 September 1997. The Act also includes a partially

retrospective operation so that for convictions for relevant offences received before 1 September 1997 an offender will become subject to the notification requirements if he was awaiting sentence or serving his sentence on that date. The 2003 Act also introduced sexual offences prevention orders (SOPOs) which are made by a court in respect of any offender who poses a risk of serious sexual harm and who has received a conviction or caution for a sexual or violent offence (listed in Schedule three or five to the Act). SOPOs are used to impose prohibitions on an offender but also make him subject to the notification requirements for the duration of the order. SOPOs can be made regardless of when the conviction or caution for the qualifying offence was received. It is the case that Schedule three does not include those offences which pre-date the Sexual Offences Act 1956 and this means that if an individual's most recent sexual offence was committed 50 years ago and he has not since committed a violent offence, then it would not be possible to make him subject to a SOPO and therefore subject to the notification requirements. However, if such an individual posed a risk of harm to children, then it would still be possible for a court to make a risk of sexual harm order (RSHO) and if an offender breaches the prohibitions in a RSHO, then he automatically becomes subject to the notification requirements for the duration of the order.

Child Rescue Alert Scheme

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Department plans to extend across England the Child Rescue Alert text messaging scheme operated by Sussex Police. [42582]

Hazel Blears: Child Rescue Alert has currently been adopted by four police forces (Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire and Leicester) and it is hoped that a basic system will be in place for nationwide cover by the end of March this year. The scheme works by interrupting television and radio programmes with immediate news flashes that a youngster has been snatched and is at risk of serious harm or death. There are no plans to use text messaging as part of the alert.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of mobile location data tracking systems in enabling parents to locate their children; and if he will make a statement. [42583]

Hazel Blears: The Police Service is already actively using mobile location-based technologies in the investigation of some missing persons cases. Mobile data tracking can identify the geographical area in which a phone is located. This is used by the police under a regulation of Investigatory Powers Act authority in specified cases that are legally appropriate. I am not aware of how many times, if at all, the private sector scheme has been used by parents.

Citizens' Arrests

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many citizens' arrests were made in each of the last five years. [47547]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Circuses (Alcohol-related Incidents)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many alcohol-related incidents connected to circuses have been recorded in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [49135]

Paul Goggins: This information is not available centrally from the recorded crime database. The British Crime Survey routinely provides information on whether the victims of violent incidents thought that one or more of the offenders were "under the influence of drink".

The BCS also routinely provides information on the location of crime-related incidents. Information on the location of violent incidents, by whether the offender was thought to be under the influence of alcohol has also been provided for 2004–05 BCS data.

The number or proportion of other crime related incidents where the offender was thought be under the influence of alcohol has not been estimated. The BCS does not collect information on incidents that have occurred in or are connected to circuses.

The available information since 1999 is included in the tables.

Proportion and numbers of violent incidents where offender was thought to be under the influence of alcohol, BCS

Percentage and number (Thousand)

Under the influence of alcohol	*1999*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Proportion of all BCS violence	40	47	44	50	48
Number of offences (Thousand)	1,315	1,251	1,190	1,302	1,112

Location of violent incidents

Percentage

	1999	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Around the home	24	27	25	26	23
Around work	17	8	8	9	7
Street	24	24	29	28	30
Pub or club	20	21	20	21	22
Transport	3	4	3	4	3
Other location	12	15	14	12	15

Location of violent incidents by whether the offender was thought to be under the influence of alcohol, all BCS violence, BCS 2004/05

Percentage

	Under the influence of alcohol		
	Yes	*No*	*Not known*
Around the home	45	50	4
Around work	46	52	2
Street	35	47	18
Pub or club	82	12	6
Other location	35	58	6

Civil Servants

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what proportion of each civil service grade in his Department is located in each *(a)* region and *(b)* nation of the UK; what the average salary is for each grade; and if he will make a statement. [35909]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The number of civil service staff that are located in each *(a)* region and *(b)* nation of the UK and the average salary for each grade is shown in the following table.

For the SCS, the progression target rates for their grades are as follows:

HO senior civil service (SCS) (non-Prison Service) as at 30 November 2005

	£
PB1 (G5)	76,156
PB1 (G3)	101,905
PB3 (G2)	132,586

Region	*Headcount*	*Percentage of SCS in region*
Croydon	41	16.14
East	1	0.39
Heathrow	3	1.18
Liverpool	1	0.39
Location blocked or new	3	1.18
London	197	77.56
Midlands	1	0.39
North East	1	0.39
North West	1	0.39
Scotland	1	0.39
South East	3	1.18
Wales	1	0.39
Total	254	

Note:
Locations blocked or new, are either in the process of being set up, or unrecorded for security reasons.

Correspondence

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to the letter of 4 October 2005 from the right. hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, on behalf of Nazmul Islam Chowdhury (Home Office reference C450910). [46729]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate replied to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood on 30 January 2006.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his Department will respond to correspondence from the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green dated 12 October 2005, regarding a constituent, Ms Dorothy Kyomuhendo (Home Office reference T1059542). [47054]

Mr. McNulty: I wrote to the hon. Member on 27 January.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, will receive a reply to her letter of 8 December 2005 on behalf of Edlira Meta (Home Office reference M1027953/2), acknowledgement reference M30428/5), sister of Blerina Berisha. [47380]

Mr. McNulty: I wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood on 3 February 2006.

Corruption

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money has been repatriated as a result of corruption investigations in the UK in each of the last two years; and to which countries. [46375]

Paul Goggins: No money has been repatriated. It would not be appropriate to comment on any current investigations in view of the risk of prejudicing the outcome.

Counter-terrorism Funding

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the written statement of 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 57WS, on counter terrorism funding, (1) what proportion of the Consolidated Grant for Counter-Terrorism would previously have been included in the General Grant; [47289]

(2) pursuant to the written statement of 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 57WS, on counter terrorism funding, how much of the £446 million police counter-terrorism expenditure will come from *(a)* the General Police Grant, *(b)* other expenditure falling within his Department's departmental expenditure limits and *(c)* annually managed expenditure; [47290]

(3) how much was spent on counter-terrorism by *(a)* the Metropolitan Police Service and *(b)* local and regional police forces between 1997 and (i) when funding was drawn together into a consolidated grant for counter terrorism, (ii) 5 December 2005 and (iii) 25 January 2006. [47336]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We are consolidating existing and new funding streams into a new fund. The overall provision will be: The whole provision is made from within the Department's Delegated Expenditure Limit (DEL). Information on the level of counter terrorism spending by the Metropolitan Police Service and local and regional policing is not held centrally.

£ million

	2006-07	*2007-08*	*Total*
Existing MPS Specific Grant	61	61	122
New MPS Specific Grant	30	45	75
Existing Regional Specific CT Grant	35	35	70
New Regional Specific CT Grant	33	65	98
Existing Specific CT Capital Grant	8	8	16
New Specific CT Capital Grant	30	35	65
Subtotal	197	249	446
Former General Grant (DSP)	213	213	426
Met Police Special Payment (Former General Grant)	50	50	100
Subtotal	263	263	526
Total	460	512	972

Crack Cocaine

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many closure notices were placed on crack houses by each police force in England and Wales in 2005. [47710]

Paul Goggins: The data is not available in the form requested.

Crime Statistics

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* arrests, *(b)* convictions and *(c)* cautions there were in the Avon and Somerset police authority area in each year since 1997. [45252]

Hazel Blears: The available information is given in the table.

Number of persons[1] arrested for recorded crime (notifiable offences) and offenders[1] cautioned and found guilty at all courts for all offences, Avon and Somerset, 1997–2004

	Arrests	Cautioned	Found guilty
1997	[2]—	3,773	41,799
1998	[2]—	4,534	41,031
1999	[2]—	5,197	36,919
2000	21,308	4,764	37,756
2001	27,269	4,351	36,139
2002	25,421	4,286	38,817
2003	24,773	4,615	43,835
2004	25,677	5,075	43,982

[1] Data on persons arrested, offenders cautioned and found guilty are provided on the principal offence basis.
[2] Arrests data prior to 2000 are not available.

Custody Plus

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his timetable is for the introduction of Custody Plus sentences. [47573]

Fiona Mactaggart: We intend to introduce Custody Plus in the autumn of 2006.

Dangerous Dogs Act

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been prosecuted under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 in each year since it was passed. [45654]

Hazel Blears: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of how many people have been prosecuted under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 for England and Wales, from 1992 to 2004, is shown in the following table. Court statistics for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006.

Defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts for offences under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 in England and Wales, 1992 to 2004[1]

Offence description	Statute	1992[2]	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Breeding or breeding from a fighting dog	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(2)(a)	31	4	1	1	5	1	6
Selling, exchanging, offering, advertising or exposing for sale a fighting dog	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(2)(b)	4	0	1	0	1	0	0
Giving or offering to give a fighting dog	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(2)(c)	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Allowing a fighting dog to be in a public place without a muzzle or a lead	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(2)(d)	187	2	24	20	12	12	7
Abandoning, or allowing to stray, a fighting dog	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(2)(e)	27	0	8	3	2	3	0
Possession, without exemption, of a Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa or other designated fighting dog	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(3)	209	1	57	35	18	15	23
Owner or person in charge allowing dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place, no injury being caused	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(1)	389	329	196	189	162	175	248
Dangerously out of control in a public place injuring any person	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(1)	310	560	286	259	221	259	434
Owner or person in charge allowing dog to enter a non-public place causing reasonable apprehension of injury to a person	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(3)	30	20	8	18	4	10	12
Owner or person in charge allowing dog to enter a non-public place and injure any person	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(3)	20	52	25	22	18	22	28
Failing to give up a dog for destruction or having custody of a dog while disqualified	Badgers (further protection) Act 1991 Sec. 1. Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 4(8). Protection of Badgers Act 1992 Sec.13	12	20	11	7	6	7	6
Total		1,222	988	617	554	449	504	764

Offence description	Statute	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Breeding or breeding from a fighting dog	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(2)(a)	1	2	1	6	4	15
Selling, exchanging, offering, advertising or exposing for sale a fighting dog	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(2)(b)	0	1	0	0	0	0
Giving or offering to give a fighting dog	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(2)(c)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Allowing a fighting dog to be in a public place without a muzzle or a lead	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(2)(d)	11	9	4	3	2	2
Abandoning, or allowing to stray, a fighting dog	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(2)(e)	2	0	0	1	0	0
Possession, without exemption, of a Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa or other designated fighting dog	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 1(3)	12	5	4	6	1	5
Owner or person in charge allowing dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place, no injury being caused	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(1)	254	266	278	284	329	290
Dangerously out of control in a public place injuring any person	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(1)	449	458	490	537	560	597
Owner or person in charge allowing dog to enter a non-public place causing reasonable apprehension of injury to a person	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(3)	9	24	20	18	20	11
Owner or person in charge allowing dog to enter a non-public place and injure any person	Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 3(3)	34	48	50	38	52	48
Failing to give up a dog for destruction or having custody of a dog while disqualified	Badgers (further protection) Act 1991 Sec. 1. Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Sec 4(8). Protection of Badgers Act 1992 Sec.13	30	23	39	29	20	22
Total		802	836	886	922	988	990

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Offence codes for Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 were introduced to the court proceeding database from 1 January 1992.

Death Statistics

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were killed by police personnel in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [48069]

Hazel Blears: Police forces are required to report deaths which occur in police custody or during police contact to the Independent Police Complains Commission (IPCC). The IPCC is responsible for publication of statistics relating to deaths in those circumstances. Any inquiries should be made to the Chair of the Commission.

Departmental Publications

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what was the cost of the publication Compact on the Department's relationship with the voluntary sector; and if he will make a statement. [47212]

Paul Goggins: The Compact on Relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector sets out the rules for engagement between government bodies and the sector. The costs of publishing the Compact in October 1998 with subsequent reprints were £28,200. We have published Codes of Good Practice that underpin the Compact. The costs for these and subsequent reprints were £95,300. Summaries of the Compact and Codes have also been published and the costs for these and reprints were £18,700.

Departmental Targets

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the time scales are for each aspect of performance against 2004 public service agreement target No. 4. [29935]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Details of the target levels and time scales are set out in the public service agreements (PSA) technical notes. For the element on offenders entering treatment, these details were added in a revision published in July 2005 and can be found at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/psa-technical-note-SR04-jul-05. Performance against PSA No. 4 was published in the Home Office autumn performance report in December. This is a Command Paper and available on the Home Office website.

DNA

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what guidance he has issued to chief constables on the retention of the DNA records of *(a)* children and *(b)* adults who have not been convicted of any offence. [47518]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* Home Office Circular 25/2001 issued to chief constables in June 2001 states that when an individual is cleared of an offence, samples taken during an investigation may be retained, but that they may only be used for the purposes of prevention and detection of crime, the investigation of an offence or the conduct of a prosecution. Since April 2005, they may also be used for the purposes of identifying a deceased person. There is no distinction between the retention of DNA profiles of an adult or a juvenile.

Guidance has also been issued in The Codes of Practice (Code D) made under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 which give advice on the taking, use and retention of samples. The Codes of Practice (Code C) also give advice on interviewing juveniles.

The decision whether or not to retain a DNA sample is an operational one for the chief constable of the force which took the sample, and the Association of Chief Police Officers has for some time been developing guidelines to assist them in the exercise of their discretion. It is expected that a decision not to retain a DNA sample will be made in exceptional circumstances only. These guidelines will be issued shortly.

Dog Fighting Act

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were prosecuted under the Dog Fighting Act 1835 in each year since 1997; and what sentences they received. [45219]

Fiona Mactaggart: The question relates to the Cruelty to Animals Act 1835 which has been repealed. There is no record on the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice of any prosecutions under this Act.

Drugs

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the results of the Drug Intervention Programme. [44094]

Paul Goggins: Since its introduction in April 2003, over 33,000 drug misusing offenders have entered treatment through the Drug Interventions Programme (DIP). Waiting times for treatment in the 'intensive' DIP areas have fallen to their lowest levels ever. Acquisitive crime—to which drug related crime makes a substantial contribution—fell by 12 per cent. in the year to April 2005.

Its success has been achieved through a combination of additional resources, new legislation, revised working practices and a stronger focus on partnership working.

We are on track to achieve the overall target of 1,000 offenders a week into treatment by 2008 and we exceeded the interim (March 2005) target by 54 per cent. Over 2,000 offenders entered treatment in November 2005.

The programme continues to be developed and strengthened. For example, from 1 December 2005 new provisions contained in the Drugs Act 2005 have been implemented in three police force areas: Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire and Nottingham. These give police powers to test for specified Class A drugs on arrest and to require persons who have tested positive for a specified Class A drug to attend an assessment of their drug use (an initial assessment). These powers are improving access to offenders including those who have previously not been in treatment. They will be extended to other intensive areas by 31 March 2006 on which date restriction on bail provisions will also be available across the whole of England.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been remanded in police custody for a further 192 hours under the Drugs Act 2005 for drug trafficking offences. [47711]

Paul Goggins: The power for a magistrate to remand into police custody a person charged with a drug trafficking offence for a period of up to 192 hours was contained in the Drugs Act 2005. This provision commenced on 1 January 2006, and no figures are available for its use to date.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of problem drug misusers he estimates are addicted to heroin. [44642]

Paul Goggins: Current estimates of the number of problematic drug users do not provide a breakdown by type of drug used.

However, the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse (NTA) has published provisional figures showing that in 2003–04 about two thirds (67.3 per cent.) of drug treatment clients in England used heroin as their main drug. This may not provide an entirely accurate reflection of the percentage of problematic drug users who are addicted to heroin as the numbers will be influenced by the types of services that are available (reflecting historical patterns of drug use), the availability of effective treatments, and the type of clients who present to drug treatment services.

Electronic Monitoring

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* age group and *(b)* sex was of each asylum claimant carrying an electronic tag on 31 December 2005. [47481]

Mr. McNulty: Section 36 of the Immigration and Asylum (treatment of claimants etc.) Act 2004 allows for the electronic monitoring of those of at least 18 years of age. On 31 December 2005 there were a total of 71 asylum claimants wearing an electronic tag. Their ages ranged from 20–53 years. 65 were male and 6 were female.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his estimate is of the number of asylum claimants who will be carrying an electronic tag on *(a)* 30 June 2006 and *(b)* 31 December 2006. [47483]

Mr. McNulty: For the financial year 2005–06, a maximum of 200 new inductions have been funded, increasing to 800 new inductions for 2006–07. These projections are based on funding allocations.

Emigration

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have emigrated from the UK in each year since 1990. [47742]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 6 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding the number of people emigrating from the United Kingdom in each year since 1990.I am replying in her absence. (47742)

Estimates of emigration from the UK are shown in the attached table. The figures are based on the most comprehensive estimate of migration produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), Total International Migration (TIM), which is based on a number of sources. TIM estimates using the current methodology are only available from 1991 onwards. The latest estimates, for 2004, were published in the First Release on 20 October 2005, and can be found on the National Statistics website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Product.asp?vlnk = 507.

Total international migration[1]: Emigration time series 1991 to 2004

Thousands

	Outflow (emigration out of the United Kingdom) All citizenships
1991	285.0
1992	281.1
1993	266.3
1994	237.6
1995	236.5
1996	263.7
1997	279.2
1998	251.5
1999	290.8
2000	320.7
2001	307.7
2002	359.4
2003	361.5
2004	359.5

[1] Data for 1991 to 2004 are based mainly on data from the International Passenger Survey. Includes adjustments for (1) those whose intended length of stay changes so that their migrant status changes; (2) asylum seekers and their dependants not identified by the IPS; and (3) flows between the UK and the Republic of Ireland.

Note:

A small weighting adjustment has been applied to IPS data for 1991 to 1998. This reflects the estimated effect of applying the weighting improvements made to IPS data from 1999 onwards.

Enrolment Centres

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the commitment given by the noble Lord Bassam of Brighton in the House of Lords on 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 979, that the Government envisage that a person will have to travel no more than one hour to get to an enrolment centre, how the Government plans *(a)* to implement and *(b)* to monitor this commitment; and if he will make a statement. [47858]

Andy Burnham: While no final decisions have been taken with regard to the eventual locations of enrolment centres for the Identity Card Scheme, current analysis envisages that no person will have to travel more than an hour to get to an enrolment centre. Provision for mobile enrolment facilities is planned for those who would have to travel more than an hour from the location of a fixed enrolment centre.

With regard to the implementation of the enrolment centre network, this analysis has been built on existing and new research, operational experience and consultations with representatives of sparsely populated communities. In particular, the analysis will draw on extensive work carried out for the implementation of the expansion of the UK Passport Service's office network. Modelling is continuing using census, travel time and socio-economic data.

Planning for the provision of enrolment facilities for sparsely populated communities has been informed by the experience of other organisations such as the Driving Standards Agency, the Department of Work and Pensions, the Scottish Executive Environmental and Rural Affairs Department as well as services provided by the banking industry. Consultations are continuing with DEFRA through their Rural Services Divisions in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Additionally, the results from consultations conducted for the UK Passport Service have also been integrated into this work. These included discussions with local authorities in Cornwall, Devon, North Yorkshire, Cumbria and Northumberland as well as the National Assembly for Wales, the Northern Ireland Equality Commission, Scottish Borders Enterprise, Dumfries & Galloway Enterprise and Highlands & Island Enterprise. It is anticipated that once more detailed plans for enrolment in remote communities are ready, further consultation with relevant local bodies will take place.

With regard to continual monitoring of travel times, final plans on how this will be monitored on an ongoing basis are yet to be decided. However, it is anticipated that this will be monitored through customer feedback, consultations with local communities and further modelling in response to population changes.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the commitment given by the noble Lord Bassam of Brighton in the House of Lords on 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 979, that the Government envisage that a person will have to travel no more than one hour to get to an enrolment centre, what the boundaries are of the area which the Passport Service's proposed Oban office will service for this purpose. [47859]

Andy Burnham: The network of offices that the UK Passport Service is currently in the process of establishing are for interviews of adult first time passport applicants. It is not possible at this stage to announce the locations of these offices because procurement negotiations are still in progress and the availability of premises is not confirmed.

The undertaking given by the noble Lord, Lord Bassam, related to identity card enrolment centres. The UK Passport Service will be working to similar standards and will make alternative arrangements for areas more than one hour's travel from the nearest office. The possibilities being considered are mobile offices, or premises staffed on an occasional basis by peripatetic staff, or interviews over a secure webcam link, facilitated by a local administrator.

EU Home Affairs Agenda

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to advance the home affairs agenda in the EU. [45443]

Andy Burnham: During the UK's presidency of the EU we made substantial progress on delivery of practically focussed measures which will make a real difference to the lives of citizens in the UK and the rest of the EU. We agreed the directive on retention of telecommunications data, measures to increase the EU's effectiveness against organised crime, an external relations strategy in the justice and home affairs (JHA) field and initialled agreements with Russia on readmission and visa facilitation as well as adopting council conclusions on pilot regional protection programmes. We also delivered against existing commitments in the Hague programme and the counter-terrorism and drugs action plans.

We will be seeking to build upon the successes we achieved and take forward UK priorities in the JHA field, through continued close contact with succeeding presidencies; bilateral work with other member states; engagement through the G5 and G8 groups of countries; and by maintaining the close working relationship we have built with the Commission and the European Parliament.

During 2006, we will push for continued momentum on the action plan on trafficking in human beings, agreed during our presidency; we will continue to encourage close working with African partners on migration; will support the Austrian presidency in building on the progress we made in our presidency to get final agreement on the European evidence warrant; and we want to see progress made on the transfer of information from criminal records, in particular to improve cross-EU protection from sex offenders for children.

Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2013–14W, on audible fire alarms, what plans he has to extend audible fire alarms coverage to all his Department's buildings where there is no operational reason for not having one. [47045]

Mr. Charles Clarke: All buildings occupied by the Home Office are subject to a fire risk assessment in line with the requirements of current legislation and the draft Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order. Part of this risk assessment is to ensure that the occupants are provided with sufficient means of early warning in the event of fire. Any requirement to extend audible fire alarm coverage will therefore be addressed on a building by building basis.

FRANK Campaign

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many hits on the FRANK website were recorded in 2005. [47704]

Paul Goggins: From January 2005 to the end of December there were a total of 5,241,355 visits to www.talktofrank.com.

Global Peace and Unity Conference

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria the Metropolitan Police used in deciding to sponsor the Global Peace and Unity Conference at London's Excel Centre on 4 December; and if he will make a statement. [41614]

Hazel Blears: The Commissioner for the police of the Metropolis informs me the criteria used in deciding to sponsor an event, organisation or activity is based on a business case approach to determine that the outcomes can provide clear benefits to the MPS and the communities it serves.

Following the bombings and attempted bombings in London in July the MPS has been conducting consultation with faith groups to learn about their concerns, particularly about the impact that the July events had on their communities. This conference was an opportunity to engage the Muslim community and in particular young people. 17 Police Officers and Police Staff attended and spoke to 2,000 people. They were also able to promote the MPS and provide recruitment advice to individuals interested in joining the MPS, to engage the Muslim community and provide reassurance, and to encourage individuals to sign up to the Police Message Broadcasting System and to receive the MRS community bulletin.

Identity Cards

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the public sector databases that the new Identity Card Agency will have access to as part of the implementation and administration of the identity card scheme. [43545]

Andy Burnham: The use of information on public sector databases for the implementation and administration of the Identity Cards Scheme will be primarily for the electronic verification of identity information provided by an applicant. This is known as the biographical footprint check.

This check relates to identity verification only and does not provide the Scheme with access to those databases. Instead, the Scheme will seek to verify identity information by either receiving confirmation of the information provided by the holder of the database or by that holder releasing the relevant information from those databases to the Scheme. Under Clause 11 of the Identity Cards Bill, such arrangements must be first laid out in secondary legislation and approved by Parliament by the affirmative procedure before they can occur.

At present, the final decision about which databases will be used in the biographical footprint check has not been made and is subject to ongoing planning and assessment. In particular, the check will build on the work conducted by the UK Passport Service to verify electronically some information provided on passport applications.

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to ensure the reliability of information held on a national database in connection with an identity card scheme. [47016]

Andy Burnham: There will be a number of steps taken to ensure the reliability of information to be held on the National Identity Register. During the enrolment stage, these steps will include:

1. The electronic verification of some information provided by the applicant against information held on other databases. Clause 30 of the Identity Cards Bill provides that a person is guilty of a criminal offence if they provide information which they know or believe to be false in order to place it on the register or are reckless as to whether this information is false;

2. Relevant supporting documentation may also be examined in advance or at the enrolment centre to ensure that it is valid and corresponds with information provided on the application form and the results from biographical footprint check;

3. Attendance in person to allow information to be clarified and checked with the applicant in person;

4. The design of enrolment procedures will be informed by the experience of the UK Passport Service's introduction of personal visits for all first time passport applicants;

5. Security policies and appropriate working procedures are being designed to prevent and detect fraud originating from either applicants or staff members;

6. The recording and matching of biometric information which will make a much stronger link between the information recorded on the register and the individual associated with it. This will make it much easier to detect people trying to enrol more than once to establish false, multiple identities.

There will be continuing actions to ensure that the information on the register remains reliable. Biometric verification or secure remote authentication technology will be used to link an individual to the correct record if he should wish to update it. The information provided may also be verified through electronic record checks. There will also be an online facility where, subject to secure remote authentication, an individual will be able to review their record and thus, ensure that it is accurate. In addition, a person will be entitled to request a full subject data access request under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. To encourage individuals to keep their information up to date, the Identity Cards Bill provides for a civil penalty regime. Its operation will be subject to a Code of Practice under Clause 36 of the Identity Cards Bill and this code will ensure that sufficient prior notification of this requirement will be made.

Identity Databases

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions in the last 12 months the UK national fingerprint database was inaccessible to police forces. [42803]

Hazel Blears: The central UK national fingerprint database (NAFIS/IDENT1) has been unavailable to the police service on 96 unplanned occasions in the last 12 months. On only 36 occasions the central system was unavailable for more than two hours and for the remainder the system was unavailable for periods as short as 15 minutes. During these periods the police service were able to continue to carry out some of the identification business processes but this can also prevent users from carrying out all or part of the processes. There are currently no national figures available that reflect periods of local disruption directly connected to IDENT1 development and maintenance work. Presently Police Information Technology Organisation together with the supplier are migrating the fingerprint identification service from the National Automated Fingerprint System (NAFIS) to the new IDENT1 identification platform which will have additional capability. There has been disruption and problems to the IDENT1 service during the migration process in the last few months. These problems are being addressed by the Police Information and Technology Organisation (PITO) and should result in a robust and reliable service to the police forces being resumed as soon as possible. In order to ensure the Home Office investment in the IDENT1 service is developed and maintained to provide maximum benefit to the police fingerprint community I have asked my Home Office colleagues to review and report progress to me at regular intervals.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which international biometric databases are being used as exemplars for the development of the UK National Identity Card Register. [42804]

Andy Burnham: Since the final details of the design and implementation of the National Identity Register cannot be completed in advance of procurement stages for the Scheme, it is not possible to provide a direct comparison with another biometric database at present and as such there are no 'exemplars' for the Register. However, as well as looking at the outcomes of biometric research and testing and the advice of biometric experts, the development the National Identity Register will be informed by experience gained from the operation of other biometric databases including: IAFS—IND's biometric database, IDENT1—UK fingerprints database, Philippines Social Security Card System, Hong Kong Identity Card System, US Visit biometric border control system, US Department of Homeland Security border crossing database, US Department of State Mexican visa database, United Arab Emirates Iris Expellee Tracking and Border Control database.

Interception of Communications

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many requests have been received by his Department for the electronic interception of *(a)* telephones, *(b)* emails and *(c)* other electronic communications between July and December 2005; and how many requests his Department has received for details of the communications traffic data of hon. Members in this period. [47558]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The available information is published annually in the report of the Interception of Communications Commissioner. Figures for 2005 will be included in the Commissioner's next report.

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46760]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Staff are made aware of Hanukkah, Yom Kippur and other important Jewish festivals by means of the Department's Calendar of Religious and Cultural Festivals. Home Office staff have also attended talks, by a representative from the Chief Rabbi's office, to understand how Jewish people apply the principles of their faith to the modern world.

The Home Office aims to promote a workplace that values staff from different religions including providing prayer/private reflection rooms and guidance for managers about staff leave arrangements around religious festival periods.

Khat

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what evidence led to the decision by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs not to classify Khat. [47806]

Paul Goggins: The evidence which the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) considered in reaching a recommendation on Khat is described in its report which was published on 19 January. This includes research and studies on Khat drawn from both UK and international sources, and oral evidence provided by experts on the issues.

London Underground

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the security implications of internet websites which show disused stations and shafts on the London Underground. [34791]

Ms Buck: I have been asked to reply.

While some details are already available, both on websites and in written media, London Underground seeks to control access to security-sensitive information. When assessing the security of the network, and appropriate protective security measures, both operational areas and sites which are no longer in use are considered.

Motoring Offences

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish the data set for findings of guilt in England and Wales for each type of motoring offence in 2004, broken down by *(a)* age and *(b)* sex. [46472]

Paul Goggins: The annual Home Office Statistical publication 'Offences relating to motor vehicles, England and Wales, Supplementary tables', table 17, lists data on findings of guilt at all courts by offence group, sex and age of offender.

2004 data will be published end of March 2006.

National Bureaucracy Adviser

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the National Bureaucracy Adviser is provided with a car and driver; and if he will make a statement. [47410]

Hazel Blears: The National Bureaucracy Adviser is not provided with a car and a driver.

National Database

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether DNA profiles held on the National DNA database will be tagged with the individual's National Identity Register number; and if he will make a statement. [47565]

Andy Burnham: The Government have no plans to link DNA profiles held on the National DNA Database with the proposed National Identity Register number.

National Identity Register

David Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department under what circumstances the particulars of an occasion on which information from the National Identity Register is provided to another person would not be recorded on the register as information falling under paragraph 9 of schedule 1 of the Identity Cards Bill *(a)* in cases where the information is provided under powers granted in clause 14 of the Bill and *(b)* otherwise. [23002]

Andy Burnham: It has not yet been decided on which occasions—either under the powers of Clause 14 or otherwise—information from the National Identity Register is provided to another person will be recorded on the register under paragraph nine of schedule one. The Identity Cards Bill does not require such information to be recorded on every occasion.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what risk assessments his Department has undertaken of the security of the National Identity Register; whether the Communications Electronics Security Group has been involved in the assessments; and what reports have emerged. [46496]

Andy Burnham: A range of security risk assessments have been undertaken on issues such as the physical, logical, procedural, personnel and systems aspects of the Identity Card Scheme. Reports have been produced and this work will be updated as the scheme develops further.

The Communication Electronics Security Group (CESG) has been involved in the development of these assessments including elements such as card design, card manufacture and business risk modelling.

National Offender Management Service

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the indicative budget is for each of the regional offender managers to procure prison places for 2006–07. [44879]

Fiona Mactaggart: It is not currently intended to give regional offender managers budget delegation to procure prison places in 2006–07.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether service level agreements for prison places with regional offender managers will include the provision of increased funding for prison governors for prison populations above the certified normal accommodation at each establishment. [44946]

Fiona Mactaggart: The service level agreements between Regional Offender Managers and Prison Service Area Managers cover the provision of prison places up to operational capacity of the prison. Should the prison population change significantly there is provision for the renegotiation of the SLAs.

Offenders (Immigration Status)

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what records are kept of the immigration status of those convicted of crimes in the UK; and whether these records are available to the public. [47161]

Hazel Blears: It is not possible to identify the immigration status of offenders on the Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform as the individual circumstances of offenders is not collected.

Offenders' Children

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of prisoners serving custodial sentences in prisons and young offenders' institutions in England and Wales have dependent children. [41595]

Fiona Mactaggart: There is no routinely collected data on the number of prisoners in custody who have children, but Home Office Research Study 208 found that 66 per cent. of female prisoners had dependent children under the age of 18. Of those with children, 34 per cent. had pre-school children aged under five and a further 40 per cent. had children aged from five to 10.

Parenting Orders

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many parenting orders have been issued since 1999 where *(a)* a child safety order has been made, *(b)* an antisocial behaviour order has been made, *(c)* a sex offender order has been made in respect of a child or young person and *(d)* a child or young person has been convicted of an offence. [42147]

Fiona Mactaggart: Parenting orders were piloted between 30 September 1998 and 31 March 2000 during which period 284 parenting orders were made. Information was collected on 279 of these parenting orders of which 174 were made during criminal proceedings for offences committed by the child or young person; 103 in relation to the non attendance of children at school and two in relation to child safety orders. There were 686 parenting orders made with other civil orders between April 2000 and 31 March 2004 but the information collected by the Youth Justice Board over that period did not show whether these other civil orders were child safety orders, antisocial behaviour orders or sex-offender orders. The Youth Justice Board recorded 64 parenting orders made with antisocial behaviour orders between April 2004 and 30 September 2005 but none with child safety or sex offender orders. Between April 2000 and 30 September 2005, the Youth Justice Board recorded 4,429 parenting orders where the child or young person had been convicted of an offence and a further 249 made in connection with a referral order.

Passport Service

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Passport Service's proposed Oban office will first open for interviews; and for how many hours each week it will open for interviews. [47793]

Andy Burnham: It is not yet possible to announce locations for the offices being established to carry out interviews of adult first time passport applicants because procurement negotiations are still in progress and the availability of premises has not been confirmed. The intention is for all offices to open in the last quarter of this year. The number of hours each will open will vary and will be determined by the number of interview appointments to be accommodated. All offices will be open on Saturdays.

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many passport photographs of under-5 year olds were rejected in December 2005. [46854]

Andy Burnham: For the five week period commencing 28 November 2005, 2,918 photographs for children aged five and under were rejected. This equates to around 7 per cent. of all applications from children aged under six.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to allow passport application and renewal forms to be issued through small post offices. [46952]

Andy Burnham: There is currently a network of 2,513 post office branches that offer the passport application Check and Send service and therefore hold passport application packs. Of these branches 1,082 are post office sub branches.

Police

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his proposals to restructure the police force in North Yorkshire. [34646]

Hazel Blears: Further to my written ministerial statement of 11 November, I would like to state that based upon feedback given on 9 November to forces and authorities, they are further developing their options for change. For the Yorkshire and Humber region, two options of those submitted were assessed as meeting the criteria and these are, (1) a single regional strategic force option and (2) two strategic forces, North Yorkshire merging with West Yorkshire and South Yorkshire merging with Humberside. I made it clear that police authorities including North Yorkshire, are free to submit options other than ones we have commented on if they wish to, making a compelling case for these by 23 December. No decisions will be made until after the consultation process has run its course.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the Written Statement of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 68–79WS, on police authorities in England and Wales (grant allocations), what his Department's definition of a neighbourhood is. [36349]

Hazel Blears: The Government are committed to ensuring that every neighbourhood will have a dedicated neighbourhood policing team by 2008. The size of the neighbourhood which is served by this team will vary from area to area: a "neighbourhood" to an inner-city resident will be very different from what it means to someone living in a predominantly rural area. Typically though, it is likely that a neighbourhood will cover one or two council wards. What is really important is that residents will know the names of their local officers see them on the street and have their phone numbers and email addresses.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Lancashire police force has a policy of attending every reported crime. [45152]

Hazel Blears: The chief constable is responsible for the day to day operational management of the force. You may therefore wish to redirect your query to him.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2032–2033W, on police, what the job description is of the National Bureaucracy Adviser; what annual budget has been allocated for her work; and if he will make a statement. [47292]

Hazel Blears: The job description of the National Bureaucracy Adviser includes:

visiting forces and, in particular, operational officers and police staff, to raise awareness of the reducing bureaucracy agenda;

obtaining solutions which would reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and challenging, where necessary, existing practices and assumptions;

identifying and disseminating 'quick wins' to forces which specifically impact on operational policing;

identifying transferable good practice within forces and disseminating it quickly to others;

acting as a national advisor to all forces on effectively tackling bureaucratic burdens on operational police officers;

creating a network of lead officers within forces on the reducing bureaucracy agenda and, through this, encouraging the exchange of ideas and good practice which impact on operational policing; and

engaging in follow-up visits to forces to check progress and provide more assistance where appropriate.

The budget allocated for her work allows for her salary and travel expenses.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress the Police Service has made in achieving diversity targets on recruiting and retaining *(a)* female officers and *(b)* officers from ethnic minority backgrounds in the last three years for which figures are available. [44836]

Hazel Blears: The Police Service continues to make steady progress towards the 2009 Race Equality Employment Targets. In 2003, BME representation was 2.9 per cent. In 2004 it was 3.3 per cent. and in 2005 it was 3.5 per cent. Although the number of minority ethnic police officers narrowly missed the 2004 milestone of 4 per cent., further measures are being put in place to ensure that numbers continue to rise steadily and that the Police Service meets the 2009 target of 7 per cent. The retention rate for minority ethnic officers compared with white officers is very similar over comparable length of service periods after the first two years point. In the first six months of service however, minority ethnic officers are leaving at a greater rate than white officers (12.6 per cent. of BME officers compared to 7.6 per cent. of white officers) although the wastage rate is lower than in previous years. The wastage rate for officers with six months to two years' service has increased for both groups. No targets have been set for the recruitment and retention of women.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when West Yorkshire constabulary will get its own anti-terrorist unit. [43413]

Hazel Blears: West Yorkshire police is in the process of establishing its own Counter Terrorism Support Unit (CTSU). The CTSU will be a dedicated team of specialist detectives and staff, who will investigate terrorists and terrorist offences. A number of West Yorkshire officers/staff have begun a training programme in conjunction with the Metropolitan Police Anti-Terrorist Branch to ensure complete interoperability of systems and processes to support joint investigations in West Yorkshire and other forces.

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total police funding allocated to each London borough is for the next three years, broken down by *(a)* staff and *(b)* non-staff funding; and if he will make a statement. [43593]

Hazel Blears: The Government allocates funding to police authorities as a whole. The distribution of resources for policing in each London borough is a matter for the Metropolitan Police Authority and the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis.

The Metropolitan Police Authority has yet to set its budget for 2006–07 and beyond.

Nick Herbert: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of *(a)* the cost of each of the police force amalgamations and *(b)* the total cost of the police amalgamations proposed in his statement of 11 November 2005. [47318]

Hazel Blears: We are currently working to determine the viability of the options. This includes detailed analysis of the financial implications both for set-up costs and future benefits.

A Working Group led by my Department with participation from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Welsh Assembly Government, Her Majesty's Treasury and police representative bodies has been established to examine the financial aspects of reorganisation, including the impact of restructuring on budgets, grant and council tax.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will rank each basic command unit in each English police force by sanctioned detection rate for the most recent reporting period; and if he will make a statement. [45592]

Hazel Blears: Sanction detections rates by basic command units (BCUs) for the financial year 2004–05; tables are available in the Library. These rates are shown in alphabetical order by police force. The home office does not rank BCUs by sanction detection rate performance.

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received representations from the European Commission in respect of the restructuring of police forces in England and Wales. [40968]

Hazel Blears: No. The Home Office has not received any representations from the European Commission regarding police force restructuring in England and Wales.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will allow further time for consultation on the future of policing in Bedfordshire and the East of England. [41482]

Hazel Blears: Forces and authorities have had the opportunity to consult with relevant stakeholders since the process began in September 2005. In recognition of the challenging timescale for developing options for change, force and authorities have been given the opportunity to further refine their business cases during January 2006.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likely effects of the police force restructuring proposals on the recorded levels of crime in the year after they are introduced for each constabulary in England and Wales. [35294]

Hazel Blears: The Government's Spending Review 2004 Public Service Agreements set a target to reduce crime by 15 per cent., and further in high crime areas, by 2007–08. We remain committed to delivering those reductions in crime and any objectives beyond this period will arise out of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007. Force restructuring is intended to improve the capacity and capability of forces in England and Wales to provide an effective service, to ensure that every force is well equipped to deliver effective protective services, as well as effective policing at the neighbourhood level.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many helicopters owned, used or hired by the police were in use over East Yorkshire on *(a)* 21 and *(b)* 22 January; and what the reason was in each case. [46741]

Hazel Blears: The Humberside Police Air Support Unit made a number of flights over East Yorkshire on 21 and 22 January. The times and reasons for the flights are shown in the following table.

Additionally, West Yorkshire Police Air Support Unit made one flight over the East Yorkshire area, also shown in the table.

Humberside Police Air Support Unit

21 January		*Area covered*	*Reason for flight*
00.13	01.00	Cottingham	Searching for suspects from domestic burglary
		North Hull	Proactive crime patrol
		Hull City Centre	Proactive crime patrol
		West Hull	Proactive crime patrol
		Cottingham	Proactive crime patrol
14.20	15.05	North Hull	Searching for suspects for vehicle crime
		Hull City Centre	Stolen motor vehicle pursuit
		North Hull	Searching for suspects for vehicle crime
		East Hull	Disqualified driving incident
20.50	21.25	East Hull	Racially based public order and vehicle crime incident
22.10	22.20	West Hull	Firearms offences
22.40	23.00	West Hull	Searching for suspects from domestic burglary and searching for fire
		East Hull	Searching for suspects from domestic burglary
22 January			
01.30	01.40	East Hull	Stolen motor vehicle pursuit
04.00	04.45	Burstwick	Searching for suspects from domestic burglary
		East Hull	Searching for suspects from domestic burglary
		North Hull	Searching for suspects from domestic burglary
13.20	14.00	Hull City Centre	Searching for suspects for a theft
		West Hull	Youths causing annoyance on stolen mopeds
		North Hull	Photographing scene of a fatal accident
18.40	18.45	East Hull	Disqualified driving incident

West Yorkshire Police Air Support Unit

21 January			
21.25	21.35	Askham Bryan	Searching for suspects from domestic burglary

Nick Herbert: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will list the private finance projects in place in each police force in England and Wales; and what is *(a)* the cost and *(b)* the duration of each. [47317]

Hazel Blears: The following list shows all grant supported police private finance initiative (PFI) projects which are operational or under construction. Information is not held on any PFI projects developed without grant support.

Police force	*PFI project*	*PFI credits (£ million)*	*Length of service contract (years)*
Cheshire	Centralised custody suites	41	29
Cheshire	Force HQ	45	30
Cleveland	Rationalised custody	38.3	26.5
Cleveland/Durham	Firearms facility	11	25
Cumbria	Workington Police Station	7.5	25
Derbyshire	Ilkeston Police Station	3.8	30
Derbyshire	Divisional HQ and City Police Station	23.9	30
Dorset	Divisional HQ and three new police stations	24.3	30
Dyfed Powys	Ammanford Police Station	5.3	30

Police force	PFI project	PFI credits (£ million)	Length of service contract (years)
Gloucestershire	Force HQ	26.2	30
GMP	Property Review—Divisional/Sub Divisional HQ and police stations	63	25
Gwent	Ystrad Mynach Police Station	8.7	30
Kent	Divisional HQ—Medway	23.6	30
North Wales	Divisional HQ and Major Incident Unit	19.6	25
Norfolk	HQ, Operations and Communications Centre	36.3	35
Northumbria	Mounted facilities	1.9	15
Nottinghamshire	Traffic wing and vehicles services	21.4	25
Sussex	Centralised custody suites	39.3	30
TVP	Abingdon Area Divisional HQ	10.4	30
Wiltshire	Divisional HQ and satellite facilities	24	30
Wiltshire	Air support	3.1	10

Note
PFI credits are the assumed capital component of the project, on which annual revenue support grant is paid.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many police authorities did not respond to the consultation on restructuring before 23 December 2005 deadline; [44280]

(2) how many police authorities submitted *(a)* business plans and *(b)* implementation plans for restructuring forces on or before 23 December 2005 deadline. [44281]

Hazel Blears: 42 of 43 police forces and authorities responded to the consultation deadline of 23 December 2005 with the exception of the Metropolitan Police for whom a later deadline was agreed to take account of the separate reviews of British Transport Police by Department of Transport and of fraud by the Attorney General. The responses received did not necessarily constitute full business cases. Rather, they set out the force and authority's response to the recommendations in HMIC's report, "Closing the Gap".

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the Government will fund the initial start-up costs of merging Bedfordshire Police with other forces. [46786]

Hazel Blears: We are currently working to determine the viability of the options for reorganisation. This includes detailed analysis of the financial implications for set up costs and for future costs and benefits.

We are also working with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Welsh Assembly Government, HM Treasury and police representative bodies in examining the financial aspects of reorganisation, including the impact of restructuring on budgets, grant and council tax. I announced details of the provisional police funding settlement for 2006–07 and 2007–08 on 5 December and capital grant allocations on 13 January. I have set aside £50 million capital grant for 2006–07 and £75 million for 2007–08 to address prospective force amalgamations.

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likely effect on the number of officers Bedfordshire police will have if the reorganisation costs of a merger are not borne by central Government and police precepts are capped at 5 per cent. [46787]

Hazel Blears: No decisions have been made about the future structure of policing in Bedfordshire.

We are currently working to determine the viability of the options. This includes detailed analysis of the financial implications both for set up costs and future benefits. Budget management for any reorganised police area will be a matter for the new police authority and the chief officer, who will be responsible for prioritising local needs.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the costs of new *(a)* names and *(b)* insignia for police forces following amalgamation; and if he will make a statement. [47211]

Hazel Blears: No decisions have been made about the future structure of police forces in England and Wales.

We are currently working to determine the viability of the options. This includes detailed analysis of the financial implications both for set up costs and future benefits. It would be premature to comment further until this analysis has been completed.

Nick Herbert: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the basis is of the estimate of potential savings in paragraph 6.30 of the report of Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, Closing the Gap; and if he will publish the relevant calculations. [47310]

Hazel Blears: The relevant calculations can be found in Appendix I (Summary of potential costs and savings associated with Merging Police Forces; pg 108) of the Closing the Gap Report.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what funding his Department has paid to the Metropolitan police for the operations of *(a)* S012 and *(b)* S013 in each year since 1997; [44707]

(2) what the budget for Special Branch was in each police force in each year since 1997; [44710]

(3) what funding was provided by his Department for the Special Branch National Training Unit in each year since 1997; and what his Department's projected funding is for *(a)* 2006–07 and *(b)* 2007–08; [44712]

(4) what funding the Metropolitan Police Special Branch Surveillance Unit received in each year since 1997. [44714]

Hazel Blears: This information is not held centrally. There is no Special Branch National Training Unit. Training for Special Branch Officers is co-ordinated through the Metropolitan Police Service but with contributions from other police forces.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police stations in *(a)* Westmorland and Lonsdale and *(b)* Cumbria have been closed in each of the last five years. [45814]

Hazel Blears: No police stations have been closed in Westmorland and Lonsdale in the last five years. The change in the number of police stations in Cumbria in each of the last five years is set out in the following table.

Police stations opened and closed in Cumbria

	Cumbria police stations		
	Opened	*Closed*	*Total*
March 2000	0	0	24
March 2001	0	0	24
March 2002	1	1	24
March 2003	0	0	24
March 2004	1	1	24
March 2005	3	1	26
Total	5	3	+2

Prisoners

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on the distribution of weekly supplementary nutritional packs to prisoners suffering from diabetes; and if he will make a statement. [45454]

Fiona Mactaggart: Supplementary nutritional packs are not used within the Prison Service.

Treatment of prisoners with diabetes is provided in line with the National Service Framework on diabetes which requires that diagnosed patients should receive appropriate dietary advice. This is provided to prisoners through the prison healthcare department. Any specific medical diets are prescribed by the prison doctor and notified to the catering department.

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he has taken to ensure that non-smoking prison inmates are not required to share cells with prisoners who smoke. [45455]

Fiona Mactaggart: Each prison develops its own "no smoking" policy in line with current health and safety advice, taking into account the type of establishment it is, its population and the special needs of that population. Wherever possible prisoners should not be required to share accommodation with a smoker if they so request. A working group has been set up to look at the smoke free elements of the current Health Bill as they apply to prisons. It will consider this issue as part of that work.

Prisons

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what account is taken of prison officers' *(a)* experience and *(b)* opinions in the construction of offender resettlement initiatives; and if he will make a statement; [44363]

(2) what assessment he has made of the contribution to effective resettlement made by prison officers; and if he will make a statement. [44365]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office has not undertaken a formal assessment of the contribution prison officers make to effective resettlement. However, prison officers are involved in the delivery of a number of programmes that have been accredited.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of correlation between prison overcrowding and deaths in custody; and if he will make a statement. [45208]

Fiona Mactaggart: Overcrowding alone does not explain why there are self-inflicted deaths in prisons. In 2005, despite rises in the prison population, the number of apparent self-inflicted deaths fell by 18 per cent. in comparison to 2004. Most importantly, a high proportion of prisoners arrive in prison having experienced negative life events that we know increase the risk of an individual harming themselves. We also know that cell-sharing is a protective factor against suicide.

That said, managing high numbers of prisoners can lead to an increase in transfers between prisons, itself a time of heightened risk. More people being received into custody may mean that some prisoners are located further from home, which, in turn, may mean that their access to familial or social support is affected. Sometimes overcrowding will reduce the time staff can spend with individual prisoners on care and risk assessment, and it sometimes leads to an increase in the length of time prisoners are locked in their cells, rather than engaged in regime activities, association and other purposeful activity. These factors together increase distress which we know from research by the University of Cambridge is related to suicide rates.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the capacity is of Woodhill Prison, Milton Keynes. [47423]

Fiona Mactaggart: The useable operational capacity of HMP Woodhill is 762 as at 31 January 2006.

Probation Service

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many unfilled posts there are in each region in the Probation Service; and if he will make a statement. [44387]

Fiona Mactaggart: Not all probation areas operate a set establishment against which vacancies can be measured. The Probation Service is however able to report on the number of active vacancies within each region. An active vacancy is one which a probation area is actively trying to fill through a recruitment process.

The figures shown represent active vacancies, expressed in full time equivalent value, in each probation region as at 30 September 2005. This is the most recent information available.

The number of active vacancies in the London region is significantly higher than elsewhere in the Probation Service. This is due to the fact that: the London probation area is currently undertaking a recruitment

exercise to achieve a 10 per cent. increase in staff numbers this year, and this is in addition to recruitment required to fill vacancies occurring as a result of normal staff attrition.

Please note that the Greater Manchester probation area is not able to provide active vacancy figures at present, and does not contribute to the figures recorded for the North West region.

	FTE vacancies	*Vacancy (percentage)*
North West	89.70	4.43
North East	80.30	5.83
Yorkshire and Humberside	97.78	3.97
West Midlands	37.86	1.62
East Midlands	66.20	3.56
East of England	73.88	4.45
South West	162.41	9.63
South East	111.51	4.67
London	618.00	20.52
Wales	39.40	3.07

Project Cyclamen

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of Project Cyclamen; and if he will make a statement. [21966]

Hazel Blears: Programme Cyclamen is a key element of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy. The latest Office of Government Commerce Gateway review assessed Programme Cyclamen as green—the programme is on target to succeed. Equipment has been installed at a number of sea and airports, and has screened over 2 million arrivals. Strategic fixed and mobile equipment is being rolled out across the UK during 2006–07.

Public Authorities (Disclosure of Violent Incidents)

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have had with the Association of Chief Police Officers about the creation of a specific statutory duty requiring public authorities to disclose incidents of violence coming to their attention which are committed by readily identifiable individuals; and when (i) he and (ii) his officials last met the Deputy Chief Constable of Surrey Police to discuss the creation of such an offence; [44282]

(2) whether he plans to introduce a statutory duty requiring public authorities to disclose incidents of violence coming to their attention which are committed by readily identifiable individuals; and if he will make a statement; [44287]

(3) whether he *(a)* saw and *(b)* commented upon a draft of the letter from the Deputy Chief Constable of Surrey Police, dated 13 January, on the creation of a specific statutory duty requiring public authorities to disclose incidents of violence coming to their attention which are committed by readily identifiable individuals. [44605]

Hazel Blears: There are currently no plans to introduce a statutory duty requiring public authorities to disclose personalised data related to incidents of violence in this way, and neither I nor my officials have met with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) about this specific matter. My officials did meet with the Deputy Chief Constable of Surrey Police at his request in March last year, on the more general subject of information sharing on violent crime. I understand that officials are due to meet again with him this month, in response to his specific proposals on this issue as outlined in the question.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 gives those responsible authorities which make up Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships a power to share aggregate, depersonalised data between themselves in the interest of preventing crime, disorder, substance misuse or antisocial behaviour. In the context of work being done in the Home Office to improve partnership arrangements, the potential for strengthening these provisions has been included in a review of the Crime and Disorder Act, which was completed this month.

Race Equality Scheme

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made on the publication of a revised Race Equality Scheme for the Home Office Group; and if he will make a statement. [32797]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The revised Home Office Race Equality Scheme was published on 26 May 2005. The scheme is available on the Home Office website: http://communities.homeoffice.gov.uk/raceandfaith/race-ethnicity/race-equality-schemes/Publication ref: 268845/90

Rape

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the conviction rate for rape. [45742]

Paul Goggins: In 2004, the proportion of recorded rapes that resulted in a conviction was 5.29 per cent. The Rape Action Plan 2002 led to a number of changes to the legal system and to the way in which the police and Crown Prosecution Service operate. These were intended to increase the likelihood of cases getting to trial and securing convictions. We have recently undertaken a stock take of the Rape Action Plan which will be followed up by an inspection into the investigation and prosecution of allegations of rape, due to report in the summer.

Recommendation 61 Forms

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been stopped and issued with a Recommendation 61 form in the London borough of Croydon since its inception. [41136]

Hazel Blears: Information on these stops is collected for police force areas only. 2005–06 is the first year of collection, and, in line with other data for that year, it is planned to make this information available in the Section 95 publication 'Race and the Criminal Justice System', to be published in early 2007.

Re-offending

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the re-offending rate of offenders within the Cambridgeshire probation area was in each year between 1997–98 and 2003–04; and if he will make a statement. [48143]

Fiona Mactaggart: Re-offending rates are not available centrally on a sub-national basis.

National re-offending rates are published annually. The most recent data are published in 'Adult re-offending: results from the 2002 cohort—Home Office Statistical Bulletin 25/05'. This is available on the Home Office's website (http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html). The report contains information on reconviction for the 1997 cohort and re-offending that results in conviction for the 2002 cohort.

Road Monitoring

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what controls and checks are in place to ensure that information gained from the new national monitoring of road journeys by CCTV is not misused; when this monitoring of road journeys was authorised; and by whom. [44182]

Hazel Blears: I refer to the reply I gave my hon. Friend the Member for South Swindon, on 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2014.

Safeguards are in place to ensure that access to the data collected and retained by the Police using automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technologies is strictly controlled, particularly for the purposes of investigating serious organised crime and terrorism.

Secure Establishments

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the staff turnover at *(a)* local authority secure accommodation, *(b)* Home Office youth establishments and *(c)* secure training centres was in each of the last three years. [33690]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested in respect of Prison Service young offender institutions and secure training centres is given in the following tables. No data is collected centrally on staff turnover in local authority secure children's homes.

Staff turnover in prison service young offender institutions[1]

Percentage

Establishment	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Brinsford	5.6	5.1	6.0
Bullwood Hall	8.8	10.7	6.3
Castington	8.0	5.2	6.5
Downview	9.1	10.1	9.4
Eastwood Park	14.9	13.4	12.2
Feltham	11.6	10.6	9.6
Hindley	6.1	12.7	9.9
Huntercombe	15.8	16.6	14.1
Lancaster Farms	4.7	4.1	5.6
New Hall	6.3	9.9	9.8
Stoke Heath	5.3	8.8	10.2
Thorn Cross	9.4	5.4	8.2
Warren Hill[2]	—	8.2	9.4
Werrington	9.4	12.4	7.7
Wetherby	7.7	7.2	8.8

[1] Turnover is measured as the total number of leavers during the year, excluding casual and administrative staff but including retirements, divided by staff in post at the start of the year. A number of healthcare staff transferred from the prison service to primary care trusts as part of the change of responsibility for healthcare commissioning: they are not included in the figures.
[2] Before February 2003, Warren Hill was part of HM Prison and YOI Hollesley Bay. It is not possible separately to identify staff at Warren Hill before that date.

Secure training centres[1]

Percentage

Centre	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Hassockfield	36	25	27
Rainsbrook	13	22	23
Medway[2]	26	37	28
Oakhill[3]	n/a	n/a	31

[1] Data from the centres include staff that were provisionally appointed but did not actually start work for various reasons, including failure to pass the initial training course or receive criminal records bureau clearance. (These staff did not have contact with children.)
[2] When Medway expanded in 2003 it recruited more staff than proved to be needed. The higher turnover in that year reflects adjustment to the appropriate staffing level through natural wastage.
[3] Oakhill opened in August 2004.

Serious Organised Crime Agency

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he estimates that the Serious Organised Crime Agency will be operational. [47507]

Paul Goggins: The Serious Organised Crime Agency will be operational on 1 April.

Sports Events (Security)

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the Security Industry Authority about the effects on sports bodies of the implementation of the Private Security Industry Act 2001; and if he will make a statement. [46161]

Paul Goggins: Home Office Ministers and officials have regular contact with the Security Industry Authority.

Staff Discipline

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many employees have been dismissed by his Department in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [29129]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The table contains information on the total number of dismissals from the Home Office (including Prison Service, IND and core Departments) since April 2000.

Period	*Total dismissals*
2000–01	179
2001–02	272
2002–03	366
2003–04	562
2004–05	469
April-November 2006	301
Total	2,149

The information includes dismissal reasons for; inefficiency, conduct and performance.

Substance Abuse Offences

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* arrests, *(b)* convictions and *(c)* cautions there were in the Avon and Somerset police authority area for offences relating to (i) the possession and (ii) dealing in class (A) A, (B) B and (C) C drugs in each year since 1997. [45251]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office does not currently collate data on the number of arrests for separate classes of drug offences. We do however have data on the number of people found guilty and cautioned under the Misuse of Drugs Act.

The number of people who have been found guilty for possession and dealing offences in Avon and Somerset in each year since 1997 is shown in the following tables.

Table 1: The number of people found guilty for possession and dealing offences

	Class A		Class B		Class C	
	Possession	Dealing	Possession	Dealing	Possession	Dealing
1997	321	111	124	27	328	80
1998	343	118	105	22	423	109
1999	332	137	105	22	502	73
2000	330	135	119	21	552	85
2001	289	107	115	22	482	57
2002	263	137	70	11	482	57
2003	252	167	70	11	508	63
2004	265	151	75	8	[1]327	59

[1] Street warnings were introduced in April 2004.

Note

Cannabis was reclassified to a class C drug in January 2004. For the purpose of this exercise.

Table 2: The number of people cautioned for possession and dealing offences

	Class A		Class B		Class C	
	Possession	Dealing	Possession	Dealing	Possession	Dealing
1997	126	4	3	1	460	28
1998	152	5	5	2	868	11
1999	206	13	1	0	965	9
2000	183	8	0	0	710	9
2001	131	9	0	1	856	9
2002	172	5	4	0	990	18
2003	206	1	8	2	953	12
2004	236	0	8	2	[1]392	7

[1] Street warnings were introduced in April 2004.

Note

Cannabis was reclassified to a class C drug in January 2004. For the purpose of this exercise.

Tasers

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there is a standard policy in place for taser deployment and usage in England and Wales. [44426]

Hazel Blears: I have indicated to the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) that I am content for taser to be made available to Authorised Firearms Officers as a less lethal option for use in situations where a firearms authority has been granted.

The Association of Chief Police Officers has produced Policy and Operational Guidance documents on the use of taser. Both documents are available at www.westmercia.police.uk

Terrorism (UK Airports)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received regarding funding for the provision of counter-terrorism initiatives at London Luton airport for 2006–07; and if he will make a statement. [42466]

Hazel Blears: A number of representations have been received in respect of extraordinary funding provided for Bedfordshire police in 2005–06 for policing at Luton airport but none in relation to 2006–07. These representations included the Chair of Bedfordshire Police Authority and a number of other MPs with constituencies in Bedfordshire.

UK Passport Service

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many original documents requested by the UK Passport Service were lost during the last four years. [48805]

Andy Burnham: For the period one January 2002 to 31 December 2005 the UK Passport Service have received 634 customer complaints relating to missing or lost documents sent in support of a passport application. Between one January 2002 and 31 December 2005 the UK Passport Service processed 23 million applications. The number of complaints about lost supporting documents therefore represents 0.0027 per cent. of the number of applications processed during this period.

Vehicle Recovery Times

Mr. Flello: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times vehicle recovery companies were used by the *(a)* West Mercia and *(b)* Staffordshire police forces in the last 12 months for which figures are available; and how many companies were used by each force to deal with (i) breakdowns, (ii) accidents and (iii) emergencies in this period. [46831]

Hazel Blears: The figures requested are not collected centrally

Witness Protection

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he will take to protect complainants and witnesses in antisocial behaviour cases. [47744]

Hazel Blears: The Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 introduced special measures for witnesses in proceedings for antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs). These measures were introduced to address concerns about the protection of vulnerable and intimidated witnesses. The measures include screening witnesses from the defendants, giving evidence through video link or in private, and the use of video recorded evidence. This makes it easier for witnesses to give evidence in the Crown and magistrates court during an

ASBO hearing. antisocial behaviour response courts have been established in magistrates courts sitting in their civil capacity to ensure that witness issues are addressed, and the Respect Action Plan announced plans to establish similar arrangements for county courts. There are also plans to introduce the same measures for ASBO victims in civil hearings as for victims in criminal cases. The Home Office has issued a good practice guide to practitioners on how best to support a witness.

HEALTH

Accident and Emergency Services

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the level of demand in each accident and emergency department was between midnight and 4 am, on 4 December *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [45277]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collect centrally. The data that the Department does collect on accident and emergency attendance is available on the Department's website at:

www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/about_data/a_and_e_attendances.htm

Administrative Costs

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the statement of 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 849, if she will set out the figures for the proportion of the NHS budget spent in administrative costs since 1996. [37505]

Mr. Byrne: National health service administration costs as a percentage of total NHS expenditure have fallen since 1996–67. In 1996–97 NHS administration costs were 6.1 per cent. of the total NHS budget and in 2004–05 NHS administration costs were 4.9 per cent. of the total NHS Budget[1].

[1] These figures are not directly comparable.

Administration costs

£ million

	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Total administration costs in health authorities and primary care trusts and management costs in NHS trusts	2,020	1,963	1,935	2,158	2,166	2,565	n/a	3,345	3,412
NHS total expenditure (England)	32,997	34,664	36,608	39,201	43,932	49,021	54,042	63,001	69,706
As a percentage of total net NHS expenditure	6.1	5.7	5.3	5.4	4.9	5.2	n/a	5.3	4.9

n/a = Not available.

Notes:

1. Health Authorities for 1996–97 to 2001–02.
2. Strategic Health Authorities 2003–04.
3. Primary Care Trusts 2000–01 to 2003–04.
4. NHS Trusts 1996–97 to 2003–04.
5. 2002–03 figures—contains significant, unmeasurable element of double counting of PCT costs in particular shared services. (See Background for PQ0774 for detail).
6. From 2004–05 NHS administration costs are calculated using admin and clerical figures from the administration and estates staff costs (cash terms). These figures are not directly comparable.
7. These figures do not contain NHS Foundation Trust counts, NHS Foundation Trusts report management costs separately to Monitor, the independent regulator for NHS Foundation Trusts, using DH management costs guidance as best practice.

Agenda for Change

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many appeals in relation to pay under Agenda for Change have been received from *(a)* nurses, *(b)* physiotherapists, *(c)* occupational therapists and *(d)* speech and language therapists working in the NHS. [44402]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not held centrally, as requests for reviews of banding under Agenda for Change are dealt with locally. But reports of progress on assimilation received by the Department so far suggest that the number of reviews at most trusts are modest in relation to the size of the work force.

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which grades of *(a)* nurses, *(b)* physiotherapists, *(c)* occupational therapists and *(d)* speech and language therapists will receive (i) pay increases and (ii) frozen or reduced pay under Agenda for Change; and if she will make a statement. [44403]

Mr. Byrne: Under the Agenda for Change pay system staff are assigned to new pay bands based on job weight as determined by the national health service job evaluation scheme, rather than on the basis of the person's original job title or grade. As a result, outcomes may differ for people previously in the same grade, and it is not possible to answer the question in the form in which it has been put.

Bristol Health Services Plan

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether private finance initiative funds have been earmarked by her Department for the Bristol Health Services Plan; and if she will make a statement. [40904]

Caroline Flint: The two major capital investment projects for Bristol—the United Bristol Healthcare and North Bristol/South Gloucestershire Primary Care Trusts schemes—are currently finalising the funding and service options in their outline business cases (OBC) in light of the findings from the Bristol Health Services Plan. The OBCs will then need to be approved by Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority and then the Department.

Cancelled Operations

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what status patients have who have been removed from hospital waiting lists due to operations being cancelled by the hospital at short notice but who have not yet been treated; and if she will make a statement. [44408]

Mr. Byrne: A patient whose operation is cancelled by the hospital is not removed from the hospital's waiting list until they have been treated.

The cancelled operations guarantee introduced in April 2002 states that when a patient's operation is cancelled by the hospital at the last minute for non-clinical reasons the hospital should offer another binding date within a maximum of the next 28 days or fund the patient's treatment at the time and hospital of the patient's choice.

The Department is seeking to reduce the number of cancellations. First, by increasing the use of day surgery and treatment centres to minimize the effect of emergencies that can cause cancellations. Second, by including cancellations in the ratings of hospitals in the patient choice information booklets. Third, through the 18 weeks maximum waiting time target which will require national health service trusts to treat promptly patients whose operations are cancelled.

Despite the increasing number of national health service operations cancellations at the last minute, they are 16 per cent. lower than three years ago.

Capio/Healthcare

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1293W, to question ref. 38278, on Capio Healthcare UK, on what date Capio Healthcare UK submitted its bid for the contract in the programme for the provision of a national chain of treatment centres. [44884]

Mr. Byrne: Capio Healthcare UK submitted its bid for the contract for the provision of a national chain of treatment centres on 13 June 2003.

Cardiac Physiologists

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cardiac physiologists have worked in the NHS in each year since 1997; and how many full-time equivalent posts this represents. [44782]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of healthcare scientists working in the cardiology area of work as at September 2004 is shown in the table.

NHS hospital and community health services: qualified healthcare scientists in the cardiology area of work in England by level as at 30 September 2004 1

	Full time equivalent	*Headcount*
England	1,955	2,187
Consultant Clinical Scientist (Grade C)	10	10
Clinical Scientist (Grade A and B)	28	30
MTO/Technician	1,797	2,022
Cyto-screener	121	125

Notes:
Full time equivalent figures are rounded to the nearest whole number.
Source:
Health and Social Care Information Centre, non-medical workforce census

Cardiac Physiologists had not been separately collected from other healthcare scientists until the 2004 workforce census.

Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the oral answer of 25 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 156, to the hon. Member for Wimbledon (Stephen Hammond) on NHS finance, what the level of deficit was in each year for *(a)* each hospital within the Merseyside/Cheshire strategic health authority (SHA) area and *(b)* the SHA itself. [45028]

Mr. Byrne: Cheshire and Merseyside strategic health authority (SHA) was formed in 2002–03. The final financial position for each national health service trust covered by Cheshire and Merseyside SHA and for the Cheshire and Merseyside SHA for the years 2002–03 to 2004–05 are shown in the table.

The table also includes the 2005–06 month six forecast financial position for both the Cheshire and Merseyside SHA and for the NHS trusts covered by the SHA.

£000

NHS trust name	*NHS trust under/(over) spend*			
	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*[1]
5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust	30	15	38	-4,071
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	5	5	7	0
Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Trust	3	33	13	0
Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology NHSTrust	6	22	32	0
Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Trust[2]	2	1	n/a	n/a
East Cheshire NHS Trust	10	19	24	-13,500
Liverpool Women's Hospital NHS Trust[1]	9	7	7	n/a
Mersey Care NHS Trust	2,428	0	9	0
Mersey Regional Ambulance Service NHS Trust	5	6	15	0
North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	8	25	84	-2,000
Royal Liverpool Broadgreen Hospital NHS Trust	0	0	0	-2,389
Royal Liverpool Children's NHS Trust	1	3	10	-2,055
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust	7	1	-1,189	-15,000
St Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust	2	93	9	0
The Cardiothoracic Cntr—Liverpool NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
The Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	23	3	31	-6,044

£000

NHS trust name	NHS trust under/(over) spend 2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06[1]
Walton Neurology Centre NHS Trust	15	10	10	0
Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	19	16	25	0
Cheshire and Merseyside SHA	189	5,234	6,483	17,596

[1] Month 6 forecast.
[2] Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Trust achieved NHS foundation trust status on 1 April 2004.
[3] Liverpool Women's Hospital NHS Trust achieved NHS foundation trust status on 1 April 2004.
Source:
Audited summarisation schedules 2002–03 to 2004–05.
2005–06 Month 6 Financial Monitoring returns.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was allocated by her Department to Cheshire and Merseyside strategic health authority for *(a)* capital projects and *(b)* revenue funding in each of the last five years; and what the purpose of each allocation was. [45033]

Mr. Byrne: Cheshire and Merseyside strategic health authority (SHA) was formed in 2002–03. The capital allocations made to Cheshire and Merseyside SHA for the years 2003–04 to 2005–06 are shown in the table.

Cheshire and Merseyside SHA economy

£000

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Operational capital	39,082	43,885	49,038
Access fund	5,603	5,603	5,603
Strategic capital	37,805	41,940	50,589
Total	82,490	91,428	105,230

Notes:
1. Strategic capital is allocated for prioritisation by the SHA across the health economy. Strategic capital is allocated to NHS trusts and primary care trusts (PCTs) for larger capital projects facilitating strategic change.
2. Operational capital is allocated directly to NHS trusts and PCTs within the SHA health economy for minor capital developments and equipment replacement.
3. The access fund is allocated to the SHA to reward progress against access targets within the patch.

Cheshire and Merseyside SHA has received revenue allocations for its running costs of £4.7 million in 2003–04, £5.1 million in 2004–05 and £5.4 million in 2005–06. This funding is to cover the day-to-day operational management and running of the SHA to allow it to carry out its responsibilities and functions.

In addition, revenue allocations are made to PCTs to enable them to commission health care for their local populations. The funding covers hospital and community health services, prescribing and primary medical services. The revenue allocations for 2003–06 and 2006–08 for PCTs in the Cheshire and Merseyside SHA are shown in the tables.

PCT recurrent revenue allocations 2003–04 to 2005–06

PCT	Allocation 2003-04 (£000)	2004-05 (£000)	2005-06 (£000)	Three year increase £000	Percentage
Bebington and West Wirral	99,993	108,879	118,128	26,451	28.9
Birkenhead and Wallasey	224,569	246,463	269,198	65,022	31.8
Central Cheshire	203,159	222,612	242,996	57,968	31.3
Central Liverpool	286,884	321,165	358,315	102,963	40.3
Cheshire West	138,205	150,791	164,098	37,635	29.8
Eastern Cheshire	161,386	175,727	190,654	42,696	28.9
Ellesmere Port and Neston	77,814	84,726	91,920	20,609	28.9
Halton	122,778	134,429	146,687	34,760	31.1
Knowsley	163,276	183,010	204,420	59,356	40.9
North Liverpool	118,120	132,316	147,710	42,669	40.6
South Liverpool	100,413	110,029	120,103	28,648	31.3
South Sefton	161,978	177,546	193,820	46,336	31.4
Southport and Formby	115,701	125,978	136,676	30,640	28.9
St. Helens	181,808	199,906	222,113	57,142	34.6
Warrington	163,513	178,963	195,266	46,165	31.0

PCT recurrent revenue allocations 2006–07 to 2007–08

PCT	Allocation 2006-07 (£000)	2007-08 (£000)	Two year increase £000	Percentage
Bebington and West Wirral	138,522	149,618	21,738	17.0
Birkenhead and Wallasey	321,016	350,999	57,453	19.6
Central Cheshire	292,951	322,527	53,963	20.1
Central Liverpool	418,642	457,809	75,054	19.6
Cheshire West	196,578	215,305	35,034	19.4
Eastern Cheshire	229,873	248,604	35,883	16.9
Ellesmere Port and Neston	107,271	116,811	17,700	17.9
Halton	172,678	187,634	29,149	18.4

PCT recurrent revenue allocations 2006–07 to 2007–08

PCT	Allocation 2006-07 (£000)	2007-08 (£000)	Two year increase £000	Percentage
Knowsley	243,375	268,697	53,958	25.1
North Liverpool	173,387	191,147	34,969	22.4
South Liverpool	141,193	154,399	25,309	19.6
South Sefton	227,817	249,358	40,444	19.4
Southport and Formby	161,841	175,035	25,382	17.0
St. Helens	262,020	286,542	47,175	19.7
Warrington	237,103	259,050	42,332	19.5

Chief Executive Officers

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which chief executive officers left their position in *(a)* an NHS trust and *(b)* a strategic health authority in the last three years; whether the individual was subsequently employed within (i) the NHS and (ii) the Department in each case; and what job was taken up. [46264]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* The information requested is not collected centrally.

Child Abuse

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy to ensure that the number of doctors and nurses taking the professional lead in protecting children from abuse and neglect in their area does not fall following the merger of primary care trusts. [24525]

Mr. Byrne: Any merger of primary care trusts (PCTs) will not affect their duties in ensuring that staff, and staff in services contracted by PCTs, are trained to be alert to potential indicators of abuse and neglect in children, know how to act on their concerns and fulfil their responsibilities in line with their local safeguarding children board procedures. PCTs should ensure establishment levels of designated professionals are proportionate to the local resident population and the complexity of provider arrangements. This is a matter for local decision.

Child Protection

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether *(a)* general practitioners and *(b)* staff employed by general practitioners are permitted to work if they are included on the Protection of Children Act list. [44901]

Mr. Byrne: A general practitioner or any member of staff employed by a general practitioner, who was identified as being included on the Protection of Children Act list, would not be permitted to work in any child-care position within the meaning of the Protection of Children Act 1999.

Cross-border Health Provision

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements are in place for cross-border health provision between England and Wales. [44489]

Mr. Byrne: The Department, in collaboration with the Welsh Assembly Government, issued guidance establishing interim arrangements in February 2005.

The interim arrangements recognise that the legal responsibility for patients rests with the commissioner where the patient is resident but for named commissioners on both sides of the border, the operational responsibility rests with the commissioner responsible for the general practitioner with whom the patient is registered.

The Department and Welsh Assembly Government have established a steering group to oversee the development of policy and guidance for cross border issues and in addition have prepared a procedure for resolving disputes that may arise about the interpretation of the guidance. The interim arrangements will continue for 2006–07, targeting April 2007 for full implementation of the responsible commissioner policy.

Day Surgery

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her latest estimate is of the number of in-patient procedures which could be performed as day surgery; and what savings she estimates would have resulted from such a reconfiguration of services in the latest year for which figures are available. [44058]

Mr. Byrne: Data on elective general and acute admissions and day case rates are published in the "Chief Executive's Report to the NHS, Statistical Supplement — December 2005". The statistical supplement is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/43/03/04124303.pdf.

No specific mechanism has been set up to estimate the information requested. This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, we know from studies commissioned by local national health service trusts and other interested organisations that the benefits of switching patients to day case surgery are likely to outweigh the costs of implementing such a change of services.

Dentistry

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is proposing to take to ensure that primary care trusts (PCTs) provide a minimum level of dental provision in three years' time when changes to PCTs' control over their budgets are introduced. [31790]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts (PCTs) will continue to have a duty under section 16CA(1) of the National Health Service Act 1977 to provide primary dental services to the extent considered necessary to meet all treasonable requirements in their area.

The Department has indicated that the ring-fencing arrangements for funding primary dental services that apply for the period 2006–07 to 2008–09 will be reviewed towards the end of that period.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the availability of free dental care for children *(a)* in England and *(b)* within Buckingham constituency. [35732]

Ms Rosie Winterton: All children aged under 18 are exempt from charges for national health service dental treatment. As at 30 September 2005, an estimated 59 per cent. of the child population for England and an estimated 52 per cent. of the child population in Vale of Aylesbury primary care trust were registered with an NHS dentist. The Department does not collect data centrally on the numbers of additional patients seeking NHS treatment.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the future of dental access centres operating under personal dental services pilots following the reforms to NHS dentistry to come into force from April 2006. [39451]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The reform of national health service dentistry will enable primary care trusts (PCTs) to develop more integrated commissioning strategies for primary dental care, including dental access centres (DACs).

The funding for DACs will now be included in the relevant PCTs' developed budgets for dentistry, which will enable PCTs to continue to commission these services on a substantive basis. It will be for PCTs to decide how local services, including DACs, should develop to meet local needs and service priorities.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department has taken to ensure patient access to NHS dentists. [37110]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Since 2003–04, the Department has invested an additional £250 million in national health service dentistry and has supported the NHS in recruiting the equivalent of an extra 1,459 dentists to improve patient access. The Government are also funding an additional 170 training places per year from 2005.

From April 2006, the NHS will be implementing major reforms to dentistry to build upon this success. New contracts for dentists will abolish the fee per item remuneration system and support new ways of working with a greater focus on preventative care. Evidence from personal dental services pilot schemes is that these new ways of working free up significant capacity that dentists can then use in part to see a greater range of patients.

From April 2006, primary care trusts (PCTs) will also have devolved responsibility and ring-fenced budgets for commissioning primary dental services. This means that, if a dentist leaves the NHS or reduces their NHS commitment, the resources stay with the PCT to be re-invested in local dental services.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS patients opted out of NHS dentistry treatment in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* each year since 1997. [41866]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Malik: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the potential impact of its reforms to NHS dentistry for the most socially disadvantaged on improving access to NHS dental care. [43176]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No specific assessment has been made of the impact of the dentistry reforms on access for the most socially disadvantaged. The reforms are designed to support primary care trusts and dentists in improving access to national health service dentistry for all groups of patients.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Hereford constituency have been removed from NHS dentists' registers since 2002; and what percentage of people in the constituency are registered with an NHS dentist. [44610]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not available in the format requested. However, information relating to patient registrations in Herefordshire is shown in the table.

Active patient registrations—Herefordshire

	Number/rate
Patients under 18 years	
Patients under 18 years of age	25,683
Take up rate per 100 local population	67.84
Patients 18 years and over	
Patients 18 years and over	53,415
Take-up rate per 100 local population	38.41
All patients	
All patients	79,098
Take up rate per 100 local population	44.71

Notes:
All figures are from September 2005
Source:
Dental Practice Board

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 575–76W, on dentistry, how many of the 69 NHS dentists with general dental service or personal dental service contracts within Hereford constituency are accepting new patients on to their NHS lists. [44611]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The data regarding the number of dentists admitting new national health service patients is not available centrally. This can be obtained directly from the primary care trusts concerned.

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dental practices in Manchester, Withington have started carrying out NHS work since 1997. [44671]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Within the Manchester, Withington constituency, two dental surgeries have opened a new national health service general dental services or personal dental services contract between September 1997 and September 2005.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists are in practice in Leicestershire. [44832]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As at 30 September 2005, there were 579 national health service dentists with a general dental services or personal dental services contract within the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland strategic health authority area.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists the NHS needs to recruit in order to meet Government targets. [44834]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department and the national health service last year exceeded the target of recruiting an extra 1,000 dentists. Between April 2004 and October 2005, the equivalent of an extra 1,459 whole time NHS dentists were recruited. There are no outstanding targets for NHS dental recruitment.

Departmental Finance

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much the Department expects to be rolled

forward into the next financial year as a result of delayed payment of pay as you earn tax and national insurance contributions by each strategic health authority and primary care trust in the 2005–06 financial year; [41640]

(2) what advice the Department has issued to strategic health authorities on the use of delayed payment of pay as you earn tax and national insurance contributions as a form of cash management; and if she will make a statement; [41641]

(3) which *(a)* strategic health authorities and *(b)* primary care trusts have discussed the use of delayed payment of pay as you earn tax and national insurance contributions as a form of cash management for the current financial year with the Department. [41652]

Mr. Byrne: The Department's policy is that all national health service organisations should ensure that payments of pay as you earn tax and National Insurance contributions are made when they are due, unless there is a specific agreement not to do so with the Inland Revenue. The issue has been discussed with all strategic health authorities and they have been reminded of the Department's policy. Where it has come to our attention that organisations are making specific proposals to delay payment we have reminded them of the policy.

Drug Treatment

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on training of general practitioners in dealing with substance misuse in each of the last five years. [44640]

Mr. Byrne: It is not possible to identify the amount of mainstream funding or local pooled treatment budget money used specifically for the support and training of general practitioners in dealing with substance misuse. However, since 2001 the Department has funded a national primary care certificate course for substance misuse, which is delivered by the Royal College of General Practitioners. This funding has amounted to as follows:

	£ million
2001–02	1.8
2002–03	1.2
2003–05	0.7
2005–06	1.5

European Medicines Evaluation Agency

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects the consultation process on the mechanisms of the European Medicines Evaluation Agency to report. [19928]

Jane Kennedy: The European Medicines Evaluation Agency's consultation into the mechanisms for dealing with applications submitted under the accelerated assessment procedure (Ref. EMEA/419127/2005) ends on 10 February 2006.

Finnamore Consultants

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS trusts have employed Finnamore Consultants to advise them on measures to address potential financial deficits in 2005–06; what assessment she has made of the *(a)* practicality and *(b)* relevance of their recommendations; and what the cost was in each case. [44405]

Mr. Byrne: It is the responsibility of strategic health authorities (SHAs) to deliver overall financial balance for their local health communities, and to ensure each and every body achieves financial balance. SHAs determine the support needed for their organisations to achieve this objective.

We do not hold records of the number of national health service trusts that have employed Finnamore Consultants.

Folic Acid

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment her Department has made of the effects on women of child bearing age of folic acid supplementation in protecting against babies being born with neural tube defects. [37655]

Caroline Flint: The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition is currently considering the scientific evidence of folate and disease prevention. A full report is expected to be published in the spring of 2006.

Government Shift Programme

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding she has allocated to the Government Shift programme for 2006–07; and how much money has been allocated to this programme since 2004. [46266]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* The service increment for teaching supports the cost to health care providers of providing a clinical setting for medical and dental undergraduate training. Budgets for 2006–07 have not been set yet. Funding for 2004–05 and 2005–06 is shown in the following table.

	£
	Funding
2004–05	733,196,000
2005–06	803,654,000

Haemodynamic Optimisation

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospitals in England use haemodynamic optimisation. [47390]

Mr. Byrne: We do not collect this information centrally.

All hospitals will have a variety of haemodynamic monitoring equipment available, invasive or non-invasive, to monitor haemodynamic status of the patients. This will in turn provide the information clinicians require to optimize medical treatment for a variety of medical conditions.

Head Lice

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of the incidence of head lice in schools in each local authority area in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement; [45963]

(2) what resources she has made available to each local education authority area in 2005–06 to reduce the incidence of head lice; and if she will make a statement; [45965]

(3) what mechanisms exist to monitor the incidence of head lice in schools; and if she will make a statement. [45966]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the incidence of head lice infestation is not collected centrally. Head lice infestations depend upon head-to-head contact, which is relatively common among younger school-age children while working together, or playing at school. Our policy, which is shared by the Department for Education and Skills, is to encourage a "whole school approach". This entails encouraging parents to check their children and other family members for head lice as the need arises, and arranging treatment where necessary, with advice and support from the local primary health care team (general practitioner, health visitor, school nurse or local pharmacist).

If this exercise is undertaken at the same time by families with children attending a school, then the spread of head lice will be arrested. Primary health care teams are resourced to support this activity. The Department has provided a leaflet containing guidance on the prevention and treatment of head lice. This promotes the benefits of identifying and arranging treatment, where needed, on a day which schools may determine. The leaflet is available in hard copy and on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/63/47/04116347.pdf.

Health Expenditure

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what level of expenditure will be committed to support *(a)* the improvements to alcohol treatment provision announced on 1 November and *(b)* the provision of health trainers announced on 11 August by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health; how much expenditure there has been on each programme; and whether the expenditure is financed from the Centrally Funded Initiatives and Services and Special Allocations budget of her Department in each case. [39286]

Caroline Flint: We now have 78 partnerships in the early adopter phase of health trainers, prison sites in each region, the army and Initial cleaning company.

A breakdown of where the money has been spent and cost centres is shown in the table.

National health service health trainers provision and expenditure

£ million

	Year to date 2005–06	*Provision 2005–06*	*Future provision 2006–07*	*2007–08*
Securing health care for those who need it	4.905	5.00	—	—
PCT Allocations	—	—	36.00	77.00
Securing social care and child protection for those who need it and, at national level, protecting, promoting and improving the nation's health	0.346	2.20	2.0	2.0

Hearing Services

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact on *(a)* waiting lists and *(b)* waiting times for digital hearing aids of the introduction of programmes to expand their availability; and if she will make a statement. [39256]

Mr. Byrne: Several initiatives have been introduced to improve capacity to deliver audiology services. These are the national framework contract public private partnership to bring in additional independent sector capacity, the development of a new degree to help to address the shortage of audiologists and the introduction of "Hearing Direct" which is follow-up care and advice for hearing aid users who would benefit from this.

The figures on waiting times for digital hearing aids are not collected centrally. It is for primary care trusts to ensure their local population benefits from modernised hearing aid services.

Hospitals

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the number of patients required for a hospital to remain viable. [41928]

Mr. Byrne: The configuration of services, including the viability of individual hospitals is a matter for the national health service locally. No specific assessment has been made centrally.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to prevent hospitals spending money on advertising for patients. [40662]

Mr. Byrne: With the introduction of patient choice and payment by results, it is important that patients are aware of the services and options available to them. Therefore, a small amount of advertising is in the interests of both patients and hospitals. The Department is developing guidelines, to ensure that any public communications are not only honest and accurate, but also appropriate. These guidelines, together with the payment tariff set by payment by results, should deter inappropriate expenditure on advertising.

Housing Development

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with the Deputy Prime Minister on the *(a)* demand for and *(b)* cost of the social care facilities arising from the planned expansion of housing in Aylesbury Vale. [45344]

Mr. Byrne: No formal discussions have taken place at ministerial level.

Now that the sub regional strategy is finalised, it is being taken forward by local partners. The local delivery vehicle for Aylesbury (Aylesbury Vale Advantage) will be looking at the infrastructure requirements associated with growth at a detailed level and will be working with relevant agencies as part of this process.

Illegal Drug Use

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are being taken to reduce the number of deaths from illegal drug use. [44727]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* In November 2001, the Government set a target to reduce the number of drug-related deaths by 20 per cent. by 2004 in England and Wales as part of an action plan to reduce drug-related deaths. Progress against the target is calculated against a 1999 Office for National Statistics (ONS) baseline. The latest ONS data available are for 2003, which show that drug-related deaths have declined for three consecutive years.

Since the action plan was published, the Department has focused efforts on improving the surveillance and monitoring of drug use; improving access to and consistency of prescribing treatment; and guidance to commissioners and providers of treatment and to users on limiting the risk of overdose.

Accessible information and support is available to young people and their families on the risks associated with drug misuse through the innovative "Frank" campaign. We are also getting more people in to drug treatment than ever before and this will be boosted by the increase of funding for drug action teams, which will continue to take forward the positive progress we are already making.

Infection Control

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when the research commissioned by her Department on the number of single rooms needed for effective infection control will be published; and if she will place a copy in the Library; [45762]

(2) what estimate she has made of the number of single rooms needed in hospital settings for the effective control of *(a)* hospital acquired infections and *(b)* future outbreaks of an influenza pandemic; and if she will make a statement. [45763]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 26 January 2006]:* Leeds General Infirmary and the University of Leeds are carrying out the following research project:

"What is the size and nature of the current need for single room isolation in hospital, and how does success or failure to isolate patients affect the control of meticillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)?"

The project is due to finish shortly and we expect to publish a report in the summer. A copy will be placed in the Library.

The research project will help us assess requirements for controlling hospital acquired infections. During an influenza pandemic it is likely that patients would be cohorted rather than kept in isolation.

Intensive Care Costs

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average daily cost of an *(a)* intensive care and *(b)* high dependency bed is in West Lancashire. [45032]

Mr. Byrne: The average cost of an occupied bed day in a discrete critical care unit is available in the annual reference costs publication.

The national schedule of reference costs for 2004, the latest year available, shows that for activity undertaken at Southport and Ormskirk national health service trust in England, the costs of an occupied bed day in different types of discrete critical care units is shown in the following table.

Average cost per occupied bed day

Unit type	*£*
Intensive therapy unit/intensive care unit	1,081
Spinal injuries intensive care unit	672

A copy of the reference costs publication is available in the Library.

Mental Health Services

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she has set a target for reducing the referrals to specialist child and adolescent mental health services in children's fund areas. [45708]

Mr. Byrne: We are committed to ensuring access to mental health services for all children and young people who need them. The Department has a public service agreement target to ensure access to a comprehensive child and adolescent mental health service by the end of 2006.

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting times for patients in Easington constituency to see *(a)* a consultant psychiatrist and *(b)* a psychologist were in each year since 2002. [45016]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Waiting times for first out-patient appointment following general practitioner (GP) written referral, September 2002 to September 2005, provider based

Effective length of wait from receipt of GP written referral request to first out-patient attendance (weeks)

Quarter (September)	Code	Name	0 to < 4	4 to < 13	13 to < 17	17 to < 21	21 plus	Median wait (weeks)
2002	RTC	County Durham and Darlington Priority Services NHS Trust	243	163	12	7	24	3.7
2003	RTC	County Durham and Darlington Priority Services NHS Trust	194	69	0	0	0	2.7
2004	RTC	County Durham and Darlington Priority Services NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0	n/a
2005	RTC	County Durham and Darlington Priority Services NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0	n/a
2002	[illegible]	Tees and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust	262	203	15	3	2	3.7
2003	[illegible]	Tees and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust	257	259	2	1	0	4.1
2004	[illegible]RVX	Tees and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust	222	170	0	0	0	3.5
2005	RVX	Tees and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust	215	184	1	0	0	3.7

n/a = Not available.

Notes:

Data for specialties

710 Mental Illness

711 Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

712 Forensic Psychiatry

713 Psychotherapy

715 Old Age Psychiatry

1. Due to small numbers, the calculation of the median wait is prone to fluctuation. Care should be taken when interpreting these figures.

2. Waiting times apply to consultant-led appointments only. Services in many areas are now run by multi disciplinary teams.

Source:

Department of Health form QM08.

Mortality Rates

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her policy is on hospitals' publication of mortality rates. [25119]

Jane Kennedy: The Secretary of State supports the publication of information that helps to raise awareness, improve quality and informs patient choice. Where relevant and appropriate, mortality statistics may be published locally, while taking care to safeguard patient confidentiality. Such information should be independently verifiable.

Multiple Sclerosis

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people with multiple sclerosis are awaiting *(a)* assessment to determine eligibility for treatment with and *(b)* prescription for disease modifying therapies following a successful eligibility assessment in each primary care trust; [45941]

(2) what the average waiting time for people with multiple sclerosis between eligibility assessment for treatment using disease modifying therapies, and prescription of the drugs was in each primary care trust in 2004–05; [45942]

(3) how many people with multiple sclerosis are receiving disease modifying therapies in each primary care trust (PCT); and how much prescription of these treatments cost each PCT in the last period for which figures are available. [45943]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally.

Muscular Dystrophy

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what representations she has received about the provision of electric wheelchairs for people with muscular dystrophy; and if she will make a statement; [46665]

(2) how many people with muscular dystrophy live in *(a)* Guildford, *(b)* Waverley and *(c)* Surrey. [46666]

Mr. Byrne: The Department received a letter on 22 July 2004 regarding the provision of electric wheelchairs for people with muscular dystrophy. I have not received any further representations about this issue.

The information requested is not held centrally.

NHS Contracts (Ofcom Review)

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress the Department is making in meeting the Ofcom recommendation for a review of contracts in the NHS for Patientline and Premier. [45484]

Jane Kennedy: I refer the right hon. Member to the ministerial statement made on 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 33WS.

NHS Finance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health further to her statement of 15 November 22005, *Official Report*, column 849, on NHS finance, if she will publish the analysis from which her statement was derived, with the cost increase between 1999–2000 and 2004–05 broken down by *(a)* medical secretaries, *(b)* record keepers, *(c)* health educators, *(d)* IT technicians, *(e)* financial managers, *(f)* caterers, *(g)* launderers, *(h)* cleaners and *(i)* all other staff; and what proportion of the total NHS budget was spent on administrative staff, as defined in her statement, in (i) 1999–2000 and (ii) 2004–05. [31098]

Mr. Byrne: Information on cost increases for the specific staff categories requested is not collected centrally.

The analysis of administration as a proportion of the total national health service budget calculated to 2003–04 is shown in the table.

£000

	1999–2000	2003–04
Administration spend	2,158,000	3,345,000
Total NHS spend	40,201,000	63,001,000
Administration as percentage of NHS spend	5.4	5.3

Administration spend includes administration costs in health authorities and primary care trusts and management costs in NHS trusts[1].

NHS Administration Cost figures for 2004–5 are not directly comparable due to a change in collection methods[2].

Sources:

[1] Audited summarisation schedules of health authorities, strategic health authorities, primary care trusts and NHS trusts for 1999–2000 and 2003–04 as appropriate.

[2] Admin and Clerical figures from Admin and Estates Staffing Costs (cash terms).

	2004–05 (£ million)
Administration spend	3,412
Total NHS spend	69,706
Administration as percentage of NHS spend	4.9

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her statement of 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 849, on NHS finance, if she will provide details on how she calculates administrative costs. [31099]

Mr. Byrne: National health service administration costs were collected centrally from annual accounts returns reported by the NHS. NHS administration cost expenditure was not collected prior to 1996–97 or post 2003–04 in this manner. From 2004–05, NHS administration costs are calculated using administrative and clerical figures from the administration and estates staff costs (cash terms). These figures are not directly comparable.

These figures do not contain NHS foundation trusts (NHSFTs), who report management costs separately to Monitor, the independent regulator for NHSFTs, using the Department's management costs guidance as best practice.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total (*a*) strategic health authority, (*b*) NHS trust and (*c*) primary care trust revenue expenditure was in each year since 1997; how much was accounted for by (i) salaries and wages, (ii) supplies and services-general, (iii) supplies and services-clinical, (iv) establishment expenses, (v) premises and fixed plant, (vi) cost of use of capital assets, (vii) purchase of health care from non-NHS bodies, (viii) external contract staff and (ix) all other major cost areas in each year; and what assessment she has made of how these expenditure streams may develop in the years until 2010. [36434]

Mr. Byrne: The requested information from 1997–98 to 2004–05 is shown in the table. Information is not available up to 2010.

National health service expenditure 1997 to 2005

£000

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01
Strategic health authorities (SHAs)				
Salaries and wages	409,346	428,343	519,520	596,121
Supplies and services-general	2,508	2,560	3,254	2,841
Supplies and services-clinical	7,197	11,375	15,270	13,030
Establishment expenses	57,972	60,787	63,511	76,313
Premises and fixed plant	83,458	88,981	88,683	120,205
Cost of use of capital assets	119,520	74,077	139,756	-41,176
Purchase of health care from non-NHS bodies	985,746	1,108,472	1,166,413	1,328,208
External contract staff and consultancy	24,838	28,537	35,056	42,097
Other expenditure	319,989	586,681	1,222,185	1,447,268
Total revenue expenditure	2,010,574	2,389,813	3,253,648	3,584,907
Primary care trusts (PCTs)				
Salaries and wages	—	—	—	121,682
Supplies and services-general	—	—	—	3,792
Supplies and services-clinical	—	—	—	45,183
Establishment expenses	—	—	—	11,994
Premises and fixed plant	—	—	—	13,137
Cost of use of capital assets	—	—	—	5,112
Purchase of health care from non-NHS bodies	—	—	—	33,742
External contract staff and consultancy	—	—	—	916
Other expenditure	—	—	—	22,775
Total revenue expenditure	—	—	—	258,333
NHS trusts				
Salaries and wages	15,689,601	16,652,762	18,188,706	19,811,609
Supplies and services-general	631,812	703,501	752,143	796,346
Supplies and services-clinical	2,841,335	3,145,624	3,418,190	3,826,004
Establishment expenses	811,493	843,828	892,723	990,416

National health service expenditure 1997 to 2005

£000

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01
Premises and fixed plant	1,476,264	1,468,014	1,460,136	1,646,767
Cost of use of capital assets	945,639	998,614	2,301,450	1,160,915
Purchase of health care from non-NHS bodies	122,436	121,954	134,784	187,190
External contract staff and consultancy	110,722	93,072	93,304	105,853
Other expenditure	689,014	1,330,337	1,808,515	1,632,415
Total revenue expenditure	23,318,316	25,357,706	29,049,951	30,157,515

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Strategic health authorities (SHAs)				
Salaries and wages	603,852	178,475	161,000	203,494
Supplies and services-general	6,900	1,782	582	696
Supplies and services-clinical	20,421	1,298	1,050	909
Establishment expenses	83,313	21,866	20,604	23,863
Premises and fixed plant	114,419	43,186	31,970	30,471
Cost of use of capital assets	-36,230	4,003	5,193	2,766
Purchase of health care from non-NHS bodies	1,136,793	27,234	3,329	0
External contract staff and consultancy	66,855	19,648	17,278	15,620
Other expenditure	1,497,339	2,908,293	3,255,278	3,446,986
Total revenue expenditure	3,493,662	3,205,785	3,496,284	3,724,805
Primary care trusts (PCTs)				
Salaries and wages	1,487,000	4,365,127	4,845,299	5,750,413
Supplies and services-general	51,895	157,033	146,496	124,285
Supplies and services-clinical	143,798	348,936	357,501	325,803
Establishment expenses	115,116	348,622	407,454	425,876
Premises and fixed plant	105,079	354,216	392,468	397,066
Cost of use of capital assets	82,767	216,755	231,932	252,550
Purchase of health care from non-NHS bodies	409,936	1,184,372	2,903,763	3,353,036
External contract staff and consultancy	16,090	59,154	53,101	55,925
Other expenditure	251,268	2,043,987	764,705	630,036
Total revenue expenditure	2,662,949	9,078,202	10,102,719	11,314,990
NHS trusts				
Salaries and wages	21,120,826	21,368,230	23,553,819	24,020,430
Supplies and services-general	814,984	785,673	832,940	661,264
Supplies and services-clinical	4,141,182	4,463,604	4,966,667	3,911,597
Establishment expenses	996,554	926,965	978,122	868,706
Premises and fixed plant	1,644,660	1,534,385	1,553,125	1,433,187
Cost of use of capital assets	1,171,855	1,320,214	1,379,788	1,321,260
Purchase of health care from non-NHS bodies	246,239	338,172	408,800	312,988
External contract staff and consultancy	125,948	149,438	157,425	135,150
Other expenditure	810,494	1,065,124	997,102	754,939
Total revenue expenditure	31,072,742	31,951,805	34,827,788	33,419,521

Notes

1. Data from financial returns. Although data is not audited, it is reconciled to figures in the audited accounts.
2. 2004–05 NHS trust figures do not contain NHS foundation trusts.
3. 2004–05 data is still subject to amendment, although significant changes are unlikely.
4. 2004–05 financial returns data has been used to answer parliamentary questions.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the incremental funding available to the NHS since 1997 has been spent on *(a)* higher wages, *(b)* shorter working hours, *(c)* administrative costs including contractors, consultants and external legal expenses and *(d)* incremental medical services provided to patients. [42187]

Mr. Byrne: The table gives details of the attribution of additional resources spent across the national health service since 1997.

	Cash accounting increase 1997–98 to 2000–01	*Stage two resource accounting increase 2000–01 to 2004–05*
Real increase in total NHS DEL[1] (£ billion)	7.6	20.0
Apportionment of Increase		
Staff and pay[2,3] (Percentage)	47	53
Of which		
Higher wages (Percentage)	33	29
Additional staff (Percentage)	13	23
Drugs (Percentage)	17	13
Others[4] (Percentage)	36	34

[1] Figures calculated in 2004-05 prices by applying Gross Domestic Product deflator.
[2] From 2003-04 onwards, the Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) for the Department was increased by a switch from the exchequers annually managed expenditure spending to cover the increased costs of pensions. An addition of £1.6 billion was made to the NHS DEL to cover these costs from 2003-04 onwards. While this change affected the overall level of NHS Expenditure, they did not increase or decrease the spending power of the NHS. It is cost neutral. For purpose of comparability, the extra expenditure has been stripped out of pay and included in others.
[3] Pay has been estimated by combining NHS Accounts information, accounts data for foundation trusts from Monitor, and general medical practice data based on latest information on the new general practitioner contract. Increases in staff are based on census returns, the proportion of extra funds to new staff and pay is based annual comparison of growth in pay bill with growth in NHS staff numbers (weighted by pay).
[4] Examples of other incremental expenditure include: buildings, equipment, training, research and development, supplies of services.
Note.
This analysis may not be directly comparable to previously published analyses due to revisions to forecasts, estimates and GDP deflators.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* surpluses and *(b)* deficits have been of each of the (i) trust and (ii) foundation hospitals in each of the last three years. [43055]

Mr. Byrne: The information on the financial positions of strategic health authorities, primary care trusts and national health service trusts for 1997-98 to 2004-05 is available in the Library.

The forecast outturn position for 2005-06, as submitted by NHS organisations at the mid-year point (month six), is also available in the Library and in addition, is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/fs/en.

With reference to NHS foundation trusts (NHS FTs), I am advised by the Chairman of Monitor that the Review and Consolidated Accounts of NHS FTs 2004-05 were laid before Parliament on 22 November 2005. These set out the financial performance of each of the 25 NHS FTs in operation during the 2004-05 financial year, the first year in which NHS FTs operated.

I am further advised, that Monitor published its half-yearly update on the performance of NHS FTs on 16 December 2005. Both the review for 2004-05 and the half-yearly update is available on Monitor's website at: www.monitor-nhsft.gov.uk.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 732W, on NHS finance, if she will list the 63 NHS organisations which are forecasting the most significant deficits; and what the *(a)* latest in-year deficit and *(b)* forecast year-end deficit is in each case. [44242]

Mr. Byrne: The national health service organisations that are forecasting significant deficits at month six of 2005-06 were subject to the first phase of the turnaround teams' baseline assessment. A report on the work of the turnaround teams, which lists these organisations, is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/71/88/04127188.pdf.

The forecast outturn position for 2005-06, as submitted by NHS organisations at the mid-year point (month six), is a net deficit of around £620 million. The 2005-06 month six forecast outturn position for individual NHS organisations (strategic health authorities, primary care trusts and NHS trusts) is also available on the Department's website, and can be accessed at: www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/fs/en

Copies of this information are available in the Library.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government are taking to deal with the NHS trusts that are unable to contain their financial deficits; and if she will make a statement. [44418]

Mr. Byrne: It is the responsibility of strategic health authorities (SHAs) to deliver overall financial balance for their local health communities, and to ensure each and every body achieves financial balance. SHAs determine the support needed for their organisations to achieve this objective.

To help restore financial balance in the national health service, in December 2005, turnaround teams were appointed. The turnaround teams will work with SHAs, individual primary care trusts and NHS trusts. Their focus will be on organisations that are forecasting the largest deficits for the current financial year.

Turnaround teams will help to ensure NHS organisations deliver efficiency and quality improvement needed to achieve financial balance and better care for patients.

NHS Managers

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of NHS managers were clinicians in each of the last 10 years. [43462]

Mr. Byrne: The table shows the percentage of national health service managers who also had a clinical qualification in each of the last 10 years.

Percentage of managers with a clinical qualification, England

	Percentage
1995	47.4
1996	47.8
1997	47.2
1998	47.1
1999	45.4
2000	45.8
2001	46.0
2002	42.5
2003	46.0
2004	50.2

NHS Staff Costs

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of the increase in NHS funding has been spent on staff costs in each year since 1997. [19279]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Total (England) increased expenditure on staff costs, shown as a percentage of the increase in total national health service expenditure

	Percentage
1997–98	31.1
1998–99	50.5
1999–2000	45.3
2000–01	48.9
2001–02	52.7
2002–03	53.0
2003–04	29.7
2004–05	21.6

Notes:
1. Returns for 2003–04 from NHS bodies excluded the increase in NHS employers' pension contributions from 7 per cent. to 14 per cent. of pensionable pay. This was paid directly to the NHS Pensions Agency by the Department of Health.
2. Expenditure in NHS foundation trusts is not included within returns provided to the Department of Health. The 2004–05 figures therefore exclude all NHS foundation trusts data and are not consistent with the previous figures in the table.

Sources:
Annual financial returns of the health authorities 1997–98 to 2001–02
Annual financial returns of the strategic health authorities 2002–03 to 2004–05
Annual financial returns of the primary care trusts 2000–01 to 2004–05
Annual financial returns of the NHS trusts 1997–98 to 2004–05

Obesity

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will launch the planned cross-Government campaign to raise awareness of the health risks of obesity and the steps people can take through diet and physical activity to prevent it; what discussions she has had with external stakeholders regarding the design of the campaign; when these discussions took place; and if she will make a statement. [43536]

Caroline Flint: The social marketing programme will be launched in the autumn of 2006. Its focus will be on providing the general public with the necessary information and support to lead healthier lifestyles in relation to diet and physical activity. In developing this activity, discussions have taken place with a broad range of stakeholders across Government, the non-governmental organisations sector and relevant industries over the past six months. These meetings have included bilateral discussions and a larger scale summit held in December. Development work has focused on understanding the behaviours and attitudes of people at highest risk of obesity and exploring how stakeholders can contribute to the development and implementation of the programme.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2716W, on obesity, how rates of childhood obesity are calculated; whether this will change following publication of her Department's guidance on measuring childhood obesity on 11 January 2006; and if she will make a statement. [43634]

Caroline Flint: Calculation of the rate of childhood obesity for measuring obesity prevalence in the Department are based on United Kingdom national body mass index (BMI) percentile classification. This defines children as overweight and obese if their BMI falls above the 85th and 95th centile, respectively, of the reference curve for their age and gender. This methodology is used by both the Health Survey of England and is outlined in the guidance to primary care trusts (PCTs) on calculating local childhood obesity prevalence. There are no plans to change this following publication of the Department's guidance on measuring childhood obesity on 11 January 2006.

Recent guidance on measuring childhood obesity provides advice to PCTs on how to measure the height and weight of children in reception year (four to five years) and year 6 (10 to 11 years). This local data on childhood obesity will help inform local planning, targeting of local resources and interventions and enable tracking of local progress against the childhood obesity public service agreement target.

Ophthalmic Services

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether NHS organisations were invited to submit proposals for mobile clinics for cataract operations. [17373]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 17 October 2005]:* Any organisation, including national health service organisations, could have expressed an interest in the advertisement published in the *Official Journal* of the European Union advertisement in 2003 and submitted a pre-qualification questionnaire. No NHS organisations responded to these stages of the procurement.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of ophthalmic services in Wolverhampton. [46822]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* It is the responsibility of the Wolverhampton city primary care trust to ensure that appropriate services are commissioned to meet the needs of its local population.

The Birmingham and the Black Country strategic health authority reports that the Royal Wolverhampton hospitals national health service trust intends to relocate ophthalmic services from the Wolverhampton eye infirmary to new facilities in the New Cross hospital. This follows a formal period of public consultation which concluded in December 2004.

Paediatric Continence Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what action she plans to take to promote the development of integrated paediatric continence services in every primary care trust; [43574]

(2) what assessment she has made of the effects of integrated continence services to children with persistent bladder and bowel problems. [43575]

Mr. Byrne: Primary care trusts will be assessed increasingly against the standards identified in the national service framework for children, young people and maternity services, and their progress toward meeting these standards, including standard six, which recommends integrated paediatric continence services. This is in line with our assessment that integrated community-based paediatric continence services, informed by our previous guidance, "Good Practice in

Paediatric Continence Services", can help children with incontinence problems and their parents or carers to access care and treatment more easily. The guidance is available on the Department's website at: www.cgsupport.nhs.uk/PDFs/articles/good_practice_paediatric_continence_services.pdf.

Parkinson's Disease

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what recent discussions she has had with *(a)* ministerial colleagues and *(b)* others about the provision of funding for Parkinson's disease nurse specialists; and if she will make a statement; [47349]

(2) what assessment she has made of the levels of funding required for Parkinson's disease nurse specialists; and if she will make a statement. [47361]

Mr. Byrne: We have made no assessment on the levels of funding required for Parkinson's disease nurse specialists, nor have we had recent discussions on the provision of such nurses.

It is the responsibility of primary care trusts to provide services for those living with Parkinson's disease. This may include the provision of Parkinson's disease nurse specialists.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government are taking to increase the quality of treatment available for those suffering from Parkinson's disease in Bedfordshire; and if she will make a statement. [47353]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national service framework (NSF) for long-term conditions focuses on improving services for people with neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease. People with these conditions will get faster diagnosis, more rapid treatment and a comprehensive package of care under the NSF, both nationally and in Bedfordshire.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many Parkinson's disease specialist nurses there have been in Bedfordshire in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [47355]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Patientline Contract

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 4 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 226W, on the Patientline Contract, what monitoring her Department has carried out on the *(a)* pricing policies and *(b)* profits of Patientline. [46560]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* I refer the right hon. Member to the ministerial statement made on 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 33WS.

Patientline is contracted by national health service trusts to supply a service for patients. The detail of and the performance against the contact is a matter for the trusts.

Plagiocephaly

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice her Department has provided to parents on positional plagiocephaly. [37213]

Mr. Byrne: The Department's guidance to parents on the first five years of their child's life, 'Birth to five' advises parents to enable their babies to experience a range of positions during waking hours. This is good for their development. Positional plagiocephaly is caused by consistent pressure applied to one part of a baby's skull over a period of time, typically while sleeping in one position. This is commonly remedied by encouraging the baby to adopt different postures while awake.

Poultry Inspections

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Food Standards Agency put in place to monitor compliance with the requirement for poultry inspection assistants appointed after 1 January to meet the new training and qualification requirements of the EU Hygiene Package. [44985]

Caroline Flint: The Official Veterinarian (OV) in the plant is responsible for checking that slaughterhouse staff appointed as poultry inspection assistants have undergone formal training and external assessment and achieved the necessary qualification awarded by the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health.

The Food Standards Agency audits OVs' compliance with their instructions.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many poultry slaughterhouses have indicated to her Department that they wish the Meat Hygiene Services to replace poultry inspection assistants with official poultry meat hygiene inspectors after 1 January as a result of the EU Hygiene Package as it affects poultry inspection assistants' training and qualifications. [44986]

Caroline Flint: In early November 2005, the Meat Hygiene Service (MHS) surveyed all 109 licensed poultry slaughterhouses on their future intentions regarding the use of plant inspection assistants after 1 January 2006. 63 operators replied that they were using plant inspection assistants at the time.

11 operators indicated that they were considering changing their current inspection system. Of these, three confirmed that they intended to cease using plant inspection assistants and would require MHS staff to carry out post-mortem inspection, four were considering replacing plant inspection assistants with MHS staff and one was considering using MHS staff as emergency cover for plant inspection assistants. Three were proposing to introduce plant inspection assistants at their establishment.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes will be made to the training and qualifications arrangements for poultry inspection assistants after 1 January following the introduction of the EU Hygiene Package. [44987]

Caroline Flint: Slaughterhouse staff appointed as poultry inspection assistants after 1 January 2006 are required to undergo formal training and pass the same examination as official auxiliaries in relation to the official controls they will actually perform.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment the Food Standards Agency has made of the public health implications of allowing transitional arrangements in the new EU Hygiene Package. [44988]

Caroline Flint: Transitional arrangements for the new European hygiene regulations cover a range of issues, including poultry meat inspection.

In view of the more robust training requirements for plant inspection assistants (PIAs) contained in the regulations and reduced risks to food safety from British poultry meat, the Food Standards Agency's assessment of the transitional arrangements relating to PIAs is that there is no negative implication for public health.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether poultry inspection assistants in post prior to 1 January will be permitted to continue to inspect poultry meat without reference to the new training and qualifications framework in the new EU Hygiene Package under transitional arrangements. [44989]

Caroline Flint: Existing plant inspection assistants (PIAs), in post prior 1 January 2006, can continue to assist the Official Veterinarian unless their performance falls below the requirements of the Regulation, in which case their authorisation will be withdrawn.

Existing PIAs are required to pass the same examination as the official auxiliaries for the tasks they are authorised to perform by 31 December 2009, end of the transitional period.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what training poultry inspection assistants in post before 1 January were required to undergo before they were permitted to inspect poultry meat. [44990]

Caroline Flint: The training for plant inspection assistants was set out in Regulation 11 of the Poultry Meat, Farmed Game Bird Meat and Rabbit Meat (Hygiene and Inspection) Regulations 1995 (revoked on 31 December 2005). The training consisted of theoretical and practical experience of on-line post-mortem inspection under the supervision of the official veterinary surgeon.

The recommendation for theoretical training was 15 hours of instruction dependant upon the candidate's existing knowledge and the recommendation for on-line practical experience was 50 hours for the species they would be inspecting. This could vary depending on the number of species to be inspected and the previous experience of the candidate.

The contents of the training included gross pathology, leading to detention and control of unfit meat; animal welfare; anatomy; physiology and an understanding of relevant legislation and the Meat Hygiene Service's role in its enforcement.

Prescriptions

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have been prosecuted under the Health Act 1999 for wrongful claims of free prescriptions in Gravesham in each year since 2000. [29822]

Jane Kennedy: Since August 2001, a penalty charge system has been in place in respect of those falsely claiming exemption to national health service pharmaceutical charges. This has resulted in a considerable increase in civil action being instigated for first time offenders with repeat offenders subsequently dealt with through criminal proceedings. Penalties are sanctioned through the civil courts as criminal prosecution of offenders would not be a cost effective way of dealing with such high volume but low-value frauds.

Up to 31 March 2005, 160,000 penalty notices had been issued, with a further surcharge applied if the penalty charge was not settled within the given time limit. The total amount recovered up to 31 March is £2,950,000. These figures are national and are not broken down into regions as requested.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2166W, on primary care trusts, if she will make it her policy not to require primary care trusts to *(a)* outsource and *(b)* market test services. [43571]

Mr. Byrne: There is no central requirement for primary care trusts to outsource or market test services. We want the new primary care trusts (PCTs), not the existing strategic health authorities, to decide how best to manage their new responsibilities after reconfiguration.

If a new PCT wishes to change the provision of community services in the future, this will of course be subject to consultation before any decisions are made.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether it is her intention to encourage primary care trusts to reduce direct provision of services to a minimum. [43562]

Mr. Byrne: It is not the intention to encourage primary care trusts to reduce direct provision of services to a minimum. The Secretary of State made this clear in her statement to Parliament on 25 October 2005, stating:

> "District nurses, health visitors and other staff delivering clinical services will continue to be employed by their PCT, unless and until the PCT decides otherwise"

and

> "any such decisions would be driven locally following our White Paper deliberation".

We do not have a policy requirement or timetable for primary care trusts (PCTs) to divest themselves of provision. We will support PCTs whether or not they divest themselves of service provision, provided that what is being offered is genuinely best for local patient care.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list all hospitals with a private finance initiative contract, broken down by constituency; what the value is of each contract; and what the repayment costs are on each contract. [42668]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 988–89W and on 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1885W, which stated that detailed unitary payment (we have interpreted repayment costs to mean the unitary charges) for schemes which have reached financial close had been placed in the Library. This list has now been updated to reflect constituencies and the four private finance initiative hospital schemes which have reached financial close since then and which are over £20 million in capital value.

Purified Protein Derivative

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects Mantoux-strength purified protein derivative to receive a product licence from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. [39325]

Jane Kennedy: A marketing authorisation for any medicinal product, including Mantoux purified protein derivative, will be issued by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency if the data submitted in support of that application are considered satisfactory against the standard criteria of safety, quality and efficacy for the intended use.

Respiratory Diseases

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1864W, on respiratory diseases, what assessment she has made of the European Community respiratory health survey; and if she will make a statement. [47163]

Mr. Byrne: The European Community respiratory health survey is specifically designed to estimate variations in the prevalence of asthma; to estimate variations in exposures to known or suspected risk factors for asthma, and assess to what extent these variations explain the variations in the prevalence of disease; and to estimate differences in the use of medication for asthma.

The results of this survey will prove valuable for health professionals working to identify the causes, and most effective treatments, for asthma.

Rickets

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the incidence was of rickets in the UK in each of the last five years. [37133]

Caroline Flint: The incidence of rickets is shown in the table. The information provided is for England only.

All diagnosis count of finished consultant episodes for rickets[1] national service hospitals, England 2000–01 to 2004–05

	All diagnosis count of finished consultant episodes
2000–01	229
2001–02	297
2002–03	283
2003–04	329
2004–05	306

[1] Rickets defined as:
Rickets, active recorded as primary or secondary diagnosis.
Excludes—rickets: coeliac, crohn's, inactive, renal, vitamin D resistant.

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

School Sanitary Provision

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what penalties are imposed on schools failing to adhere to the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999, with regard to the number of toilets and washbasins provided for pupils. [47233]

Jacqui Smith: I have been asked to reply.

Responsibility for applying the requirements of these regulations rests with local education authorities. There are no penalties for failure to meet these requirements, but the Secretary of State for Education and Skills has the power to direct schools and LEAs to meet the Regulations.

Special Advisers

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the special advisers in post in her Department, broken down by pay band; and what the total budgeted cost to her Department of special advisers is for 2005–06. [29409]

Jane Kennedy: Since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each pay band. For the most recent information, I refer the hon. Member to the statement made by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 158–62WS.

Information on the numbers of special advisers prior to 2003 was provided at regular intervals and this information will be available in the Library.

Information relating to costs for 2005–06 will be published after the end of the current financial year.

Strategic Health Authorities (Board Members)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the board members of each strategic health authority who have left their position in each of the last three years. [46265]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* Information about board members who have left the boards of strategic health authorities is not available centrally.

The NHS Appointments Commission does hold information about the appointment of non-executive board members since 2001 when it was established.

The NHS Appointments Commission have been asked to write to the hon. Member regarding this matter.

Thyroid Function Testing

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will introduce routine testing for thyroid function. [47239]

Mr. Byrne: Routine testing for thyroid function is currently available at the clinical judgement of health care professionals.

Trainee Medical Staff (Financial Support)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes have been made to financial support available to trainee NHS *(a)* nurses, *(b)* doctors, *(c)* midwives and *(d)* managers since 1997. [45884]

Mr. Byrne: We developed the NHS bursary scheme for trainee nurses and midwives in its present form in 1998. Since 1999, there have been a number of additional allowances provided by the NHS bursary scheme that include re-imbursement for clinical placements, travel and accommodation costs, a childcare allowance and we have recently extended provision for maternity leave.

Since 2002, the national health service has paid the tuition fees for students on years five and six of their pre-registration medical education programmes and years two until four of the post-graduate programme. These students may also be eligible for a means-tested NHS bursary.

There has been no significant change to the financial support available to trainees on the national graduate management training scheme.

Velcade

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will issue guidelines to primary care trusts on the prescribing of Velcade to apply until such time as the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence has issued its guidelines; and if she will make a statement. [48367]

Jane Kennedy: In 1999, the Department issued Health Service Circular 1999/176, which asks national health service bodies to continue with local arrangements for the managed introduction of new technologies where guidance from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence has not yet been issued. These arrangements should include an assessment of the available evidence.

Worcestershire Acute Hospital Trust

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average length of stay is for patients in Worcestershire Acute Hospital Trust in the last year for which figures are available. [46894]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The average length of stay for patients in Worcestershire Acute Hospitals National Health Service Trust during 2004–05 was 4.9 days.

Notes:
Finished provider spell
A finished provider spell is defined as a period of in-patient care within one health care provider that commences with the patient's admission and ends on the date of discharge. It may comprise one or more finished consultant episodes (FCEs).
Length of stay (duration of spell)
Length of stay is calculated as the difference in days between the admission date and the discharge date, where both are given. Length of stay is based on hospital spells and only applies to ordinary admissions, that is, day cases are excluded, unless otherwise stated. Information relating to Length of stay figures, including discharge method/destination, diagnoses and any operative procedures, is based only on the final episode of the spell.
Ungrossed data
Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data, that is, the data is ungrossed.

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics, NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Academy Schools

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list sponsors of academy schools making donations of £100,000 or more since 1997. [47300]

Jacqui Smith: The sponsors of academies, which are open or in implementation, who will be making donations of £100,000 or more since 1997 are:

Amey plc

Sir Clive Bourne

Corporation of London

Roger de Haan Charitable Trust (projects with Kent County Council and with Kings School Canterbury)

Deacon's Trust Perkins Engines

Diocese of Liverpool and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Liverpool

Diocese of Ripon and Leeds

Dixons CTC Trust

Bob Edmiston

Emmanuel Schools Foundation

Garrard Education Trust

Greig Trust with the London Diocesean Board for Schools

Harris Charitable Trust (and a project with The Whitgift Foundation)

John Laycock and the University of the West of England

Leicester Diocesan Board for Education and the Samworth Brothers

Liverpool University and Granada Learning

Sir Frank Lowe

Macmillan CTC

John Madejski

David Meller

The Mercers Company with Thomas Telford Online (and a project with HSBC)

Oasis Community Learning

Jack Petchey Foundation

Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark with the Provincial de la Salle Brothers

Alec Reed

Peter Shalson

Toc H and the Church of England

Barry Townsley

Travis Charitable Trust

UBS

United Learning Trust (and projects with Manchester Science Park and Manchester Diocese)

The Worshipful Company of Haberdashers

A-levels

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average A-level points score per pupil was for 11 to 18 years schools with sixth forms containing *(a)* 50 or fewer, *(b)* 51 to 100, *(c)* 101 to 150, *(d)* 151 to 200, *(e)* 201 to 250 and *(f)* more than 250 pupils in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [47826]

Jacqui Smith: The average GCE/VCE A/AS point score per candidate aged 16 to 18 in school sixth forms (excluding independent schools), split by size of sixth form for 2003 to 2005 is as follows:

Number of pupils aged 16 to 18	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
50 or fewer	164.9	179.0	169.0
51 to 100	196.2	203.0	202.1
101 to 150	222.6	226.8	229.1
151 to 200	255.9	261.4	256.8
201 to 250	282.3	282.8	290.9
250 or more	291.9	298.5	301.6
Total	266.8	273.6	277.6

Note:

Average point score calculations are based on A-level candidates only. The size of the sixth form has been estimated by using the total number of students aged 16–18 at the school, whether they were entered for an A-level or not.

Asset Sales

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the income derived from sales of assets resulting from the tier simplification of education structures in the North East; if she will list the items sold; and if she will make a statement. [48127]

Jacqui Smith: We have not made any estimates of the income to local authorities from the disposal of surplus school assets resulting from the reorganisation of education structures in the North East. It is for the local authorities to determine which assets are no longer needed by schools and the community which may use them.

The organisation of school provision is a local matter and local authorities have overall responsibility for ensuring that there are sufficient schools to meet local needs and final decisions on proposals to change the pattern of provision would normally be made by the local School Organisation Committee (SOC) or schools adjudicator.

In the North East there are three local authorities with middle schools (Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumberland and North Tyneside). Following approval from the schools adjudicator in April 2004 Newcastle upon Tyne LA has now completed its reorganisation of schools (3 to 2 tier) in the Outer West area. The Gosforth area will remain 3 tier. Northumberland LA has published proposals and obtained approval for a reorganisation scheme to remove some of its middle schools for implementation from 2005 onwards. We understand that North Tyneside LA has no current plans to reorganise its school structure.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what contingency plans her Department has prepared for schools in case of a reported outbreak of avian influenza within the UK. [48679]

Jacqui Smith: I refer the hon. Member to the earlier replies given to the hon. Member for Sutton and Cheam (Mr. Burstow) on 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1341W and my hon. Friend the Member for Bury North (Mr. Chaytor) on 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 96W.

Boarding Schools

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the terms of reference are of her Department's working group on boarding schools; and who are the members of the working group. [47124]

Jacqui Smith: The Department chairs an informal group of external partners who are assisting in exploring the potential for greater use by local authorities of boarding education provision for vulnerable children, where a careful assessment of the child's individual needs indicates that this would be beneficial. The group is focusing on designing a series of pathfinder projects with a sample of local authorities, boarding schools and representatives of educational trusts to develop and evaluate tools for identifying and assessing those children whose needs could be met by appropriate boarding provision.

In addition to the DfES officials, the group's current membership is:

Adrian Underwood—National Director, Boarding Schools' Association;

Melvyn Roffe—Chairman, State Boarding Schools' Association;

Gerri McAndrew—Director, The Frank Buttle Trust;

Colin Morrison—Chairman, Royal Wanstead Children's Foundation;

Julie Burns—Director, Joint Education Trust;

Maureen Phillips—Head of Service, Looked After Children, Hertfordshire County Council; and

Jane Held—DfES contracted consultant and researcher.

Catch-up Classes

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in what subjects she proposes to provide catch-up classes as referred to on page 21 of the White Paper Higher Standards, Better Schools for All. [47762]

Jacqui Smith: Schools are best placed to know the learning needs of their pupils and must use their own professional judgement to decide in which subjects they need to provide catch-up classes.

We will continue through our National Strategies programme to offer advice, guidance and support to primary and secondary schools on catch-up classes in English and mathematics. In addition, we will be investing £565 million by 2007–08 to support the personalisation of learning in schools, focusing particularly on helping children who have fallen behind in English and mathematics, and a further £60 million in each of the next two years to provide effective one-to-one and small group tuition for the lowest attaining pupils in targeted schools.

Citizenship Curriculum

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to ensure that the citizenship curriculum includes the teaching of *(a)* the words of the National Anthem and *(b)* knowledge of the flags and patron saints of the nations of the United Kingdom; and if she will make a statement. [48858]

Jacqui Smith: The flags, patron saints and the national anthem of the United Kingdom are not a separate element of the Citizenship National Curriculum. However, understanding the origins and implications of the diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom is an important part of Citizenship curriculum which became statutory for 11 to 16-year-olds in September 2002. In this context pupils have the opportunity to explore the unique qualities that are part of the shared identities of the countries of the United Kingdom. They may consider the political, religious, social and constitutional systems that affect their lives and communities and that may include learning about the flags, patron saints and the national anthem. These are presently not a separate element of the Citizenship National Curriculum and there are currently no plans to change this.

Civil Servants

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what proportion of each civil service grade in her Department is located in each region of England; what the average salary is for each grade; and if she will make a statement. [35897]

Maria Eagle: My hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Secretary at the Cabinet Office has written to the hon. Member with details for the civil service of the percentage of staff in post by region and grade responsibility and the median salary of staff in post by region and grade responsibility as at 1 April 2004. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Class Sizes

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many primary school classes for five to seven-year-olds contained more than 30 pupils in each of the last five years. [48258]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary schools[1]: number and percentage of Key Stage 1 classes containing 31 or more pupils[2,3] 2001 to 2005—Position in January each year

	Key Stage 1	
	Number of classes of 31 or more pupils	*Percentage of classes of 31 or more pupils*
2001	1,120	1.8
2002	330	0.5
2003	520	0.9
2004	650	1.2
2005	700	1.2

[1] Includes middles schools as deemed.

[2] One teacher classes.

[3] Classes as taught during a single selected period in each school on the day of the census in January.

Note:

Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

Annual Schools Census

Dental Training

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the written statement of 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 64WS, on dental training, whether the additional temporary dental training places awarded to the Newcastle Dental School in 2005–06 will be renewed in 2006–07; and what additional resources will be made available to Newcastle Dental School in *(a)* 2006–07 and *(b)* succeeding years to make provision for the additional students recruited in 2005–06. [48799]

Bill Rammell: In order to ensure that the total intake of dental students does not fall in 2006–07, the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) intends to extend the temporary 2005–06 allocation of dental student numbers for a further year. The University of Newcastle was awarded 20 temporary dental student numbers for academic year 2005–06 and has now been offered 12 temporary dental student numbers for academic year 2006–07.

The 2006–07 funding to be allocated to Newcastle for its additional dentistry places is subject to agreement by the HEFCE Board later this month, when overall decisions are taken about funding levels for the sector. Funding will be at the rate decided for all dental and medical students and will be announced to the university thereafter. HEFCE has undertaken to fund both the 2005–06 and 2006–07 intakes through to the completion of their studies.

HEFCE will also make available additional capital funding to underpin the 2005–06 allocation of permanent dental student numbers. Existing dental schools, including Newcastle, will be invited to submit a case for funding to support the development of innovative methods of dental education.

Departmental Advertising

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the public information advertising campaigns run by her Department in the past 12 months; and how much her Department spent on *(a)* newspapers and *(b)* television advertising for those campaigns. [42513]

Maria Eagle: The following table lists spend on newspapers and television for public information advertising campaigns in the last 12 months.

£000

Campaign	Newspaper spend	Television advertising
Fast Track recruitment	66	0
Student Finance	318	2,418
Adult Basic Skills	283	2,588
Foundation Degrees	18	0
Parents Centre Website	189	0
Sure Start	251	0
Parents Centre Website	161	0
Every Child Matters	2	0
Teenage Pregnancy	80	0
Childcare Recruitment	271	0
Total Spend	1,642	5,006

Early Interventions

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent on the New Approaches To Contact Early Interventions Project; and why the project was terminated. [48170]

Maria Eagle: The Government did not spend money on the NATC Early Interventions Project. The Government developed the Family Resolutions Pilot Project, which was a time-limited pilot project that ran for one year from September 2004 to September 2005. It was designed to test the value of group work and parent planning sessions in helping parents resolve their differences about contact arrangements for their children after parental separation, without recourse to the full court process.

The pilot project ended in September 2005 and an independent evaluation, to assess its impact, is currently being prepared, which is expected to be published in March 2006. This is intended to inform decisions about how to implement lessons learned from the pilot.

The Government invested an estimated total of £300,000 in Family Resolutions over two financial years (£170,000 in 2004-05 and £130,000 in 2005-06). Final expenditure figures will not be available until end year outturn is known, in April 2006.

Education (Restriction of Employment) Regulations

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many students were reported to her Department under the Education (Restriction of Employment) Regulations 2000 by *(a)* teacher training colleges and *(b)* further education institutions in each year since 2000. [47352]

(2) how many teachers were reported to her Department under the Education (Restriction of Employment) Regulations 2000 in each year since 2000; and how many *(a)* were dismissed from teaching on the grounds of misconduct and *(b)* resigned in circumstances which would have led to consideration of their dismissal had they not resigned. [47357]

Jacqui Smith: The Department does not collect the information requested in the format requested. However, figures representing the total number of referrals to the Department in each of the last five years are set out in the following table. These include both child abuse and non child abuse issues from all sources that report concerns to the Secretary of State.

	Number of referrals from all sources
2005	2,092
2004	1,362
2003	1,147
2002	1,004
2001	1,007
2000	1,092

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many people received education maintenance allowances in *(a)* Stroud constituency, *(b)* Gloucestershire and *(c)* England in each year since the inception of the scheme; and what estimate she has made of the impact of the scheme on the percentage stay-on rate for 16-year-olds; [41530]

(2) how many people *(a)* were eligible for and *(b)* took up education maintenance allowances in (i) Stroud constituency, (ii) Gloucestershire and (iii) England in the last year for which figures are available. [41531]

Maria Eagle: The first part of question 41530 and question 41531 are matters for the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to my hon. Friend with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Regarding the impact of EMA, I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I have given to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1015W.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 30 January 2006:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Questions that asked "how many people received education maintenance allowances in each year since the inception of the scheme in *(a)* Stroud constituency, *(b)* Gloucestershire and *(c)* England?", and how many people *(a)* were eligible for and *(b)* took up education maintenance allowances in (i) Stroud constituency, (ii) Gloucestershire and (iii) England, in the last year for which figures are available?".

Information on the number of young people who have applied for, enrolled and received EMA is available at local education authority level, but not at constituency level. The information relates to the academic years.

EMA was piloted in 56 areas before launching the national scheme. Gloucestershire local education authority was not a pilot area. EMA was rolled-out nationally in the academic year 2004-05. In this year, EMA was available to all 16-years-olds nationally and to 17 and 18-years-olds in former pilot areas (young people who are 19 are entitled to receive EMA in certain circumstances).

The following table displays data for Gloucestershire local education authority area and England.

	Number of young people receiving at least one EMA payment			
Area	2001/02 Pilot	2002/03 Pilot	2003/04 Pilot	2004/05 National
Gloucestershire	n.a	n.a	n.a	2,125
England	127,900	125,600	115,900	297,500

No data is available prior to 2001/02. For 2001/02–2003/04, no data is available for Sunderland, East Lancashire or Suffolk. Therefore, figures for England (pilot areas) are approximate only.

In preparation for the national roll-out, projections of the number of young people eligible for EMA were only made for 16-years-olds. The projections are formed by applying income distributions (derived from the Family Resources Survey) and expected numbers in full-time further education to the estimated population of 16-years-olds. When applied to individual localities the figures may be subject to some variation but they provide a useful estimate.

The following table displays the data for Gloucestershire local education authority area and England.

	Take-up of EMA by 16-years-olds in 2004/05		
Area	Projected number eligible	Actual take-up	Percentage take-up
Gloucestershire	2,210	2,125	96.15
England	266,000	217,360	81.71

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question. If you would like further details please contact Chris Bradley at the LSC National Office on 0114 207 4512 or Christopher.Bradley@lsc.gov.uk.

Education Statistics (Wandsworth)

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average class size is in (*a*) primary schools and (*b*) secondary schools in Wandsworth. [47754]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: average class size[2,3] January 2005: Wandsworth local authority

Maintained primary	25.8
Maintained secondary	21.6

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] One teacher classes.
[3] Classes as taught during a single selected period in each school on the day of the census.

Source:
Annual Schools Census

Education White Paper

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions she has had with representatives from the North East region regarding the education White Paper "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All". [48392]

Jacqui Smith: The Secretary of State has been in the north east of England on a number of occasions in recent months. She met with local MPs and councillors and among other issues she discussed the White Paper "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All". She also addressed the delegates in the North of England Conference in Gateshead on 6 January.

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many representations she has received from Wales about the cross-border implications of the White Paper on Schools, "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All: More Choice for Parents and Pupils". [48446]

Jacqui Smith: The Department has received over 200 representations from a wide range of organisations, Members of Parliament and members of the public which directly refer to the White Paper. We have not received any representations from Wales which specifically refer to cross border implications of the White Paper on Schools, "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All: More Choice for Parents and Pupils".

Educational Attainment

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of candidates achieved five or more A* to C grades at GCSE, excluding BTEC First diplomas or equivalent, in each of the last six years. [45376]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 24 January 2006]*: The figures requested are included in the following table. BTEC First diplomas were not included in GCSE and equivalent results prior to 2004.

Year[1]	Percentage of 15-year-olds[2] achieving 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent excluding BTEC First diplomas	Percentage contribution of BTEC First diplomas to the percentage of 15-year-olds[2] achieving 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent
2005[3]	56.2	0.1
2004	53.7	0.0
2003	52.9	0.0
2002	51.6	0.0
2001	50.0	0.0
2000	49.2	0.0

[1] BTEC First diplomas were only included in GCSE results from 2004. Results only included GCSEs and GNVQs between 2000 and 2003.
[2] The figures shown relate to pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year (ie 31 August).
[3] 2005 figures are revised. 2004 figures are final.

English Folk Dance and Song

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will include teaching of English folk dance and song within the national curriculum; and if she will make a statement. [48857]

Jacqui Smith: Within the National Curriculum Programme of Study for Physical Education there is already provision for the teaching of dances which reflect different times and cultures. The National Curriculum Programme for Study for Music states that the breadth of study should be taught through a range of music from different times and cultures which may include music from the British Isles.

We have moved away from a prescriptive curriculum and no longer explicitly state exactly what must be taught in any subject. Indeed, we have given teachers this flexibility as they will know the best ways to address the needs of their pupils.

Excellence Centres

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) in which constituencies early excellence centres are located; [43935]

(2) how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time places have been available at early excellence centres in each year for which figures are available. [43937]

Beverley Hughes: There are 107 early excellence centres (EEC) across England, of these six deliver special projects across the country and the others are based around schools and early years settings. We do not hold information on the constituencies covered by the centres. The following table lists the number of centres within each local authority.

We do not collect information about the number of full or part-time places provided by individual centres. Centres provide a range of services including: one-stop shop activities like parent/carer drop-ins, access to adult education and training, home visiting, health visitor and therapist services, information and counselling.

Local authority	*Number of centres*
Bath and NE Somerset	1
Bedfordshire	2
Birmingham	2
Blackpool	1
Bolton	1
Bradford	1
Bristol	2
Bury	1
Cambridgeshire	2
Camden	1
Cornwall	2
Coventry	1
Croydon	1
Cumbria	1
Derby	1
Derbyshire	1
Devon	2
Dorset	1
Durham	1
Ealing	1
Gateshead	1
Gloucestershire	1
Greenwich	1
Hackney	1
Hammersmith and Fulham	2
Hampshire	2
Haringey	1
Harrow	1
Herefordshire	1
Hertfordshire	1
Hillingdon	1
Isle of Wight	2
Islington	2
Kent	1
Kingston upon Thames	1
Kirklees	1
Lambeth	1
Lancashire	2
Leeds	1
Lewisham	1
Liverpool	1
Luton	2
Manchester	1
Middlesbrough	1
Newcastle	1
Newham	1
Norfolk	1
North East Lincolnshire	1
North Tyneside	1
Northamptonshire	1
Northumberland	1
Nottinghamshire	1
Oxfordshire	2
Peterborough	1
Plymouth	1
Portsmouth	1
Reading: Norcot	1
Richmond-upon-Thames	1
Rotherham	2
Sheffield	2
Somerset	2
Southampton	1
South Tyneside	1
St. Helens	1
Stockport	1
Sunderland	1
Surrey	1
Sutton	1
Swindon	1
Tameside	1
Tower Hamlets	1
Wakefield	1
Waltham Forest	1
Warwickshire	2
West Sussex	1
Westminster	1
Wigan	2
Wiltshire	2
Wirral	2
Wokingham	1
Wolverhampton	1
Grand total	101

Note:
The six special projects are not based at any particular setting.

Fire Safety

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her Department's timetable is for bringing forward final proposals on design and managing against the risk of fire in schools. [45021]

Jacqui Smith: The draft of Building Bulletin 100, "Designing and Managing Against the Risk of Fire in Schools", has been out to public consultation and an analysis of the responses should be completed by the end of March. Work will then commence on a final version and we expect to be able to publish this during the summer.

Free Milk

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of school age children received free milk on the latest date for which figures are available. [48065]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not collected centrally.

GCSE Performance

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to improve the performance of pupils who attain fewer than five GCSEs or equivalent at grade A* to C. [47955]

Jacqui Smith: We have made good progress in the number of pupils getting five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grade A* to C. In 2005, 56.3 per cent. of 15- year-olds achieved five or more GCSEs or equivalent—a 2.6 percentage point increase on 2004 results and an increase of 11.2 percentage points compared with 1997. Over 67,000 more pupils are now achieving at this level than did so in 1997. We have also made good progress in the percentage of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grade A* to C including English and mathematics, which rose from 42.6 per cent. in 2004 to 44.3 per cent. in 2005. This was the biggest annual percentage point increase since 1997.

The Department has a number of initiatives to ensure that schools receive the resources, advice and support that they need to raise attainment further at key stage 4. The key stage 3 national strategy has extended to become a full secondary national strategy for school improvement designed to raise standards, particularly in the core subjects, for all secondary school pupils. It aims to introduce excellent teaching and learning practices into every classroom through CPD, teaching materials and consultancy support. In addition, we are drawing on the expertise of successful schools and the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust to work in partnership with around 400 schools underperforming in value added terms.

The White Paper "Higher Standards, Better Schools for All" published in October 2005 sets out our plans to improve standards further, particularly by providing significant new incentives for schools to tailor education to the needs of every child and focus on the basics of English and mathematics.

Head Teachers

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to encourage teachers to take the National Professional Qualification for Headship. [47372]

Jacqui Smith: The NPQH is mandatory for all aspirant head teachers wishing to take up their first headship posts in LEA maintained, and non-maintained special, schools. The success of the programme is evidenced by the increasing numbers coming forward to undertake it.

The National College for School Leadership works closely with its regional providers to target potential applicants, and advertises widely nationally and regionally during the application rounds.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of headmasters who lead more than one school. [47367]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not held centrally.

Home Tutors

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) to what regulations home tutors are subject; [44283]

(2) whether an individual who has been convicted of a sexual offence may work as a home tutor; and if she will make a statement. [44286]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* Where an individual is barred from working with children under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 on the grounds that he or she is "unsuitable to work with children", it is a criminal offence to work or seek work in any position that includes training or being in sole charge of a child or children. A person guilty of this offence is liable, on summary conviction, to imprisonment for up to six months and/or a fine and, on indictment, to imprisonment for up to five years and/or a fine.

The Department would strongly advise parents to verify the credentials of any person employed to provide private tuition for a child, particularly if that person is likely to be alone with the child at any time. For example, parents could ask prospective tutors for references from a recent employer.

The Department is fully aware that parents currently have limited access to information. The new scheme to be implemented as part of the Bichard Inquiry Recommendations will allow parents to access relevant information on people they wish to employ as home tutors.

I made clear in my statement to the House on 12 January, we are committed to implementing Sir Michael Bichard's recommendations to tighten the system of vetting and barring people who wish to work with children and that will entail the ability for parents to check whether tutors, nannies, and other individuals whom they employ, are barred or disqualified.

Independent Schools

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total annual financial saving is to independent schools as a result of their charitable status. [47763]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply.

Independent schools, along with other charities, benefit from a range of tax exemptions on trading profits, rental income, investment income and business rates, as well as certain reliefs from VAT. Those registered with HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) are also able to reclaim Gift Aid on qualifying donations. Using Gift Aid, the charity is able to reclaim 28 pence for every £1 donated.

It is not possible to ascertain the amount of these reliefs because HMRC records do not distinguish amounts repaid to or claimed by charities according to type of charity.

India

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department has taken to help educational establishments in the UK and India establish lasting partnerships since the 2002 New Delhi Declaration. [48393]

Bill Rammell: Last September, on a visit to Delhi, the Prime Minister announced a major £10 million initiative spread over five years, aimed at re-vitalising educational links between institutions in the UK and India. The development of sustainable, long-term partnerships between institutions will be key to the success of this initiative. My Department, together with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the British Council, is leading on designing the shape of the new initiative which will begin this April. This design work is continuing and I expect to be in a position to announce more details of the scheme next month.

International Students

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment her Department has made of the contribution of international students to the UK economy; [48599]

(2) what assessment she has made of how many international students engaged in part-time employment during their time in the United Kingdom; [48600]

(3) what steps her Department is taking to encourage international students to attend UK universities. [48602]

Bill Rammell: A study commissioned by the British Council in 2004 into the Global Value of UK Education and Training Exports estimated that international students contribute some £5 billion a year to the UK economy. Since 1999, my Department has taken steps to increase the number of international students in UK higher education through the Prime Minister's Initiative (PMI). A key element of the PMI is a worldwide marketing campaign to promote the credentials of UK education overseas. We expect to launch a second phase of the PMI in April. Information on the number of international students working part-time whilst in the UK is not available.

Media Coverage

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what analysis her Department has conducted of print and broadcast media coverage of her in the past 12 months. [47927]

Bill Rammell: The Department does not conduct analysis of media coverage of the Secretary of State.

New Secondary School (Ruislip)

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment was made by her Department of the impact on other secondary schools in the London borough of Hillingdon of the decision to allow the creation of the planned new secondary school in Ruislip; [47065]

(2) what action she has taken to verify the planning predictions of pupil numbers used by the London borough of Hillingdon in its case for the construction of the planned new secondary school in Ruislip. [47068]

Jacqui Smith: The Department relies on local authorities to ensure, in their planning, that the provision of school places matches existing and forecast demand. This is because local authorities are in the best position to assess requirements. With respect to Hillingdon council, this should include the creation of the planned new secondary school in Ruislip.

Nursery Places

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* three and *(b)* four-year-olds whose parents had requested a nursery place did not have one allocated to them in each of the last five years. [48257]

Beverley Hughes: The information requested is not collected centrally.

All four-year-olds have been entitled to a free early education place since 1998 and from April 2004 this entitlement was extended to all three-year-olds. The free entitlement consists of a minimum of five two and a half hour sessions per week for 33 weeks of the year for six terms before statutory school age, which is the term following their fifth birthday.

Some local authorities may additionally offer subsidised child care places but this information is not collected centrally.

Figures for January 2005 show that all four-year-old children are benefiting from some free provision. The figure for three-years-olds is 96 per cent. This covers all maintained, private, voluntary and independent providers and represents 535,100 three-year-olds and 568,300 four-year-olds.

The available information on the number of three and four-year-old children taking up nursery education places in England is shown in the tables.

The latest figures on nursery education places for three and four-year-olds in England were published in Statistical First Release 43/2005 "Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2005 (final)" in September, which is available on my Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/

Table 1: Number of three-year-olds taking up nursery education places[1,2,3] by type of early years provider—England 2001-05

	Position in January each year				
	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Private and voluntary providers[4]					
Number	285,100	283,200	[5]321,500	[5]330,300	[5]327,000
Percentage of population[6]	47	48	56	59	59
Number taking up free places	[7]116,900	[7]184,600 (7)	[5,7]264,500	[7]288,400	[7]302,000
Percentage of population[6]	19	31	46	51	54
Independent schools[8]					
Number	27,200	27,400	26,800	26,200	24,800
Percentage of population[6]	5	5	5	5	4
Number taking up free places	[7]6,100	[7]10,700	[5,7]16,100	[7]15,800	[7]17,300
Percentage of population (6)	1	2	3	3	3

Table 1: Number of three-year-olds taking up nursery education places[1,2,3] by type of early years provider—England 2001–05

	Position in January each year				
	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Maintained nursery and primary schools					
Number	226,800	223,500	218,700	215,300	214,300
Percentage of population[6]	38	38	38	38	38
Nursery schools and nursery classes in primary schools					
Number	n/a	222,000	216,200	212,000	209,500
Percentage of population[6]	n/a	37	37	33	38
Infant classes in primary schools[9]					
Number	n/a	1,600	2,500	3,300	4,800
Percentage of population[6]	n/a	—	—	1	1
Special schools[10,11]					
Number	2,300	2,100	1,900	1,700	1,600
Percentage of population[6]	—	—	—	—	—
All providers[12]					
Number	541,100	536,300	[5]568,900	[5]573,500	[5]567,600
Percentage of population[6]	90	90	98	102	102
Number taking up free places	351,900	421,000	[5,7]501,200	[7]521,200	[7]535,100
Percentage of population[6]	59	71	87	93	96

n/a = not available.
— = less than 0.5 per cent.
[1] Headcount of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year, rounded to the nearest hundred.
[2] Numbers of three-year-olds in schools may include some two-year-olds.
[3] Any child attending more than one provider may have been counted twice.
[4] Includes some local authority providers (other than schools) registered to receive Nursery Education Grants; excludes independent schools and providers not registered to receive Nursery Education Grants.
[5] Scaled up from the data returned for the Early Years Census exercise to all providers of early years education.
[6] Numbers of three-year-olds taking up places expressed as a percentage of the three-year-old population.
[7] Providers returned the number of places for three-year-olds for which they had received or expected to receive funding.
[8] Includes direct grant nursery schools and city academies.
[9] Includes reception and other classes not designated as nursery classes.
[10] Includes general hospital schools.
[11] Excludes pupils who are also registered elsewhere.
[12] Rounding of components may cause discrepancies in totals.

Table 2: Number of four-year-olds taking up nursery education places[1,2] by type of early years provider—England 2001–05

	Position in January each year				
	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Private and voluntary providers[3]					
Number	101,100	96,500	[4]107,100	[4]115,100	[4]105,900
Percentage of population[5]	17	16	18	20	19
Number taking up free places	[6]91,300	[6]89,500	[4,6]100,600	[6]100,100	[6]94,700
Percentage of population[5]	15	15	17	17	17
Independent schools[7]					
Number	28,300	29,400	29,000	28,500	27,200
Percentage of population[5]	5	5	5	5	5
Number taking up free places	[6]21,200	[6]21,200	[4,6]24,400	[6]22,600	[6]21,900
Percentage of population[5]	3	4	4	4	4
Maintained nursery and primary schools					
Number	482,800	477,700	472,200	461,100	449,500
Percentage of population[5]	79	80	80	80	80
Nursery schools and nursery classes in primary schools					
Number	n/a	119,400	115,100	108,200	102,800
Percentage of population[5]	n/a	20	19	19	18
Infant classes in primary schools[8]					
Number	n/a	358,300	357,000	352,900	346,700
Percentage of population[5]	n/a	60	60	61	62
Special schools[9,10]					
Number	2,700	2,700	2,500	2,400	2,100
Percentage of population[5]	—	—	—	—	—

Table 2: Number of four-year-olds taking up nursery education places[1,2] by type of early years provider—England 2001-05

	Position in January each year				
	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
All providers[11]					
Number	614,900	606,300	[4]610,800	[4]607,100	[4]584,700
Percentage of population[5]	101	101	103	105	104
Number taking up free places	598,000	591,100	[4,6]599,700	[6]586,300	[6]568,300
Percentage of population[5]	98	98	101	101	101

n/a = not available.
— = less than 0.5 per cent.
[1] Headcount of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year, rounded to the nearest hundred.
[2] Any child attending more than one provider may have been counted twice.
[3] Includes some local authority providers (other than schools) registered to receive nursery education grants; excludes independent schools and providers not registered to receive nursery education grants.
[4] Scaled up from the data returned for the Early Years Census exercise to all providers of early years education.
[5] Numbers of four-year-olds taking up places expressed as a percentage of the four-year-old population.
[6] Providers returned the number of places for four-year-olds for which they had received or expected to receive funding.
[7] Includes direct grant nursery schools and city academies.
[8] Includes reception and other classes not designated as nursery classes.
[9] Includes general hospital schools.
[10] Excludes pupils who are also registered elsewhere.
[11] Rounding of components may cause discrepancies in totals.

Ofsted

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what proportion of schools inspected by Ofsted were rated *(a)* unsatisfactory, *(b)* satisfactory, *(c)* good and *(d)* outstanding in each year since 1997. [47229]

Jacqui Smith: This is a matter for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, Maurice Smith, has written to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Maurice Smith, dated 2 February 2006:

Your recent parliamentary question has been referred to me, as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of schools, for reply.

You asked how many and what proportion of schools inspected by Ofsted were rated *(a)* unsatisfactory, *(b)* satisfactory, *(c)* good and *(d)* outstanding in each year since 1997.

From January 2000 Ofsted inspections of maintained schools have included a judgement about the overall effectiveness of the school. Until July 2005 these judgements were made on a seven point scale; excellent (1), very good (2), good (3), satisfactory (4), unsatisfactory (5), poor (6) and very poor (7). Since September 2005 a four point scale has been used; outstanding (1), good (2), satisfactory (3) and inadequate (4). Prior to January 2000 inspectors were not required to make a single overall judgement about a school.

The tables overleaf summarise data made available in HMCI's Annual Report for each of the years 1999/2000 to 2004/05. These are shown separately for primary, secondary and special schools.

The overall effectiveness of primary schools

	Number of inspections[1]	*Excellent, very good*[2]	*Good*	*Satisfactory*	*Unsatisfactory, poor*
1999/2000[3]	2,309	20 (1)	43	27	10
2000/01	3,396	23 (1)	42	28	7
2001/02	3,283	24 (2)	45	26	6
2002/03	3,021	25 (1)	44	26	5
2003/04[4]	3,517	19 (1)	48	28	5
2004/05	1,998	19 (1)	49	27	4

The overall effectiveness of secondary schools

	Number of inspections[1]	*Excellent, very good*[2]	*Good*	*Satisfactory*	*Unsatisfactory, poor*
1999/2000[3]	359	24 (1)	43	21	12
2000/01	636	25 (2)	46	23	7
2001/02	548	26 (3)	44	24	7
2002/03	539	28 (4)	43	23	6
2003/04[4]	627	20 (2)	49	22	10
2004/05	485	25 (3)	44	24	7

The overall effectiveness of special schools

	Number of inspections[1]	*Excellent, very good*[2]	*Good*	*Satisfactory*	*Unsatisfactory, poor*
1999/2000[3]	169	34 (2)	34	20	10
2000/01	238	32 (3)	45	15	8
2001/02	213	39 (6)	40	16	6

The overall effectiveness of special schools

	Number of inspections[1]	Excellent, very good[2]	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory, poor
2002/03	179	36 (5)	38	18	8
2003/04[4]	196	21 (3)	55	18	6
2004/05	152	31 (5)	44	20	5

[1] Weighted figures to provide a balanced evidence base.
[2] Figures in brackets are the percentage judged to be excellent.
[3] The overall effectiveness judgement was only available for schools inspected from January in the academic year 1999/2000.
[4] New framework introduced September 2003.

The overall effectiveness of schools autumn term 2005: provisional

	Number of inspections	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Primary	1,52	9	51	31	9
Secondary	362	10	42	34	14
Special	114	26	57	16	1

Overseas Students

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of overseas students studying in further education institutes in England are from India. [45117]

Bill Rammell: Defining for this purpose home learners as those whose country of domicile is either England, Wales or Scotland then there were a total of 82,130 overseas students in further education institutions in England in 2004/05. Of these 2,930 were from India which represents 3.6 per cent. of the total.

Playing for Success (Hartlepool)

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the Playing for Success initiative in Hartlepool. [48868]

Jacqui Smith: Hartlepool United FC is one of more than 150 sports clubs and venues currently signed up to the Department's "Playing for Success" (PfS) initiative, which is establishing study support centres in or near their grounds. Four consecutive national evaluation studies have shown that PfS is highly effective in meeting its objectives of improving the literacy, numeracy and ICT skills of pupils at key stages 2 and 3, as well as boosting their motivation and self esteem. Hartlepool's Centre was not open at the time of the last evaluation. However, the local authority's annual report of the Centre's work in 2004—05 echoes the national findings.

Pupil Performance

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of school pupils who are performing below national expectation. [47436]

Jacqui Smith: Record achievements have been made by pupils in both primary and secondary schools since 1997, as measured by the results from national curriculum tests and public examinations. Last year there were improvements at every key stage, with GCSE and equivalent results showing the biggest annual increase for over a decade.

The following tables show the number and proportion of pupils who did not achieve the target level for their age in each of the national curriculum tests taken at the end of key stages 2 and 3 in 2005, compared to 1997. The tables also show the number and proportion of 15-year-olds who did not achieve the Government's national target of five or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent qualifications in 2005, compared to 1997.

The figures for key stages 2 and 3 represent the number and proportion of children entered for each individual test who are performing below the target level. An individual pupil could be counted under one, two or three headings depending on whether the child is performing below in more than one subject.

Key stage 2

Thousands

	Number of 11-year-olds below level 4[1]	
	1997	2005
English	196.6	122.9
Percentage	34	20
Mathematics	205.0	146.1
Percentage	36	24

Key stage 3

Thousands

	Number of 14-year-olds below level 5[1,2]	
	1997	2005
English	204.2	138.1
Percentage	39	23
Mathematics	191.4	143.2
Percentage	37	24
Science	185.9	168.2
Percentage	36	28

Key stage 4

Thousands

	Number of 15-year-olds with fewer than 5 A-C GCSEs or equivalent*
1997	321.2
Percentage	54.90
2005	278.4
Percentage	43.7

[1] Excludes pupils who were absent or unable to access the national curriculum tests

[2] There are no national curriculum tests in ICT at the end of key stage 3. Results are published on the basis of teacher assessments.

The Government's White Paper—Higher Standards, Better Schools for All—sets out our commitment to an extra investment of £565 million by 2007/08 to support personalisation in primary and secondary schools, focusing particularly on helping children who have fallen behind in English and mathematics. A further £60 million will be available in each of the next two years to provide effective one-to-one and small group tuition for the lowest attaining pupils.

Qualifications (Gateshead)

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Gateshead, East and Washington, West (Mrs. Hodgson) of 16th January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1016W, on qualifications (Gateshead), if she will provide comparable information for each local authority in Tyne and Wear. [48891]

Phil Hope: The following table shows estimates of the level of highest qualification held by the working age population in the local authority districts of Gateshead, Newcastle Upon Tyne, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland. Data comes from the Local Labour Force Survey and covers the period 1999/2000 to 2004/05.

Percentage

Qualification level	*1999/2000*	*2000/01*	*2001/02*	*2002/03*	*2003/04*	*2004/05*
Gateshead						
Level 4 or 5	15	19	17	20	22	22
Level 3	12	11	12	12	12	13
Trade Apprenticeships[1]	12	10	10	10	8	8
Level 2	15	15	17	16	16	16
Below level 2	18	17	17	16	19	18
Other qualifications[2]	5	6	6	7	6	6
No qualifications	23	21	21	19	17	17
Newcastle Upon Tyne						
Level 4 or 5	21	25	25	26	28	26
Level 3	14	13	14	16	15	15
Trade Apprenticeships[1]	10	9	8	8	7	7
Level 2	15	15	13	14	12	13
Below level 2	12	11	13	11	13	12
Other qualifications[2]	10	7	7	7	7	8
No qualifications	18	20	20	18	18	19
North Tyneside						
Level 4 or 5	16	20	22	23	24	26
Level 3	12	13	16	16	15	16
Trade Apprenticeships[1]	14	11	10	8	10	8
Level 2	17	17	16	18	16	17
Below level 2	16	16	14	16	15	15
Other qualifications[2]	8	5	7	7	6	5
No qualifications	16	18	15	13	14	14
South Tyneside						
Level 4 or 5	16	14	16	18	17	17
Level 3	12	12	12	14	15	16
Trade Apprenticeships[1]	15	14	13	11	10	10
Level 2	15	15	15	15	16	18
Below level 2	14	16	18	18	19	17
Other qualifications[2]	9	6	6	6	6	5
No qualifications	19	22	20	18	17	17
Sunderland						
Level 4 or 5	14	15	15	16	15	16
Level 3	11	10	13	14	13	12
Trade Apprenticeships[1]	13	12	10	10	9	8
Level 2	12	16	16	15	16	20
Below level 2	19	18	19	19	20	20
Other qualifications[2]	8	7	6	7	7	6
No qualifications	23	22	21	18	20	18

[1] For the purposes of target measurement people with trade apprenticeships as their highest qualification are assigned to level 3 and level 2 in the ratio of 50:50.
[2] Qualifications that cannot be assigned directly to levels. For the purposes of target measurement, people with Other qualifications as their highest qualification level are assigned to level 3:level 2:below level 2 in the ratio of 10:35:55.
Notes:
1. As with all sample surveys the estimates presented in this table are subject to sampling variability.
2. Columns may not sum to 100 per cent. due to rounding.
3. Working age people are defined as males and females aged 16–64 and 16–59 respectively.

Raising Standards

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if she will make a statement on John Smeaton Community High School in Leeds and the measures the school is taking to raise its standards; [47379]

(2) what steps Agnes Stewart Church of England High School in Leeds is taking to raise its standards; and if she will make a statement. [47909]

Jacqui Smith: Both Agnes Stewart Church of England High School and John Smeaton Community High School have been part of a project with four other high schools in Leeds supported by my Department and Education Leeds since 2004. The project is currently seeking to raise standards through a range of initiatives, designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning and raise attainment.

For Agnes Stewart support has included a collaborative arrangement with Garforth High School and Braimwood High School in Leeds. Agnes Stewart had serious weaknesses and on re-inspection in November 2005 was judged to still require significant improvement. Agnes Stewart and Braimwood are to close this year and be replaced by a new Academy in September.

For John Smeaton School support measures have included the appointment of an additional part-time Vice Principal, seconded from the David Young Academy, to ensure the school's assessment procedures are improved; targeted support from Secondary National Strategy consultants, who are working with the school's numeracy assistants; extra assistance from school improvement advisers from Education Leeds; and continued support from other schools within the local Leadership Incentive Grant collaborative partnership.

School Performance

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools have been closed because they were deemed to be failing in each year since 1996. [47465]

Jacqui Smith: The number of failing schools that have been closed by local authorities since 1996 is set out in the following table:

Academic year	*Number of schools closed*
1995/96	9
1996/97	14
1997/98	30
1998/99	39
1999/2000	42
2000/01	17
2001/02	19
2002/03	19
2003/04	28
2004/05	21

These are schools judged by Ofsted to require special measures only. The figures do not include other schools closed by local authorities. For example, they do not include schools judged by Ofsted to have serious weaknesses; weak schools with falling rolls not in Ofsted categories; or, schools which were part of local authority school re-organisations to reduce surplus places.

Schools Admissions

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1927W, on schools admissions, if she will list the schools where there have been objections to schools' proposals to interview parents and pupils as part of their admissions process; which objections were considered by *(a)* the Schools Adjudicator and *(b)* the Secretary of State; and what the outcome was in each case. [47535]

Jacqui Smith: The two schools that had objections to proposals to interview parents and pupils were The London Oratory School (in 2004 and 2005) and Gunnersbury Catholic School (in 2005).

In April 2004, the Schools Adjudicator determined part of the objection to the London Oratory School's admission arrangements for 2005 on the issue of the practice of interviewing prospective parents in a general sense. The Adjudicator upheld this part, but the determination was quashed at Judicial Review and permission to appeal was refused.

In 2004, the Secretary of State decided on the second part of the above objection to the lack of clarity, fairness and objectivity of the admission arrangements relating in part to a person's religion. The Secretary of State partially upheld this part and the school modified that section of its admission arrangements.

In 2005, two objections were made to the proposed admission arrangements to Gunnersbury Catholic School and The London Oratory School and were referred to the Secretary of State as both cases involved interviewing to determine religious affiliation.

The objection to interviewing at Gunnersbury School was upheld as the school proposed to interview only to verify that an applicant was a practising Catholic and this information could be verified by documentary evidence.

The objection to interviewing at the London Oratory was not upheld as the school was able to provide thorough and sufficient proof that its interviewing arrangements were the only appropriate way of assessing the degree of an applicant's religious commitment as set out in their admission arrangements.

Schools for the Hearing Impaired

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to her answer of 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 830W, on schools for the hearing impaired, how many of the special schools approved to make provision for pupils with hearing impairment are *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools. [48246]

Jacqui Smith: Information on number of special schools is derived from Annual Schools' Census returns made by schools to the Department in January each year. Special schools form a distinct school type and they are not classified as being either primary or secondary schools.

Sex and Relationship Education

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if her Department will issue best practice guidelines to schools to ensure that every child receives a high standard of sex and relationship education. [48692]

Maria Eagle: The Department issued guidance to schools on sex and relationship education in July 2000. Additionally, in November 2005, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority produced a package of guidance to schools including exemplar units of work on sex and relationship education.

To improve further the quality of teaching, all teachers of sex and relationship education are encouraged to undertake the Government funded teachers' certificate in Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE). The certificate supports standards in the delivery of PSHE teaching including sex and relationship education and is available to both primary and secondary school teachers.

Special Measures

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what proportion of schools were in special measures in each of the past 15 years. [48244]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* The information is set out in the following table. Special measures judgments were first given by Ofsted in the 1993/94 academic year.

Academic year	*Number of schools in special measures at end of year*	*Percentage of schools in special measures at end of year*
1993/94	[1]15	0.1
1994/95	[1]81	0.3
1995/96	[1]192	0.8
1996/97	[1]366	1.6
1997/98	[1]524	2.2
1998/1999	447	2.0
1999/2000	394	1.8
2000/01	320	1.4
2001/02	270	1.2
2002/03	282	1.2
2003/04	332	1.5
2004/05	242	1.0

[1] Ofsted have recently updated their figures for schools in Special Measures. The figures above therefore provide a revision to figures previously published for years 1993/94 to 1997/98.

Specialist Schools and Academies Trust

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what role *(a)* has been played by and *(b)* is envisaged for the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust in relation to specialist schools in England. [47844]

Jacqui Smith: The Specialist Schools and Academies Trust is a non profit-making educational charity. It is the lead advisory body on the specialist school initiative for the DfES, providing advice and support for schools in England seeking to achieve or maintain specialist school status. Its work includes the promotion, development and support of specialist schools, conference and seminar activities and a publications programme. The Specialist Schools and Academies Trust also plays an important role in raising sponsorship and introducing potential sponsors to suitable candidate schools. We expect that the trust will continue to perform these roles.

Stevenson Report

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the implementation of the Stevenson Commission Report; and if she will list the recommendations of the report which have yet to be implemented. [48272]

Phil Hope: The Stevenson Commission Report was issued in March 1997 and made five major recommendations. Since then the Government has sustained a programme of activity that has addressed all these major recommendations and has supported the development of ICT in schools resulting in:

The launch of a national strategy through the National Grid for Learning Programme.

An improved computer pupil ratio in schools between 1996 and 2005 with the breakdown between primary and secondary schools as follows:

	1996	*2005*
Primary	1:19	1:6.7
Secondary	1:9	1:4.1

Every school connected to the internet and now 85 per cent. connected at broadband levels to a National Education Network. Of this total 83 per cent. of primary schools are now connected at broadband levels and 99 per cent. of secondary schools.

The establishment of Curriculum Online and the additional investment of over £500 million in schools for the purchase of educationally relevant software.

Trained over 96 per cent. of all teachers so that between 1998 and 2004 the numbers who can confidently use ICT increased as follows:

Percentage

	1998	*2004*
Primary	65	85
Secondary	61	81

We continue to maintain activity in this area and last March launched a new system wide e-strategy. We have also recently announced an additional £50 million to help the most disadvantaged pupils gain access to ICT at home.

Teachers (Fraudulent Applications)

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many reports of serious *(a)* fraud and *(b)* deception in connection with an application for employment as a teacher were received by her Department in each year since 1997. [47359]

Jacqui Smith: The Department does not keep this information.

Underachieving/Deprived Pupils

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will rank local authorities by their proportion of *(a)* underachieving and *(b)* deprived school pupils; and if she will make a statement. [41299]

Jacqui Smith: Information on *(a)* the proportion of pupils at Key Stage 4 achieving 5 or more A* to C or equivalent grades at GCSE and *(b)* the proportion of pupils in secondary schools known to be eligible for free school meals in 2005 is shown in the tables.

Maintained secondary schools: percentage of pupils at key stage 4 achieving 5 or more A to C at GCSE and equivalent[1], by local authority areas in England, ranked in ascending order of percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A* to C at GCSE and equivalent (2005)*

	Percentage
England Average[2]	57.1
Total (Maintained sector)	55.0
Bristol	36.5
Blackpool	40.7
Nottingham City	41.5
North East Lincolnshire	42.6
Sandwell	43.0
Manchester	43.9
Kingston-upon-Hull	44.0
Islington	44.2
Doncaster	44.5
Knowsley	44.6
Barnsley	45.4
Leicester City	45.5
Isle of Wight	45.5
Salford	45.6
Middlesbrough	45.7
Greenwich	45.7
Portsmouth	46.0
Walsall	46.2
Coventry	46.4
Reading	46.4
Bradford	46.6
Sheffield	46.7
Westminster	46.8
Blackburn with Darwen	46.9
Nottinghamshire	47.1
Merton	47.1
Southampton	47.1
Southwark	47.2
Hackney	47.3
Haringey	47.7
Stoke on Trent	48.1
Redcar and Cleveland	48.3
Liverpool	49.1
Thurrock	49.1
Waltham Forest	49.1
Halton	49.2
Rochdale	49.2
Lewisham	49.4
Rotherham	49.5
Leeds	49.6
Swindon	50.1
Luton	50.3
Bolton	50.7
Barking and Dagenham	50.8
North Lincolnshire	50.9
Tower Hamlets	50.9
Newham	51.0
Hillingdon	51.0
Kirklees	51.1
Durham	51.2
Sunderland	51.5

Maintained secondary schools: percentage of pupils at key stage 4 achieving 5 or more A to C at GCSE and equivalent[1], by local authority areas in England, ranked in ascending order of percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A* to C at GCSE and equivalent (2005)*

	Percentage
Milton Keynes	51.6
South Tyneside	51.7
Tameside	51.7
Wigan	51.7
Enfield	51.7
Hartlepool	51.8
Camden	51.8
Oldham	51.9
Northamptonshire	52.0
Bournemouth	52.0
Medway	52.2
Newcastle upon Tyne	52.3
Norfolk	52.6
Lambeth	53.0
Torbay	53.1
Derby	53.4
Dudley	53.5
North Tyneside	53.7
Bedfordshire	53.8
City of Peterborough	53.8
Telford and The Wrekin	53.9
Wandsworth	54.1
Bracknell Forest	54.3
Oxfordshire	54.4
Staffordshire	54.5
Croydon	54.5
Stockport	54.7
Calderdale	54.7
City of Plymouth	54.8
Stockton on Tees	54.9
Richmond upon Thames	54.9
East Sussex	54.9
Brighton and Hove	55.0
Wolverhampton	55.1
Derbyshire	55.4
South Gloucestershire	55.5
St Helens	55.7
Worcestershire	55.7
Cornwall	55.8
West Sussex	55.9
Devon	55.9
Slough	56.2
Wakefield	56.4
Darlington	56.6
Essex	56.6
Somerset	56.6
Lancashire	56.7
Herefordshire	56.7
Birmingham	56.7
Wirral	56.8
Cumbria	57.1
Leicestershire	57.1
Sefton	57.3
Warwickshire	57.3
Brent	57.3
North Somerset	57.4
Bexley	57.5
Bury	57.8
Hounslow	57.9
Wiltshire	58.1
Suffolk	58.3
Cambridgeshire	58.3
Northumberland	58.9
Lincolnshire	59.0
Hammersmith and Fulham	59.0
Ealing	59.5
Windsor and Maidenhead	59.5
Kent	59.8
Cheshire	60.2
York	60.6
Wokingham	60.8
Dorset	60.8
West Berkshire	60.9

Maintained secondary schools: percentage of pupils at key stage 4 achieving 5 or more A to C at GCSE and equivalent[1], by local authority areas in England, ranked in ascending order of percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A* to C at GCSE and equivalent (2005)*

	Percentage
Hampshire	60.9
East Riding of Yorkshire	61.2
Havering	61.2
Warrington	61.3
Surrey	61.3
Southend	61.6
Hertfordshire	61.8
Kensington and Chelsea	61.8
Harrow	61.9
North Yorkshire	62.7
Gloucestershire	62.8
Shropshire	63.2
Bath and North East Somerset	63.5
Poole	63.8
Bromley	64.0
Barnet	64.1
Solihull	64.2
Gateshead	65.5
Rutland	66.5
Kingston upon Thames	67.6
Buckinghamshire	67.6
Sutton	68.0
Redbridge	70.0
Trafford	70.2
Isles of Scilly	82.6

[1] Figures include GCSEs and other approved qualifications
[2] Includes independent schools

Maintained secondary schools[1]: school meal arrangements[2], by local authority areas in England, ranked in descending order of percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (2005)

	Percentage
England	14.0
Tower Hamlets	61.5
Southwark	46.3
Islington	43.0
Manchester	42.9
Newham	41.9
Hackney	38.6
Lambeth	38.3
Haringey	37.1
Knowsley	35.3
Middlesbrough	33.1
Westminster	32.8
Hammersmith and Fulham	32.7
Birmingham	31.8
Greenwich	31.4
Camden	31.0
Nottingham	30.4
Liverpool	30.2
Kensington and Chelsea	28.3
Lewisham	27.6
Barking and Dagenham	26.9
Ealing	26.7
Waltham Forest	26.4
South Tyneside	26.3
Bradford	25.6
Wandsworth	25.2
Salford	25.0
Blackburn with Darwen	24.7
Rochdale	24.1
Kingston Upon Hull, City of	24.0
Luton	23.6
Wirral	23.4
Newcastle upon Tyne	22.3
Leicester	22.2
Brent	22.0
Enfield	21.4
Redcar and Cleveland	21.3
Barnsley	20.6

Maintained secondary schools[1]: school meal arrangements[2], by local authority areas in England, ranked in descending order of percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (2005)

	Percentage
Hartlepool	20.3
Stoke-on-Trent	20.1
Oldham	20.0
Hounslow	19.6
Halton	19.5
Harrow	19.3
Blackpool	19.2
Croydon	19.0
Sandwell	18.9
Wolverhampton	18.5
Bristol, City of	17.8
Tameside	17.6
Leeds	17.6
North East Lincolnshire	17.5
Durham	17.4
Hillingdon	17.3
Gateshead	17.2
Stockton-on-Tees	17.1
Telford and Wrekin	17.1
Southampton	17.0
Coventry	16.8
St. Helens	16.7
Derby	16.7
Walsall	16.6
Sheffield	16.5
Richmond upon Thames	16.4
Peterborough	16.4
Kirklees	16.3
Merton	16.1
Brighton and Hove	16.1
Isle of Wight	15.9
Bolton	15.6
Sunderland	15.5
Sefton	15.5
Portsmouth	15.3
Slough	15.1
Redbridge	15.0
Rotherham	15.0
Dudley	14.9
Darlington	14.7
Barnet	14.7
Wakefield	14.6
Wigan	14.3
Doncaster	14.2
Thurrock	13.6
Bury	13.5
Torbay	13.4
Calderdale	13.3
Lancashire	13.0
Reading	12.7
Southend-on-Sea	12.1
North Lincolnshire	12.1
North Tyneside	12.1
Plymouth	11.8
Stockport	11.8
Cumbria	11.4
Nottinghamshire	11.2
East Sussex	11.0
Northumberland	10.9
Solihull	10.9
Trafford	10.8
Bournemouth	10.7
Bromley	10.3
Milton Keynes	10.2
Norfolk	9.9
Cornwall	9.8
Havering	9.7
Derbyshire	9.4
Bedfordshire	9.2
Suffolk	9.0
Bexley	9.8
Cheshire	8.9
Kent	8.8
Medway	8.7

Maintained secondary schools[1]: school meal arrangements[2], by local authority areas in England, ranked in descending order of percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (2005)

	Percentage
Essex	8.5
Kingston upon Thames	8.3
Swindon	8.3
Worcestershire	8.3
Devon	8.3
Warrington	8.2
Staffordshire	8.1
Oxfordshire	8.0
Sutton	8.0
Somerset	8.0
North Somerset	7.8
Herefordshire	7.7
York	7.6
Cambridgeshire	7.4
Warwickshire	7.2
Northamptonshire	7.2
East Riding of Yorkshire	7.0
Gloucestershire	6.9
South Gloucestershire	6.8
Hampshire	6.8
Lincolnshire	6.8
Bath and North East Somerset	6.7
Hertfordshire	6.7
Shropshire	6.7
West Sussex	6.2
Dorset	6.0
North Yorkshire	5.9
Leicestershire	5.9
Surrey	5.8
Buckinghamshire	5.8
Wiltshire	5.7
Bracknell Forest	5.5
Poole	5.4
Windsor and Maidenhead	5.4
West Berkshire	4.9
Wokingham	4.9
Rutland	3.2
Isles of Scilly[3]	1.6
City of London	n/a

n/a = Not applicable. No schools of this type.
[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Includes dually registered pupils and boarding pupils.
[3] Isles of Scilly is deemed primary, but is included in this analysis for consistency with the table on attainment.

University for Industry

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made towards the establishment of the University for Industry included in the Government's 1997 manifesto; and if she will make a statement. [48132]

Bill Rammell: Ufi (initially called the "University for Industry"), the organisation responsible for learndirect, has successfully pushed the boundaries of learning methods, by making innovative use of technology to make learning more flexible. It is the largest Government supported e-learning initiative in the world, and provides high quality learning for the post-16 learning and skills sector. It particularly reaches those with few or no skills and qualifications who are unlikely to participate in more traditional forms of learning.

In eight years Ufi has grown from an idea to an organisation providing 500,000 learners a year with the opportunity to improve their skills at either a learndirect centre, or from work, or from their home computer. Through its national advice line it has dealt with over seven million calls. Almost 200,000 small and medium sized employers have also used learndirect services.

Year 11 Leavers

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many year 11 leavers in *(a)* West Yorkshire, *(b)* Wakefield District and *(c)* Normanton constituency have stayed on in learning each year since 2001. [48391]

Jacqui Smith: The percentage of 16-year-olds in full-time education in England at the end of 2004 was estimated to be 74.2 per cent.—the highest ever rate. Percentage figures on participation in education by young people are not available for parliamentary constituencies, but are available for local authorities—including Wakefield LEA and for West Yorkshire. These were published in the Statistical First Release "Participation in education and training by 16 and 17 year olds in each local area in England"—SFR11/2005 on 31 March 2005.

The publication is accessible on the DfES website via the link, http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000568/index.shtml

The specific figures are available through the following link: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000568/SFR11-2005tables_lea.xls

TREASURY

Alcohol Sales

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of total sales of *(a)* beers and lagers, *(b)* wine and *(c)* spirits were sold in (i) licensed premises and (ii) off licences in the United Kingdom in the last year for which figures are available. [45928]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have been asked to reply.

Household final consumption expenditure figures for 2004 show that 70 per cent. of expenditure on alcoholic drinks was in licensed premises and 30 per cent. was in off licences in the United Kingdom. Figures for beer and lager, wine and spirits are shown in the following table.

Household final consumption expenditure on alcohol in the UK in 2004

	Licensed premises (£ million)	Off licences (£ million)	Total (£ million)	% sold in licensed premises	% sold through off licences
Beer and lager	16,222	3,054	19,276	84.2	15.8
Wine	7,665	5,900	13,565	56.5	43.5
Spirits	4,701	3,295	7,996	58.8	41.2
Total Alcohol	28,588	12,249	40,837	70.0	30.0

Source:
Office for National Statistics, Household final consumption expenditure

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the estimated consumption per capita was of (*a*) beers and lagers, (*b*) wine and (*c*) spirits in the UK, in each of the last 10 years. [45983]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have been asked to reply.

The following table shows estimated average weekly purchases per person of beer, lager, wine and spirits by people aged 14 and over in UK households. Information on alcoholic drinks eaten out is not available until 2001–02 when the Expenditure and Food Survey replaced the National Food Survey. It should be noted that survey respondents may tend to underestimate the quantity of alcoholic drinks they purchase.

UK household purchases of beer, lager, wine and spirits by people aged 14 and over

ml per person per week

	1995	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Beers and lagers										
Household purchases	413	429	445	415	401	473	471	460	503	478
Eating out purchases[1]	—	—	—	—	—	—	759	716	673	623
Total purchases	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,230	1,176	1,176	1,101
Wine[2]										
Household purchases	198	206	219	241	241	716	270	267	287	302
Eating out purchases[1]	—	—	—	—	—	—	24	24	25	26
Total purchases	—	—	—	—	—	—	294	291	312	328
Spirits[3]										
Household purchases	39	42	39	37	42	45	48	47	50	46
Eating out purchases[1]	—	—	—	—	—	—	21	20	22	20
Total purchases	—	—	—	—	—	—	69	67	72	66

[1] Quantity of alcohol eaten out is not available prior to 2001–02
[2] Includes sparkling and non-sparkling wine, wine with mixers, champagne
[3] Includes spirits, spirits with mixers, liqueurs, cocktails etc.
Source:
Defra, adjusted National Food Survey (1995 to 2000), Expenditure and Food Survey (2001–02 to 2004–05)

Benefit Payments (Debt Recovery)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions his Department has had with the banking industry on the impact on customers of the right of set-off being used to recover debts from benefits paid into a basic bank account. [49191]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Treasury has had a number of discussions with the banking industry covering a range of topics including the basic bank account.

Chard Neighbourhood Nursery

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects HM Revenue and Customs to make its ex gratia payment of outstanding valued added tax to the Chard Neighbourhood Nursery; and if he will make a statement. [47849]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: HM Revenue and Customs officials are discussing this matter with the various parties concerned and are making an immediate substantial interim payment while the remaining matters are resolved.

Community Banking

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress the Financial Inclusion Taskforce has made in evaluating the community banking model. [49038]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Financial Inclusion Taskforce was launched in February 2005 following the publication of "Promoting financial inclusion". The taskforce has been asked to monitor progress towards tackling financial exclusion and report to the Government on what more needs to be done. The terms of reference of the taskforce can be found on the taskforce website at www.financialinclusion-taskforce.org.uk. The taskforce will report to Treasury in due course.

Construction Industry Scheme

James Duddridge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps HM Revenue and Customs has taken to communicate to the construction industry the operation of the new Construction Industry Scheme; and how much has been spent on this activity. [47257]

John Healey: HMRC is delivering a comprehensive publicity and education programme. This started with a mailing to accountants in March 2005 and a more detailed mailshot in August 2005.

Factsheets for the new scheme were published on the internet in August 2005, designed to inform contractors and sub-contractors about the different aspects of the new scheme. Later that month contractors were invited to attend seminars on the scheme run by HMRC's business advisers.

The change was publicised in national tabloid newspapers and in accountancy and the trade press in September and October 2005. The adverts directed readers to the HMRC website for further information.

Earlier mailings were followed up by direct mailings to contractors in December 2005 and January 2006. These were to promote the launch of two new services: a helpline and an Employment Status Indicator (ESI) tool. The helpline was opened to help deal with inquiries on new CIS and employment status. The ESI is a computer based interactive tool to help determine the status. The new ESI tool can be accessed direct over the internet from the HMRC website.

Further mailshots for contractors and sub-contractors are scheduled in the run-up to the launch of the new CIS in April 2007.

The cost of publicity and education programme to date is approximately £1 million.

James Duddridge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what process Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs applies to money that has been deducted under the Construction Industry Scheme but cannot be allocated to national insurance due to a worker not registering a national insurance number; and how much was dealt with under this process in 2004–05. [47264]

John Healey: The Construction Industry Scheme requires contractors to make deductions (currently at 18 per cent.) from payments made to sub-contractors and pay the deductions to HM Revenue and Customs. All sub-contractors registered under the scheme are also registered for self-assessment and are required to report their profits on a self assessment return, at the end of the tax year. The amounts deducted from sub-contractors are applied first against their liability to income tax on their profits and then against their liability to class 4 national insurance contributions on those profits. Any balance is repaid. Where sub-contractors are liable to class 2 national insurance contributions, they account for them separately to HM Revenue and Customs.

Corporation Tax Relief

Kate Hoey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he intends the abolition of corporation tax relief for small businesses making less than £10,000 profit a year to include sports clubs. [48147]

John Healey: The proposed abolition of the corporation tax starting rate means that this benefit will no longer be available to small businesses, including most sports clubs. The change is due to take effect from April 2006. This is in line with our stated intention to improve fairness between organisations, whatever their legal structure.

Sports clubs that are registered as charities would however be exempt from corporation tax on rental income, most investment income and their primary purpose trading income. Sports clubs that are registered with HM Revenue & Customs as Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCS) benefit from a range of tax reliefs similar to those enjoyed by charities. This includes exemption from corporation tax on bank and building society interest, on any trading profits where turnover is no more than £30,000, and on income from property where total receipts are no more than £20,000. Only those clubs with significant taxable income are likely to be affected.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47673]

John Healey: Five Safedial cards, one desktop computer and one Blackberry have been reported as lost since January 2005.

Information relating to breakages of Treasury property is not available.

My reply to the hon. Member on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 398W, should have stated that three Safedial cards, one Blackberry and one Palm Pilot had been reported as having been stolen during 2005, in addition to the three laptop computers mentioned in the answer. I apologise for this inadvertent omission.

Exchequer Costs

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total cost to the Exchequer is of *(a)* income tax, *(b)* national insurance contributions, *(c)* corporation tax and *(d)* capital gains tax foregone for (i) the Share Incentive Plan, (ii) the Enterprise Investment Scheme, (iii) enterprise management incentives, (iv) venture capital trusts, (v) professional subscriptions, (vi) approved employee share schemes, (vii) approved employee option schemes, (viii) approved company option schemes and (ix) enterprise zones in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [47331]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The costs requested are available on the HM Revenue and Customs website at http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/tax_expenditures/menu.htm. except for the breakdown of the cost of the Enterprise Investment Scheme, where the figure published for 2004–05 consists of £45million in income tax relief and £135million in capital gains tax relief.

Financial Education

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions his Department has had with non-governmental organisations and social enterprises about the role they can play in financial education. [49259]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Financial Services Authority (FSA) lead on promoting financial capability. Their National Strategy for Financial Capability involves a range of interested parties including non-governmental organisations and social enterprises. As part of our engagement with the National Strategy and more widely, Treasury Ministers and officials have discussions about various aspects of financial education with a range of stakeholders.

Financial Services Act

Mr. Steen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he is taking to ensure that the requirements on small businesses under the Financial Services Act 1986 are not duplicated at national and county levels; and if he will make a statement. [48716]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Financial Services Act 1986 was repealed in 2001 and there are no current requirements on small businesses imposed by that Act.

Iraq

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what arrangements have been made in agreement with the Paris Club for the cancelling of Iraqi debt; and what safeguards have been put in place to ensure that creditors of less than £250,000 are protected. [47651]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Paris Club of official creditors reached agreement with Iraq on 21 November 2004 on a fair and sustainable solution to Iraq's debt problems. All creditors agreed that Iraq's debt of over $120 billion was clearly unsustainable. The Paris Club deal cancels 80 per cent. of Iraq's debt in three tranches. The tranches are linked to Iraq's progress in implementing the economic reforms agreed in IMF programmes. All bilateral creditors of Iraq, whether official or commercial, must bear their proportionate share in relation to restoring Iraq's debt sustainability and are expected to negotiate debt treatments with terms comparable to those agreed by the Paris Club.

Lyons Inquiry

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will place in the Library a copy of the written submissions from his Department to the Lyons Inquiry into local government; [47906]

(2) pursuant to his answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 542W, on the Lyons Inquiry, whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Valuation Office Agency took the decision to make a formal submission to the Inquiry. [48151]

John Healey: The Lyons Inquiry is independent of the Government. Sir Michael Lyons will decide what to publish when he makes available his final report.

Money Outreach Pilots

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of models for the money advice outreach pilots funded through the Financial Inclusion Fund. [49415]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: As announced in June 2004, £6 million of the Financial Inclusion Fund has been allocated to the Legal Services Commission, through the Department for Constitutional Affairs, to pilot mechanisms of money advice outreach aimed at those who do not normally present themselves to debt advisers. The LSC have run a competition to fund outreach pilots and are currently in final contract negotiations with successful bidders. The Financial Inclusion Taskforce has been asked to monitor the progress of the pilots as they come into service from February 2006 and to consider the outcome of the project evaluation.

National Insurance Fraud

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many incidents of National Insurance fraud for the purpose of making tax credit claims have been recorded in each year since 1997. [47665]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: As a National Insurance number may only form part of an identity profile it is not possible to provide the information in the format requested. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Paymaster General on 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 558W.

Personal Debt Advice

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what personal debt advice services are funded by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [48737]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: HM Treasury does not directly fund personal debt advice services. However, as announced in June 2004, £45 million of the Treasury's Financial Inclusion Fund has been allocated to the Department of Trade and Industry to support an increase in the provision of free face-to-face debt advice in areas of high financial exclusion. A further £6 million of the Financial Inclusion Fund will be used by the Department of Constitutional Affairs, through the Legal Services Commission, to pilot mechanisms of money advice outreach aimed at those who do not normally present themselves to debt advisers.

Planning Gain Supplement

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate the Government have made of the total annual revenue to be collected from planning gain supplement. [47875]

John Healey: The amount of revenue from a Planning-gain Supplement (PGS) will depend on decisions on its rate and scope. As set out in paragraph 1.9 of the consultation document published alongside the 2005 pre-Budget report, if introduced a PGS will be set at a modest rate to help finance additional infrastructure while preserving incentives to bring land forward for development.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether planning gain supplement is planned to be levied on developments that received planning permission prior to its introduction but where the construction commenced after its introduction. [47883]

John Healey: As set out in Chapter 3 of the consultation document published alongside the 2005 pre-Budget report, if Planning-gain Supplement (PGS) is introduced the Government will consider how best to take account of the transition period before and after its introduction, to ensure that the levy is fair while protecting yield and minimising risks of avoidance.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which Minister holds lead responsibility for the introduction of planning gain supplement. [48047]

John Healey: The Chancellor of the Exchequer has overall responsibility for the work of the Treasury. I support the Chancellor for policy on the Planning-Gain Supplement.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the process for the introduction of planning gain supplement in the devolved parts of the United Kingdom. [48052]

John Healey: As set out in paragraph 1.20 of the consultation document published alongside the 2005 pre-Budget report, if introduced a Planning-Gain Supplement (PGS) would apply throughout the UK. The Government will continue to work closely with the devolved Administrations on the interaction of PGS with devolved policy areas.

Property Prices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average purchase price was of properties bought by first-time buyers in *(a)* England and *(b)* the United Kingdom in each year since 1996. [42824]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Average mix-adjusted house prices for first time buyers buying with a mortgage are published on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website in table 507 at: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/116/Table507Excel47Kb_id_1156116.xls.

Estimates are not available for first time buyers who purchase without a mortgage.

Self-invested Personal Pension (Property)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether a regulatory impact assessment has been prepared on his decision to withdraw the right to hold residential property in a self-invested personal pension. [49162]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 31 January 2006 *Official Report*, column 405W.

Tax Credits

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many full-time tax credit staff were working in *(a)* debt management and banking, *(b)* disputed overpayments, *(c)* bank liaison, *(d)* child care provider checks, *(e)* complex cases, *(f)* employer liaison, *(g)* international claims, *(h)* issues relating to persons from abroad, *(i)* postroom, *(j)* the specialist trace unit, *(k)* claims processing, *(l)* appeals, *(m)* complaints, *(n)* valuables and *(o)* tax credit hotlines on the latest date for which figures are available. [48438]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

UK Contribution (EU)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the UK's cumulative net contribution to the EU between 2007 and 2013; and if he will make a statement. [49381]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Surrey Heath (Michael Gove) on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 399W.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Valuation Office Agency owns a licence for an image management and archiving computer database. [47863]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Valuation Office Agency's information technology systems are provided by Capgemini under the "Aspire" contract with HM Revenue and Customs. All necessary licences for systems, including those for secure data storage, are obtained and held by Capgemini on the Agency's behalf.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what child protection policy the Valuation Office Agency has to regulate the activities of council tax valuation inspectors who may enter people's homes. [47903]

John Healey: The legislation governing the powers of Valuation Office Agency staff to inspect people's homes was passed in 1992, and the VOA's approach to operating it has remained largely unchanged since then. Permission to inspect is always sought from the occupier, owner or taxpayer (as appropriate), usually in advance in writing. All VOA inspectors carry photographic identity. Under no circumstances would a VOA inspector enter a property without the occupier, owner or taxpayer (as appropriate) permission, and the VOA's instructions make clear that under no circumstances should they inspect if only a minor is present—this is the child protection policy which is operated. On recruitment all Agency staff are required to declare, subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, convictions or charge for any offence which is still pending, if they are subject to probation, on a conditional discharge or bound over after being charged with an offence. Following employment all staff are required to report any charge, apart from minor traffic offences, which is brought against them. In addition the Agency receives, via the Cabinet Office, reports of convictions and related offences from Chief Constables, in accordance with Home Office Circular No. 45/1986, in respect of its staff.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether agents of the Valuation Office Agency who conduct council tax valuation inspections inside someone's property are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check. [47904]

John Healey: The legislation governing the powers of Valuation Office Agency staff to inspect people's homes was passed in 1992, and the VGA's approach to operating it has remained largely unchanged since then. Permission to inspect is always sought from the occupier, owner or taxpayer (as appropriate), usually in advance in writing. All VOA inspectors carry photographic identity. Under no circumstances would a VOA inspector enter a property without the permission of the occupier, owner or taxpayer (as appropriate), and the VGA's instructions make clear that under no circumstances should they inspect if only a minor is present. This is the child protection policy, which is operated. On recruitment all agency staff are required to declare, subject to the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, convictions or charge for any offence which is still pending, if they are subject to probation, on a conditional discharge or bound over after being charged with an offence. Following employment all staff are required to report any charge, apart from minor traffic offences, which is brought against them. In addition the agency receives, via the Cabinet Office, reports of convictions and related offences from chief constables, in accordance with Home Office Circular No. 45/1986, in respect of its staff. Staff are not therefore subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check. In addition, the majority of the Valuation Office Agency groups have received the independent Charter Mark award for customer service, and as part

of their commitment to improve their service they have started to survey taxpayers about how the inspection is undertaken.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the functions of the District Valuer Services within the Valuation Office Agency. [48034]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: District Valuer Services provides a range of services which are set out in the booklet, District Valuer Services. This is available on their website www.voa.gov.uk.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what *(a)* rights and *(b)* powers (i) Valuation Office Agency staff and (ii) its representatives have to conduct internal or external inspections of property for (A) capital gains tax, (B) inheritance tax and (C) business rates purposes. [48035]

John Healey: The legislation governing the powers of Valuation Office Agency (VOA) staff to inspect properties for the purposes specified is longstanding—it is for *(a)* capital gains tax, section 111 Taxes Management Act 1970, *(b)* inheritance tax, section 220 Inheritance Tax Act 1984 and *(c)* business rates, Schedule 9 paragraph 7 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. The way the Valuation Office exercises these powers, and similar powers in earlier legislation, is well established. Permission to inspect is always sought from the occupier, owner or taxpayer (as appropriate) usually in advance in writing. All VOA inspectors carry photographic identity, but if the occupier, owner or taxpayer is in any doubt they are able to contact the local Valuation Office to establish the authenticity. Under no circumstances would a VOA inspector forcibly enter a property without the person's permission. Nor would an inspector enter the property if, despite having made a prior appointment, it was discovered that only a minor was present.

The Valuation Office Agency recognises the importance of not only carrying out its duties responsibly but also being clearly seen to do so. Thus the majority of its Groups already hold the independently awarded Charter Mark award for customer service, and applications from the remaining Groups are in train. As part of its commitment to improve its service, the agency now specifically surveys taxpayers about how inspections have been undertaken.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Valuation Office Agency has *(a)* sold and *(b)* transferred any of its data to non-public sector third-parties in the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [48036]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In the last five years the Valuation Office Agency has regularly sold compilations of the published non-domestic rating lists and, since October 2004, of the supporting summary valuations. All of this material is readily accessible to the public at large in non-compiled form on its website www.voa.gov.uk free of charge.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a copy of the *(a)* staff intranet announcement notice and *(b)* the data strategy update paper to which the Valuation Office Agency's Management Board Meeting minutes of 27 October 2005 refer. [48045]

John Healey: The *(a)* staff intranet announcement notice, referred to in the Valuation Office Agency's Management Board Meeting minutes of 27 October 2005, will be placed in the Library. The *(b)* data strategy update paper, also mentioned in the above minutes, includes material prepared as an input to the formulation of Government policy and cannot be made available.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what training *(a)* videos and *(b)* DVDs the Valuation Office Agency has produced for its staff and contractors in the last three years in relation to (i) council tax valuations, (ii) business rates, (iii) inheritance tax, (iv) capital gains tax, (v) revaluations, (vi) automated valuation model and (vii) computer assisted mass appraisal. [48046]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The VOA has produced no training videos or DVDs since 2002. E-learning has replaced the use of videos to supplement face to face training.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a copy of advice to staff on Health and Safety in the Field, produced by the Valuation Office Agency. [48053]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: A copy of what the Valuation Office Agency makes permanently available to its staff on Health and Safety in the field is being placed in the Library of the House.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what guidelines regulate access by *(a)* the public, *(b)* private sector organisations and *(c)* local authorities to the data used to assess the valuations of domestic properties by the Valuation Office Agency. [48054]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Disclosure of confidential information to third parties by the Valuation Office Agency is only permitted in the circumstances prescribed by section 18(2) and (3) of the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005.

Section 28 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and regulations made thereunder governs publication of the Council Tax Valuation List.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 7 February 2006

PRIME MINISTER

Lisa Dorrian

Lady Hermon: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what role the Police Service of Northern Ireland underwater search unit is playing in the investigation of the disappearance of Lisa Dorrian; [49421]

(2) what recent discussions he has had with senior Police Service of Northern Ireland officers on the investigation into the disappearance of Lisa Dorrian. [49422]

The Prime Minister: I understand that the Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) have employed a number of resources, including the PSNI underwater search unit, over the past year in the investigation into Lisa Dorrian's disappearance. This remains an on-going police investigation and my hon. Friend the Policing and Security Minister for Northern Ireland (Mr. Woodward) receives regular updates. Given the hon. Lady's interest in this case, I have asked my hon. Friend to keep her updated, within the necessary constraints given that this is an ongoing police investigation.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

China

11. **Mr. Amess:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on human rights in China. [49010]

Ian Pearson: The Government has serious concerns about a wide range of human rights issues in China. These are set out in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Human Rights report. We raise our concerns with the Chinese Government regularly, including through the UK China Human Rights Dialogue, ministerial engagement and EU mechanisms. We acknowledge that the Chinese Government has recently done much to reduce poverty and promote economic development.

14. **Mr. Stewart Jackson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on human rights in China. [49014]

Ian Pearson: China has done much in recent years to reduce poverty and promote economic development. But serious human rights problems remain.

The Government raises these concerns with the Chinese Government regularly, including through the UK China Human Rights Dialogue, ministerial engagement and EU mechanisms.

Cuba

12. **Colin Burgon:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the impact of the work of Caleb McCarry, US-Cuba Transition Co-ordinator, on UK-Cuban relations. [49011]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The UK, with EU partners, adopted a Common Position on Cuba in 1996. This has not changed. It is a clear statement of the UK/EU policy of constructive engagement to achieve political and economic reform in Cuba, including human rights.

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1702W, to the hon. Member for Houghton and Washington East, on Cuba if he will name the main non-official Cuban human rights organisation referred to; where it is based; and from what sources it receives its funding. [48976]

Mr. Douglas Alexander *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* The main non-official Cuban human rights organisation referred to of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1702W, on Cuba, is the Comision Cubana de Derechos Humanos y Reconciliacion Nacional (CCDHRN). This is a long-standing, independent organisation, which presents up-to-date information on human rights in Cuba, particularly on political prisoners and the death penalty. CCDHRN is based in Havana and run by Elizardo Sanchez Santacruz, Cuba's best known human rights monitor and a former political prisoner. It is not recognised by the Cuban state. CCDHRN has developed close links with the international media and human rights NGOs, including Amnesty International, and we understand it has a number of funding sources although its running costs are very small.

Middle East

15. **Mrs. Ellman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what account he has taken of the Hamas charter in assessing Hamas's acceptability as a partner for peace in the middle east. [49015]

Dr. Howells: As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister told the House on 1 February: We will not be able to take the process forward if one of the partners has in its constitution the desire to get rid of the other partner. Hamas faces a fundamental choice. If they choose democracy and peace, and work side by side with Israel, then we stand ready to take the process forward.

16. **Mr. Hands:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on democracy in the middle east. [49016]

Dr. Howells: We are working hard, bilaterally and multilaterally through the EU and G8, to support democratic political and economic reforms in the middle east and strengthen civil society's role in public life. Almost every Arab country now has some form of democratic legislative assembly, and more women in Government positions. It is in our interest to promote democracy and freedom as essential ingredients for economic success and the reduction of poverty.

19. **Ian Lucas:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with EU colleagues on the results of the elections in the Palestinian territories. [49019]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed the results of the Palestinian election with his EU counterparts on 30 January.

The EU expects the new Palestinian Government to be committed to a peaceful and negotiated solution of the conflict with Israel based on existing agreements and the Roadmap as well as to the rule of law, reform and sound fiscal management.

Afghanistan

17. **Mr. Pelling:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the political situation in Afghanistan. [49017]

Dr. Howells: Afghanistan has made remarkable political progress since 2001. Last year saw parliamentary and provincial elections and the inauguration of the National Assembly, building on the presidential election in 2004. This progress was recognised at last week's London Conference on Afghanistan. The Afghanistan Compact, launched at the Conference, commits the Afghan Government and international community to an ambitious progress of further reconstruction.

22. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the political situation in Afghanistan. [49022]

Dr. Howells: Afghanistan has made remarkable political progress since 2001. Last year saw parliamentary and provincial elections and the inauguration of the National Assembly, building on the presidential election in 2004. This progress was recognised at last week's London Conference on Afghanistan. The Afghanistan Compact launched at the Conference, commits the Afghan Government and international community to an ambitious progress of further reconstruction.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the strength is of *(a)* the Afghan National Police and *(b)* the Afghan Border Police; what the expected rate is of annual increase in manpower for each; and what assessment his Department has made of what additional crime-fighting equipment will be required to meet the target of a fully functioning combined force of 62,000 personnel by 2010. [49280]

Dr. Howells: As of 31 December 2005, 49,300 national police, 1,500 highway police, 5,600 border police, and 500 Counter-Narcotics police (CNPA) had been trained and deployed. At 31 December 2005, 2,367 national police, 79 highway police, 597 border police and 25 CNPA were undergoing training. On current schedules, by 1 June 2006, 55,650 national police, 1,850 highway police, 9,600 border police, and 600 CNPA will have been trained, a combined force of 67,380.

Germany, which is responsible for co-ordinating international assistance to the Afghan Government's police reform programme, the Afghan Government and Qatar, are co-hosting an international conference on police reform in Afghanistan, in Doha on 27–28 February. The focus of the conference is regional police co-operation and the role of the Afghan Border Police in managing Afghanistan's borders. The conference also aims to reach agreement on priority activities to support the further development of the combined Afghan National Police, in terms of institutional capacity-building and the provision of equipment to meet current and future needs. The UK will participate in the conference and will subsequently consider how it can continue to support reform of the Afghan National Police.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of *(a)* the number and *(b)* the total strength of illegal armed groups in Afghanistan. [49281]

Dr. Howells: We have made no independent assessment of the numbers or strength of Illegal Armed Groups in Afghanistan. The Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme (ANBP), the mechanism through which the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, the United Nations Development Programme and the international community support the Government of Afghanistan's efforts to disarm, demobilise and reintegrate former Afghan Military Force members, estimates that there are 2,000 groups with a total strength of up to 100,000 members. 579 of these groups are already engaged in the disarmament and demobilisation programme. The UK is represented on the ANBP international co-ordinating body and has contributed over £12 million to the ANBP and separate weapons destruction programmes since 2002. Further information is available on the ANBP website at http://www.undpan.bp.org.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what quantity of drugs was seized in Afghanistan during 2005, broken down by type of narcotic. [49282]

Dr. Howells: We estimate that the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan and the Afghan Special Narcotics Force have seized around 165 tonnes of opiates since November 2004. However, seizure figures since 2001 have been unreliable, due to difficulties in collating data centrally within Afghanistan. Additionally, forensic facilities are not yet widely available in Afghanistan and so Afghan police are often unable to accurately identify substances or record the quantities. We are unable, therefore, to provide a breakdown of types of narcotics seized.

Caribbean Sugar Producers

18. **Charlotte Atkins:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to obtain EU support for vulnerable Caribbean sugar producers. [49018]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We welcomed December's agreement to €40 million transitional assistance for the first year (2006) for countries affected by reform of the EU sugar regime, in the Caribbean and elsewhere. Discussions are now starting on detailed allocations for 2007–13. We are pressing for significantly higher assistance for this period. We have also been working with the countries affected to help draw up country plans through which this assistance will be delivered.

Cyprus

20. **Bob Spink:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on progress towards a settlement of the situation in Cyprus. [49020]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The UN Secretary-General recently stated there had been "negligible" progress towards a settlement.

I welcomed his statement, on the eve of my recent visit to Cyprus, reiterating his commitment to a comprehensive settlement.

I urge the two communities to resume their dialogue and for progress to be made on all fronts.

Niger Delta

21. **Michael Connarty:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the security situation in the Niger Delta. [49021]

Ian Pearson: The security situation in the Niger Delta remains tense following recent attacks on oil installations and the kidnapping, and subsequent release on 30 January, of four foreign oil workers. We are and will remain in close contact with the Nigerian authorities. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary spoke personally to President Obasanjo of Nigeria on 21 January about the situation.

G8 Summit (Gleneagles)

Anne Moffat: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking at EU level to ensure that the agreements reached at the G8 summit in Gleneagles are taken forward. [48540]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The December European Council agreed the EU-Africa Strategy to take forward many key Gleneagles commitments on Africa. The Strategy is a comprehensive overview of the EU's support to Africa in promoting peace and security and achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and will provide strategic direction to the EU on its partnership with Africa. It includes commitments on peace and security, governance, sustainable economic growth and trade, investing in people and development assistance.

The UK also used its presidency of the G8 and the EU to ensure that climate change was pushed up the EU agenda. We worked to ensure that, on energy efficiency for example, the EU and G8 approaches were mutually complimentary. We are working to ensure that the progress made during the 2005 EU Summits with India, China, Canada and Russia, and at the Gleneagles summit, continues. In December 2005, the UK was instrumental in producing a clear EU position and a successful overall outcome at the UN Climate Change meetings in Montreal.

HIV/AIDS (China)

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the incidence of HIV/AIDS in China; and if he will make a statement. [47540]

Mr. Thomas: I have been asked to reply.

The Chinese Ministry of Health, the World Health Organisation and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) jointly announced new HIV and AIDS estimates on 25 January. They estimate that 650,000 people are living with HIV and AIDS. There were 70,000 new infections, and 25,000 deaths from AIDS, in 2005. Although this figure is less than the previous estimate in 2003 of 840,000, it represents a better estimation rather than a decline in prevalence. Working with China to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS is a priority for our DFID China programme.

Iran

Anne Moffat: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with other EU governments on a diplomatic solution to the situation regarding Iran's nuclear programme. [48544]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed Iran's nuclear programme with his EU counterparts at the meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Brussels on 30 January. On the same day, he and his French and German colleagues discussed Iran with their US, Russian and Chinese counterparts in London. He has also discussed Iran with Ministers attending a conference about Afghanistan on 31 January, and in routine bilateral meetings.

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of Iran's support for terrorist groups; and if he will make a statement. [49013]

Dr. Howells: We remain deeply concerned by Iran's approach to terrorism and the nature of its relationship with Lebanese Hizballah and Palestinian Islamic Jihad. We are also deeply concerned by and continue to investigate Iran's links to extremist groups in Iraq. We have pressed Iran to renounce all support for groups using terror and violence. We have urged Iran to act against members of Al-Qaeda and affiliated groups using Iran as a transit route or refuge, and to co-operate actively with the international community against them.

Nursery Schemes

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the cost to the United Kingdom of nursery schemes for the children of EC staff. [46851]

Mr. Straw: None. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office runs nurseries in London and Hanslope Park for its own staff and contributes towards the cost of nursery attendance for children of its staff overseas. It has no knowledge of nursery schemes for EC staff.

Overseas Territories

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will change the eligibility criteria for EU and UK funding for each of the overseas territories *(a)* to exclude per capita income to take account of their small population size

and *(b)* to include the vulnerability of their micro-economy to outside circumstances beyond their control; and if he will make a statement. [46905]

Mr. Thomas: I have been asked to reply.

DFID already recognises that a wide range of circumstances present significant development challenges to the overseas territories (OT) including small size, isolation and access, limited human resource capacity and vulnerability to external shocks. Funding decisions are not based only, or even primarily, on per capita income criteria, but with limited resources prioritisation is inevitable towards those territories which most need development assistance.

The main focus for DFID's support are Montserrat, St. Helena and Pitcairn. None are able to raise sufficient revenue to balance their recurrent budget so we provide budgetary aid to help them do so. We combine this with a development programme to help increase revenue and manage recurrent expenditure efficiently. We do however also provide assistance to other territories through our cross-cutting programme which provides support for a range of activities that are common to many or all of the OTs. These programmes include natural disaster management, environment protection, HIV/AIDS, law revision and child protection. All OTs benefit in some way from this assistance.

EU programmes have to a large extent focused on those overseas countries and territories whose economic development is least advanced, with wealth per capita criteria being the main deciding factors for allocations. However we are currently in discussion with the European Commission about the arrangements for continued funding for the OTs when the current allocations end after 2007. These discussions have included the commissioning of a study to look at a range of criteria, in addition to gross national income (GNI) per capita, to help determine the allocation of EU development funds to individual territories. We are also working to ensure that, overall, OTs receive an equitable allocation within the total available for EU development funding.

Regulatory Reform Orders

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many regulatory reform orders his Department has laid before Parliament in each of the last five calendar years. [46803]

Mr. Straw: None.

Russian Federation

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment the Government have made of whether the practice of the Russian Federation meets the standards of the Energy Charter Treaty. [49692]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The obligations of the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) on a signatory depend on whether it has ratified the treaty, is applying it provisionally or has opted out of provisional application. The Russian Federation has not ratified the Treaty but has agreed to provisional application in accordance with Article 45 of the Treaty. This places some obligations on the Russia Federation, but only to the extent that such provisional application is not inconsistent with its constitution, laws or regulations. An assessment of whether a particular signatory of the ECT meets its provisions could be made by individual companies, the Energy Charter Secretariat or other signatories or Contracting Parties. It is a particular feature of the Treaty that companies can take direct action against signatories if they are in dispute on a matter covered by the Treaty.

The Government takes an active interest in the implementation of the Treaty's obligations by signatories, in particular through the work undertaken by the Energy Charter Treaty Secretariat, but has not undertaken assessment of any particular signatory.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it is Government policy to encourage that the Russian Federation ratify the Energy Charter Treaty. [49693]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government have consistently encouraged the Russian Federation to ratify the Energy Charter Treaty and we continue to hope that they will do so.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his Russian counterpart on the Russian Federation's ratification of the Energy Charter Treaty. [49694]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Energy security formed an important part of the discussions that took place on 3 October during the EU-Russia Permanent Partnership Council (PPC), co-chaired by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, and on 4 October during the EU-Russia summit, hosted by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. The discussion at the PPC included Russian ratification of the Energy Charter Treaty. Energy Minister Viktor Krishtenko led the Russian delegation to the PPC. President Putin led the delegation to the EU-Russia summit, accompanied by Foreign Minister Lavrov.

Turkey

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in securing the language rights of Kurdish speakers in Turkey since the agreement to begin talks on Turkish accession to the EU. [48998]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Reforms in Turkey have strengthened Kurdish rights, but progress since 2004 has been limited. Last December Turkey's Radio and Television High Council re-iterated their commitment to allowing local broadcasting in non-Turkish languages. Progress in Turkey's negotiations for accession to the European Union will depend on measures taken in a range of areas including the need to protect the rights of all citizens. We will continue to press the Turkish Government to extend the rights of the Kurds in Turkey.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Poultry

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many poultry owners in Northamptonshire are registered with her Department; and what the flock size is of each registered poultry owner. [38097]

Mr. Bradshaw *[pursuant to the reply, 19 December 2005, Official Report, c. 2386W]:* This answer was incorrect. The answer that we originally provided drew on a combination of state veterinary service (SVS) data and local knowledge. It is clear that our answer should have been based on information from the Great Britain Poultry Register, which was launched on 9 December 2005. The revised answer provides information from this source.

As of midnight on 20 December 2005, four poultry owners in Northamptonshire have registered eligible poultry premises on the new GB poultry register. The total numbers of poultry on each registered premises in Northamptonshire are as follows:

(1) 84 Chickens, 1 Duck, 2 Geese

(2) 195 Chickens

(3) 7,000 Turkeys

(4) 83 Chickens

Eligible premises are required to register by 28 February 2006.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Church Legislation

Andrew Selous: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what assessment the Commissioners have made of the extent to which the recent use of ministerial orders to amend church legislation has modified the convention that Parliament does not legislate for the Church of England without its consent. [48861]

Sir Stuart Bell: The recent amendment of Church legislation by Orders made by ministers under the Civil Partnership Act 2005 was handled entirely consistently with the convention that Parliament does not legislate for the Church of England without its consent. Consent was given on behalf of the Church, by the House of Bishops and the Archbishops' Council, both to the inclusion in the Act of the powers enabling ministers to make consequential and other changes to Church legislation and then to the specific changes to be made in reliance on those powers.

Ecclesiastical Law (Human Rights)

Andrew Selous: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what procedures are followed for the drafting of laws in response to judgments of the European Court of Human Rights which affect matters traditionally within the sphere of ecclesiastical law. [48860]

Sir Stuart Bell: The European Court of Human Rights has not, to date, held any legislation specific to the Church of England to be incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights. Were it to do so, or were any such legislation considered to be incompatible having regard to a finding of the European Court of Human Rights, an assessment would need to be made in consultation with ministers of the changes needed to ensure compatibility and the most appropriate form of legislation required to do so.

In the event of the European Court of Human Rights making a finding of incompatibility in relation to some aspect of the general law which bore significantly upon the life of the Church, the Church would expect to be consulted, in the usual way, before ministers exercised the power conferred by s.10 Human Rights Act 1998. The Church has been consulted in this way as part of ministers' consideration of the implications of the decision of the European Court of Human Rights in B and L *v.* United Kingdom, in which the Court held that the prohibitions under the Marriage Act 1949 on marriages between a person and the parent of their former spouse and between a person and the former spouse of their child were incompatible with Article 12 of the Convention.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how his Department is liaising with non-governmental organisations operating in Afghanistan on reconstruction. [48930]

Hilary Benn: DFID is currently providing over 70 per cent. of its total programme funding (£100 million) in 2005–06 through the Government of Afghanistan. The other 30 per cent. of our programme is channelled directly to service providers, including non-governmental organizations (NGO)s, consultants, and multilateral agencies. However, a large amount of the work we fund through the Government is implemented on their behalf by NGOs. DFID also funds NGO work in Afghanistan through its central Civil Society Challenge Fund, and through Programme Partnership Agreements with leading UK NGOs.

In order to reach more remote and insecure areas, DFID works alongside locally based organisations to promote conflict prevention and stabilisation. This kind of community outreach encourages local organisations to identify areas of need which can then be implemented through community managed projects. The Global Conflict Prevention Pool (a trilateral fund shared by DFID, the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office), is also active in funding local initiatives aimed at enhancing the prospects of peace and security.

DFID maintains regular dialogue with NGOs on security problems and other challenges to operating in Afghanistan. We also discuss wider policy issues with them. Most recently we co-funded a Civil Society Conference in Kabul which engaged Afghan civil society (including NGOs) in consultation on the

Interim-Afghanistan National Development Strategy and sent two civil society representatives to the London Conference on Afghanistan on 31 January-1 February.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department's priorities are for the *(a)* rebuilding of infrastructure and *(b)* establishment of criminal justice agencies in Afghanistan. [48931]

Hilary Benn: The rebuilding of Afghanistan cannot be achieved without significant investments in infrastructure; but given the scale of resources required, and the importance of donors working to their respective comparative advantages, we believe other donors are better placed to make these investments. The USA, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Japan in particular are investing in Afghanistan's infrastructure sector. A component of DFID's livelihoods work does however include support for small scale rural infrastructure, and for road construction through emergency employment and rural access programmes.

The re-establishment of a functioning justice system is widely acknowledged to be essential to improving security and stability in Afghanistan. DFID has been engaged in the development of the Afghan Government's 'Justice for All Strategy' which outlines what needs to be done to re-establish a fully functioning justice system, including for criminal justice. DFID together with other UK Government Departments is specifically engaged in strengthening those aspects of the criminal justice system which relate directly to investigation, prosecution and detention of those engaged in the trade in illicit narcotics.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47679]

Mr. Thomas: For the period 1 January to 31 December 2005, the following items with a value of £100 or more were either *(a)* lost or *(b)* broken in DFID.

Description	*Value (£)*
(a) Lost	
Lap Top Computer	700
Computer Monitor Screen	417
Mobile Phone	100
Plumbing Fittings	1,583
Mobile Phone	100
Lap Top Computer	1,000
Lap Top Computer	550
Lap Top Computer	1,500
Mobile Phone	150
Mobile Phone	100
Mobile Phone	100
Lap Top Computer	1,200
Digital Camera	206
Office Equipment	1,932
Satellite Phone	500
Lap Top Computer	250
(b) Broken	
Portable Exhibition Display Stand	1,986

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many departmental employees have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46747]

Mr. Thomas: A total of 11 departmental employees have taken early retirement due to ill-health in the past five calendar years from the Department for International Development. On grounds of confidentiality, we are unable to disclose the individual yearly totals as there were less than five ill health retirements in each of the past five years.

Food Shortages

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department takes to assist states facing food shortages due to locusts. [49666]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has a group of humanitarian advisers at regional and country level that monitor the food situation and the potential for food crises across Africa.

Where abnormal locust infestations threaten food security, DFID can provide support for ad-hoc locust control operations. For example, in 2004 DFID committed £1.5 million channelled through the United Nations Food Agriculture Organisation towards the emergency locust control operations in the Sahel Region.

Where locusts or other natural disasters destroy crops which result in widespread food shortages, DFID also supports the United Nations and non-governmental organisations to deliver relief, for example, in Sahel in 2005, DFID allocated £4.9 million for emergency food and nutrition interventions.

HIV Prevention Goal

Chris McCafferty: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what actions the Government have taken to help countries achieve the global prevention goal to reduce HIV prevalence among young men and women aged 15 to 24 years, by 2005. [48787]

Mr. Thomas: The UK played a key role in securing support for the Joint United Nations Programme for HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) prevention policy "Intensifying HIV prevention" at its June 2005 programme co-ordination board, which I attended. This policy clearly emphasises the importance of evidence-informed prevention, including linking sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and HIV programmes and access to SRH supplies including female condoms, and tackling harm reduction.

Building on this, as EU president, we steered and secured agreement on the first EU wide policy Statement on HIV Prevention launched on World AIDS day 2005. This important document affirms the commitment of all 25 European member states to comprehensive and evidence based HIV prevention programming including:

Universal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services;

Reliable access to essential sexual and reproductive health supplies including condoms;

Universal access to education and life skills and sexuality education;

Action to confront and address gender-based violence;

Provision of accessible and integrated health promotion and harm reduction services for drug users.

Also on World AIDS Day 2005, the UK Government published a paper on "Harm reduction—tackling drug use and HIV in the developing world". The paper builds on cross-Government consensus on harm reduction, ensuring a coordinated and collaborative UK approach.

Harm reduction refers to policies, strategies and programmes designed to reduce the harm associated with the use of psychoactive substances, including illicit drugs. Actions include:

Needle and syringe access to reduce opportunities for HIV transmission by removing the need to share injecting equipment;

Drug substitution therapy providing orally administered drugs to reduce the need for injections; and

Information and advice on sexual and reproductive health.

Harm reduction activities provide an important entry point for interventions such as condom distribution, voluntary counselling and testing, peer education on safer sex and reproductive health. In addition to strong policy and strategy directions, the UK has invested in a number of aid instruments which are helping to secure effective HIV prevention outcomes. This includes our substantial investments in the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, (£100 million annually in 2006 and 2007) the World Bank and in new prevention technologies (International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, International Partnership on Microbicides and the Microbicides Development Programme).

Across Africa, DFID's 16 priority country programmes[1] are working with national partners to deliver comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment and care services. The main focus has been to strengthen national multi-sectoral responses in line with the "Three Ones[2]". Within this our programmes strengthen national HIV prevention efforts such as ensuring a stable supply of sexual and reproductive health services and commodities including male and female condoms. For example, DFID's £20 million HIV programme (STARZ) works with the Government of Zambia's national HIV and AIDS programme to provide reproductive health supplies, including condoms and education materials for HIV prevention, along with expansion of prevention of mother to child transmission programmes. In Uganda, we are funding civil society organisations such as TASO to provide prevention services such as youth clubs, radio talks, peer education workshops along with provision of care (counselling, clinical services, child support) to people living with AIDS .

Brazil's success in stabilising its AIDS epidemic within a decade is an acknowledged model for the developing world. Using the two principles of a rights based approach for people living with HIV and AIDS, and full dialogue and involvement of civil society, prevalence rates in Brazil are less than half the level estimated by the World Bank 10 years ago. The 15 to 24-years age group receive priority attention in AIDS education and health promotion initiatives, with a strong focus on mass media campaigns, backed up with small group education and condom distribution. DFID is now supporting the Brazil programme to provide technical assistance to AIDS programmes in other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

In the Caribbean, as in many places, stigma and discrimination is driving the epidemic. There are particular concerns that young women in the 15 to 24-years age group are now twice as likely as their male peers to be infected with HIV. DFID has been funding a "Champions for Change" programme, designed to encourage political, community and faith-based leaders to speak out against stigma and discrimination directed towards people living with HIV and AIDS, sex workers and men who have sex with men. Early signs, from the UNAIDS Epidemic Update (December 2005) show that overall prevalence may be starting to reach a plateau, though much remains to be done to continue and expand this improving trend.

DFID supports the response to AIDS in nine countries in Asia: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Vietnam, Cambodia, China, Indonesia and Burma (through the UN). HIV in these countries is less than 1 per cent. (with the exception of Cambodia where the incidence and prevalence rates of HIV are now falling, and Burma where measurement is particularly challenging). The relevant UN targets in these countries are therefore the prevalence rates in vulnerable groups rather than in the general population aged 15 to 24. Much of DFID's effort in these countries is directed towards prevention. This includes supporting evidence of modes of transmission and trends in spread of infection in emerging epidemics. We are also supporting the targeted delivery of services to vulnerable groups such as injecting drug users, sex workers and their clients and men who have sex with men.

[1] Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

[2] One agreed AIDS Action Framework for each country that drives alignment of all partners; One national AIDS authority, with a broad-based multi-sectoral mandate; One agreed country-level monitoring and evaluation system.

Press Coverage

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 he has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* his Department; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47079]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has not made any complaints to the Press Complaints Commission during this period.

TRANSPORT

A21

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what budget the Highways Agency has identified for compulsory purchase orders along the A21 in East Sussex in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* each year from 2006–07 to 2010–11. [49076]

Dr. Ladyman: The budget for the Targeted Programme of Improvements does not include any schemes on the A21.

The Proposed Route for the A21 Flimwell to Robertsbridge Improvement was announced in February 2005 and this has triggered the option for property owners directly affected by the proposals to submit a Blight Notice to the Highways Agency, requesting them to buy their property.

Further development of the scheme is dependent upon the outcome of the Regional Prioritisation exercise and subsequent ministerial announcement.

The agency currently has a provision of £10 million for qualifying cases in the financial year 2005–06, with a further £5 million forecast for 2006–07.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans the Highways Agency has to rent out properties purchased under compulsory purchase orders along the A21 between Flimwell and Robertsbridge. [49462]

Dr. Ladyman: A compulsory purchase order has not yet been published for this scheme. The Proposed Route for the A21 Flimwell to Robertsbridge Improvement was announced in February 2005 and this has triggered the option for property owners directly affected by the proposals to submit a Blight Notice to the Highways Agency, requesting them to buy their property.

Properties that qualify and are acquired through this process are being rented out as soon as possible through the agency's managing agent.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from the Chief Executive of the South East England Development Agency regarding the proposed A21 upgrade between Flimwell and Robertsbridge. [49460]

Dr. Ladyman: The Chief Executive of the South East England Development Agency wrote to the Highways Agency on 4 March 2003 in response to the public consultation on the A21 South of Pembury to Hastings, which included proposals for upgrading the route between Flimwell and Robertsbridge.

Air Traffic (Noise and Pollution)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what alternatives to runway alteration he will propose to provide respite from air traffic noise and pollution; and if he will make a statement. [47213]

Ms Buck: Options for introducing mixed mode at Heathrow are still being developed. There will be public consultation on any proposals and this will address the implications for runway alternation, as currently operated, and any mitigation measures.

Consultancy Contracts

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what consultancy contracts worth more than £100,000 have been entered into by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* the Highways Agency, *(c)* the Strategic Rail Authority and *(d)* the Driver Vehicle and Licensing Authority in each of the past five years; and what work the contracts covered. [43595]

Ms Buck: The Department follows central guidance on awarding contracts set out by the Office of Government Commerce. Projects are only contracted out where they require specialist advice that cannot be provided in house. All contracts are awarded following a competitive tendering process in order to ensure value for money.

A table has been placed in the Libraries of the House listing the contracts in excess of £100,000 which have been entered into, since the Department was created in May 2002.

Fixed Penalties

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much has been raised through fixed penalties for *(a)* heavy goods vehicles and *(b)* public service vehicle operators since January 2004; [48223]

(2) how much money his Department expects to raise from fixed penalties for HGV and PSV operators in 2007–08. [48226]

Dr. Ladyman: At present the only fixed penalties that apply to HGVs and PSVs are those that apply to all motorists, for example for moving traffic offences such as speeding or using a mobile phone. The penalties are levied on the driver rather than the operator. There is no breakdown available that indicates how many of these fixed penalties are paid by drivers of HGVs and PSVs.

The Road Safety Bill contains enabling provisions for a system of graduated fixed penalties for offences specific to the operation of HGVs and PSVs, for example overloading and exceeding driver's hours limits. The amount of revenue from the fixed penalty scheme will depend on the levels for fixed penalties and the range of offences for which they will be used. These details will be settled after a public consultation.

Heathrow (Sustainable Development)

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress is being made on the Project for the Sustainable Development of Heathrow; and when he expects the project to report. [46317]

Ms Buck: The work continues, to programme the technical review of current air quality around Heathrow and the approach to future assessment is largely complete. We expect to publish a full report on this shortly, following peer review. This will put us in a stronger position to re-assess the likely position at Heathrow under different scenarios in future years. We are continuing to examine measures to address surface access and noise in the event of further development, including a short third runway and the possible introduction of mixed mode.

Details of the work programme are on the Department for Transport's website and further papers will be published on the website as work progresses, in accordance with the Department's publication scheme. We expect to be reaching some conclusions later this year.

Motorway Signs

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what advice his Department has issued regarding the use of overhead electronic gantry signs on motorways for messages other than those related to relevant traffic conditions; and if he will make a statement. [49050]

Dr. Ladyman: Variable Message Signs (VMS) are generally used to display real time traffic information to help drivers complete their journeys safely and efficiently. They give warning of slow moving traffic and queues as well as delays, and give motorists the opportunity to make decisions in-journey.

VMS are also used to display safety campaign messages such as DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE, KEEP LEFT UNLESS OVERTAKING and MAKE TIME FOR A BREAK.

VMS can also be used to provide accurate information for the motorist, to reduce the effects of congestion. They can give information about possible congestion from major events likely to have a significant effect on the motorway. This type of information is given near to the location Where congestion may occur, for the journey in question.

Multi-modal Studies

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much his Department contributed to the *(a)* West Midlands to East Midlands, *(b)* West Midlands and *(c)* East Midlands Multi-modal Studies; what the total cost was of carrying out each study; which of each study's recommendations have been approved by his Department; and in which recommended areas construction work has commenced; [44751]

(2) how much his Department contributed to the *(a)* A453, *(b)* A52, *(c)* A34 and *(d)* M60 Multi-modal Studies; what the total cost was of carrying out each study; which of each study's recommendations have been approved by his Department; and in which recommended areas construction work has commenced; [44752]

(3) how much his Department contributed to the *(a)* London to South Midlands, *(b)* London orbital and *(c)* Thames Valley Multi-modal Studies; what the total cost was of carrying out each study; which of each study's recommendations have been approved by his Department; and in which recommended areas construction work has commenced; [44753]

(4) how much his Department contributed to the *(a)* Cambridge to Huntingdon, *(b)* Norwich to Peterborough and *(c)* London to Ipswich Multi-modal Studies; what the total cost was of carrying out each study; which of each study's recommendations have been approved by his Department; and in which recommended areas construction work has commenced; [44754]

(5) how much his Department contributed to the *(a)* M1 North/South, *(b)* south coast and *(c)* access to Hastings Multi-modal Studies; what the total cost was of carrying out each study; which of each study's recommendations have been approved by his Department; and in which recommended areas construction work has commenced; [44755]

(6) how much his Department contributed to the *(a)* South-West area, *(b)* South-East Manchester and *(c)* West Midlands to North-West Multi-modal Studies; what the total cost was of carrying out each study; which of each study's recommendations have been approved by his Department; and in which recommended areas construction work has commenced; [44756]

(7) how much his Department contributed to the *(a)* Hull (East-West Corridor), *(b)* South and West Yorkshire and *(c)* Tyneside Multi-modal Studies; what the total cost was of carrying out each study; which of each study's recommendations have been approved by his Department; and in which recommended areas construction work has commenced; [44757]

(8) how much his Department contributed to the A1 Multi-modal Study; what the total cost was of carrying out the study; which of the study's recommendations have been approved by his Department; and in which recommended areas construction work has commenced. [44758]

Dr. Ladyman: The cost of each Multi-modal Study funded by the Department for Transport is set out in the following table

The Multi-modal Studies were strategic transport studies which developed recommendations for implementation over the short, medium and longer term up to 2031. Many of the schemes recommended required further detailed development and appraisal work before being ready for implementation. In our responses to the Multi-modal Studies we set out the way in which we wished to see the study recommendations taken forward by the relevant delivery agencies.

Our responses to the Studies were placed in the Library of the House at the time of the announcements. I would refer the hon. Member to my answer of 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 658–62W, to the hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington (Tom Brake) which shows the schemes recommended by the Multi-modal Studies that have reached the stage of Programme Entry or equivalent with agreed funding allocations.

Cost of Multi-modal Studies

Study	*Cost (£ million)*
Tranche 1	
Access to Hastings	0.6
Cambridge to Huntingdon	1.1
South East Manchester	1.2
West Midlands Area	1.0
West Midlands to North West (M6)	2.0
London to South West and South Wales	1.8
Tyneside Area	1.4
South and West Yorkshire Motorway Box	2.5
A453	1.3
North South Movements in the East Midlands (M1)	1.8
Transport Solutions Around London (M25)	3.7
Sub total	18.4
Tranche 2	
South Coast Corridor	1.7
Thames Valley	1.2
M60 Junction 12–18	4.4
A1 North of Newcastle	0.7
Hull East/West Corridor	0.9
London to Ipswich (A12)	1.4
London to South Midlands	3.0
West Midlands to East Midlands	1.8

Cost of Multi-modal Studies

Study	*Cost (£ million)*
Sub total	12.1
Tranche 3	
Norwich to Peterborough	0.9
A34 North from Southampton (Scoping Study)	0.01
A52 Corridor	0.8
Sub total	1.71
Total	32.21

Piracy

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to tackle piracy on the coast of Devon. [49082]

Dr. Ladyman: The UK Government has published on the Department's website a counter-piracy strategy which sets out the actions that it has committed to taking to tackle the menace of piracy. However, the Department has not been notified of any act of piracy on the coast of Devon.

Ports/Airports (Critical Infrastructure Protection)

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what actions he proposes to take in UK ports and airports in pursuance of the EU policy on critical infrastructure protection. [48801]

Ms Buck *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* The European Commission's proposals in respect of Critical Infrastructure protection are currently in the form of a Green Paper. The UK Government has recently submitted its comments.

The Commission will be considering these, and other member states' comments, before developing its policy further.

UK ports and airports are already subject to EU and national standards on security and we will continue to ensure that such standards are maintained.

Public Service Agreement

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when his Department expects to publish the baseline figure for Public Service Agreement target 1 to make journeys more reliable on the strategic road network by 2007–08. [48222]

Dr. Ladyman: We expect to publish the baseline data this month.

Railways

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total amount of *(a)* public sector subsidy is and *(b)* new loan guarantees are for the rail industry in 2005–06; and what his Department's planned financial support is for each category in each of the next two years. [43602]

Derek Twigg: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's statement to the House of 10 February 2005 sets out how the Department intends to allocate money on railways up to April 2009.

There are no new loan guarantees for the rail industry in 2005–06. However, Network Rail's borrowing facilities are fully backed by credit support arrangements provided by the Secretary of State for Transport.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what projections he has made of the growth in rail capacity to 2025. [48224]

Derek Twigg: Rail capacity is a measure of the ability of the network to accommodate passenger and freight demand. The UK network is an intensive mixed traffic railway and its capacity depends on the mix of the type, speed, length, routeing and stopping patterns of passenger and freight trains. The Department is working with Network Rail and the Office of Rail Regulation to determine the forecast demand for passenger and freight.

The Government will specify the passenger capacity outputs it seeks from the rail network for Control Period 4 (which runs from April 2009 to March 2014) in the High Level Output Specification. Future High Level Output Specifications at five-yearly intervals will similarly specify the two successive Control Periods to 2025.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will announce the decision on the direct train link between Bexhill-on-Sea and London Victoria. [49179]

Derek Twigg: The Brighton Main Line Route Utilisation Strategy was published on 2 February 2006. This strategy recommends truncation of the London Victoria-Hastings service to terminate at Eastbourne. Some through services from Bexhill to/from Victoria will be retained at peak times. The Department for Transport will now undertake further work in respect of the recommendations and will develop an implementation plan in due course.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans there are to cut train services between Bexhill-on-Sea and Pevensey and Westham during the next 18 months; and if he will make a statement. [49180]

Derek Twigg: The Brighton Main Line Route Utilisation Strategy was published on 2 February 2006. Train services on the route between Hastings and Eastbourne are being reviewed in light of the recommendations contained in the strategy.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the major *(a)* rail and *(b)* light rail infrastructure projects initiated by the Government and completed since 1997. [43184]

Derek Twigg: Major rail infrastructure projects initiated by the Government and completed since 1997 are as follows:

Southern Region New Trains Programme (SRNTP) including the Power Supply Upgrade

Cross Country Route Modernisation

Evergreen 1—Track doubling between Princes Risborough, Bicester and Aynho

The following schemes have been completed since 1997:

Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) Section 1—Channel Tunnel to Fawkham Junction

Jubilee Line Extension (Underground)

The following schemes have been initiated by the Government since 1997, still under way and to be completed:

West Coast Route Modernisation

Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) Section 2—Southfleet Junction to St. Pancras via Ebbsfleet and Stratford

CRTL Temple Mills Depot

CTRL Domestic Services

Thameslink 2000

East London Line (ELL) Extension

Kings Cross Network Rail Western Concourse

Kings Cross London Underground (LUL) Works

Access for All (Disability Discrimination Act)

Evergreen 2—Bicester North to Marylebone Station Improvements

Light rail schemes are initiated by local transport authorities. I refer the hon. Member to my answers of 30 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1660W and 20 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1795W, which list the light rail schemes completed and opened since 1997 and those where construction has commenced since 1997.

Road Pricing Schemes

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment his Department has made of the effect on congestion of *(a)* a national road pricing scheme and *(b)* road pricing schemes in local authority areas; [48251]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the likely effect of *(a)* a national road pricing scheme and *(b)* road pricing schemes in local authority areas on car use; [48252]

(3) whether his Department has made an estimate of how much travel on *(a)* rural roads, *(b)* urban roads and *(c)* motorways would cost per mile under a national road pricing scheme. [48254]

Dr. Ladyman: "The Feasibility Study of Road Pricing in the UK", published by the Department for Transport in July 2004, showed that road pricing could potentially reduce congestion by some 40 per cent. with benefits of up to £12 billion a year in time savings and increased reliability. The study modelled a wide range of theoretical schemes and charges including variants of national road pricing and of charging in local authority areas. A copy of the study report was placed in the Library, and is also available on the Department's website.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the *(a)* availability, *(b)* cost and *(c)* viability of technology to support (i) a national road pricing scheme and (ii) road pricing schemes in local authority areas. [48253]

Dr. Ladyman: "The Feasibility Study of Road Pricing in the UK", published by the Department for Transport in July 2004, (a copy of which is in the House Library), concluded that the equipment necessary to deliver a full position-based charging scheme would probably not be available in a mass-market, low-cost form, until 2014. The Department is continuing to explore how the market might develop over the coming years and what synergies and opportunities this could offer in terms of road pricing.

Technologies which could support local or regional schemes, such as microwave tags and automatic number plate recognition, are well proven and are already used both in the UK and internationally. The costs of technology for local schemes will depend on the individual area and would need to be evaluated as part of the development of the business case for the scheme.

Speed Cameras

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many speed cameras are installed, broken down by police authority area. [43331]

Dr. Ladyman: Information held on the number of speed camera sites, broken down by partnership area, within the safety camera programme as at 31 December 2005 is shown in the table. This information is provided to the Department by the safety camera partnerships.

Partnership area	*Number of speed camera sites*
Avon and Somerset	147
Bedfordshire and Luton	80
Cambridgeshire	92
Cheshire	42
Cleveland	56
Cumbria	40
Derbyshire	127
Devon and Cornwall	56
Dorset	101
Essex	162
Gloucestershire	74
Greater Manchester	154
Hampshire	120
Hertfordshire	31
Humberside	126
Kent and Medway	96
Lancashire	280
Leicestershire	91
Lincolnshire	72
London	320
Merseyside	46
Mid and South Wales	377
Norfolk	89
North Wales	70
Northamptonshire	77
Northumbria	99
Nottinghamshire	58
Staffordshire	98
South Yorkshire	118
Suffolk	48
Surrey	42
Sussex	86
Thames Valley	344
Warwickshire	57
West Mercia	58
West Midlands	128
West Yorkshire	166
Wiltshire	85

Traffic Management Act

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to make an assessment of the

effects of the Traffic Management Act 2004 on traffic congestion on motorways following an accident; if he will publish each assessment; and if he will make a statement. [48864]

Dr. Ladyman: The Traffic Management Act (004) enabled the Highways Agency to establish a Traffic Officer Service on motorways and on a limited number of all purpose trunk roads in England. The congestion reduction benefits derived from the introduction of the traffic officer service are not due to be assessed until 2008 when the service will have been fully operational for 12 months. I would expect the assessment, which will cover the impacts of introducing the traffic officer service on reducing incident related congestion; improving safety; improving the accuracy of information on variable message signs and freeing up police resources for tackling criminality, to be published after this time when the data have been gathered and analysed.

Transport Innovation Fund

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what projections his Department has made of how much money will be raised through road user charging under the Transport Innovation Fund until 2015; and whether the proceeds will go to *(a)* HM Treasury, *(b)* the Department for Transport and *(c)* local authorities. [48249]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has made no projections of how much money will be raised from local road user charging schemes. The Transport Act 2000 sets out the current arrangements for proceeds from local road user charging schemes.

Transport Staff (Alcohol/Drug Tests)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* commercial and *(b)* recreational mariners have been tested for (i) drugs and (ii) alcohol since 2001; and what proportion have been found to be above the legal limit. [48269]

Dr. Ladyman: Responsibility for testing professional mariners under the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003 for the effects of drugs and alcohol rests with the relevant local police force. These statistics are not collated nationally.

Under existing legislation recreational mariners are not required to take such tests. The Department carried out a public consultation in 2004 entitled 'Alcohol Limits for Non-Professional Mariners' on whether the Railways and Transport Safety legislation should be extended to include recreational mariners. The results of this exercise are currently being reviewed, together with other supporting evidence.

Urban Road Network

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of the urban road network is covered by the 10 largest urban areas. [48228]

Dr. Ladyman: The latest available figures relate to 2004 when the length of the urban road network in England was 121,455 km, of which 41.7 per cent. was covered by the 10 largest urban areas. Road lengths, by road class, for individual local highway authority areas are available on the Department for Transport website.

Wheelchairs/Mobility Scooters

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to improve the conspicuity of wheelchairs and mobility scooters; and what discussions he has had with the manufacturers of wheelchairs and mobility scooters on this subject. [48820]

Ms Buck: We have no plans to improve the conspicuity of wheelchairs and mobility scooters. Class 2 and Class 3 invalid carriages, when used on the carriageway, must already comply with the Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989.

Workplace Parking

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether it is his policy to introduce *(a)* charges and *(b)* other forms of levy on the provision of workplace parking; [47374]

(2) whether he has had discussions with the Treasury about the introduction of *(a)* charging and *(b)* taxation of workplace parking places; [47428]

(3) what his policy is on the provision of workplace parking. [47461]

Dr. Ladyman: It is for employers to decide what parking provision they make available to employees. However, in our published guidance on workplace travel plans, we explain how effective travel plans can help employers manage the cost and demand for parking spaces.

Local highway authorities in England and Wales already have discretionary powers under the Transport Act 2000 to introduce Workplace Parking Levy schemes. For a scheme to come into force an order has to be approved by the appropriate national authority, which is the Secretary of State for Transport in England.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport discusses a wide range of matters with Ministers at HM Treasury.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Public Information

Mr. Gale: To ask the Leader of the House how much was spent on public relations and information services by his Office in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [49199]

Mr. Hoon: Information services to the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons are provided by the Communication Group of the Cabinet Office, which bears the cost.

No money has been spent on public relations by the Office in the last five years.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

2012 Business Summit

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which companies and representatives from *(a)* Wales and *(b)* Blaenau Gwent were invited to participate in the 2012 Business Summit on 24 January held in Canary Wharf. [46574]

Tessa Jowell: Both the Chairman and the Chief Executive of the Welsh Development Agency were invited to attend the 2012 Business Summit; unfortunately neither was able to attend, but they sent a representative of Trade and Invest Wales in their place. Plans are being developed for future similar events, including a conference to be held in Leeds in July, which will focus on how best to spread the benefits of the 2012 Games throughout the UK.

Licensing Act

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what *(a)* evidence she considered and *(b)* account she took of existing legislation when deciding to license (i) live music in bars and restaurants, (ii) Punch and Judy shows and (iii) circuses under the Licensing Act 2003. [44028]

James Purnell: With regard to *(a)*, the Government considered the responses to a consultation on public entertainment licensing conducted in 1996 and the findings of a review of licensing law conducted with stakeholders between 1998 and 1999. The outcome of the Government's consideration of the evidence was reported in the White Paper "Time for Reform: the Modernisation of our Licensing Laws" (Cm 4696). The Government subsequently considered about 1200 responses to the White Paper and the views of relevant stakeholders, including the Arts Council for England, the Musicians' Union, Equity, the Independent Street Arts Network and the Circus Arts Forum. With regard to *(b)*, the Government examined the operation of the Licensing Act 1964, particularly section 182, Schedule 12 of the London Government Act 1963, the Private Places of Entertainment Act 1967, the Theatres Act 1968 and Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.

The evidence showed that live music in bars and restaurants was generally licensable under the 1963 and 1982 Acts, save for the narrow exemption under section 182 of the 1964 Act applying to live music performed by not more than two people throughout the day on premises licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on the premises. Punch and Judy shows were licensable under the Theatres Act 1968, but in practice this law was rarely, if ever, enforced. The position of circuses was unclear under the 1963, 1982 and 1968 Acts because of anachronistic exemptions in the 1982 Act which related to entertainments at pleasure fairs and the lack of any obvious exemptions under the 1963 and 1968 Acts. However, in practice circuses were not being licensed, though some were being controlled by local authorities through the unsatisfactory use of public health legislation.

Lottery Funding (Scotland)

Mr. Devine: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what Lottery funding has been provided *(a)* in Scotland and *(b)* in each Scottish constituency in each of the last five years. [49262]

Mr. Caborn: The information is as follows.

(a) Lottery funding awarded by all of the lottery distributing bodies across Scotland:

	£
2001	144,560,712
2002	119,559,887
2003	201,559,954
2004	112,250,167
2005	146,991,931

(b) Lottery funding awarded by all of the lottery distributing bodies in each Scottish constituency:

£

UK constituency	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Aberdeen North	6,398,869	2,311,842	7,990,362	2,711,391	1,073,633
Aberdeen South	601,030	219,233	457,909	629,704	1,703,833
Airdrie and Shotts	572,497	783,629	1,464,455	1,819,587	514,262
Angus	2,131,873	844,852	1,934,576	1,255,912	695,829
Argyll and Bute	4,429,623	3,122,271	8,524,806	2,937,646	4,271,811
Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock	2,150,725	1,292,438	3,113,358	2,737,009	1,342,728
Banff and Buchan	407,052	857,545	1,898,784	1,467,642	468,590
Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk	4,558,101	3,037,261	4,683,952	2,428,412	1,431,177
Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross	2,715,926	1,422,666	1,399,713	775,677	1,945,037
Central Ayrshire	939,598	1,738,645	1,443,844	1,500,943	504,299
Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill	1,387,837	875,271	3,517,120	807,469	5,861,889
Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East	209,850	1,418,415	2,982,212	2,999,291	714,075
Dumfries and Galloway	1,763,141	2,553,280	2,279,253	2,413,623	4,390,321
Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale	2,793,322	2,015,877	2,615,310	680,001	510,263
Dundee East	1,347,461	832,229	473,375	827,330	1,461,463
Dundee West	2,706,525	3,216,798	7,731,997	7,111,653	1,739,333
Dunfermline and West Fife	3,042,970	433,962	365,397	3,642,608	467,174
East Dunbartonshire	1,929,765	1,408,274	820,528	617,567	448,001
East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow	921,591	1,280,658	424,763	596,347	542,249
East Lothian	2,504,820	686,849	2,433,675	1,570,295	689,417
East Renfrewshire	1,969,711	1,487,532	1,585,949	1,547,484	530,161
Edinburgh East	13,818,812	3,455,701	15,419,953	5,027,220	41,201,909
Edinburgh North and Leith	6,554,139	7,598,959	14,486,618	3,177,634	5,803,822
Edinburgh South	1,074,716	1,184,591	711,991	3,017,499	1,182,158
Edinburgh South West	1,777,940	1,958,586	4,337,269	354,073	454,721

£

UK constituency	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Edinburgh West	1,167,811	269,128	1,033,207	1,702,126	906,992
Falkirk	716,311	1,061,252	1,536,148	299,005	1,298,877
Glasgow Central	14,194,529	13,459,204	24,776,252	8,080,159	21,735,074
Glasgow East	1,467,135	446,419	934,405	1,130,207	1,220,648
Glasgow North	2,216,414	3,078,330	6,306,435	3,277,948	3,792,294
Glasgow North East	360,636	560,868	2,638,817	1,766,411	862,227
Glasgow North West	2,935,439	326,609	950,546	1,506,719	168,435
Glasgow South	1,438,113	1,371,780	1,478,397	2,697,515	2,966,165
Glasgow South West	2,084,437	126,412	971,709	1,261,404	1,266,312
Glenrothes	1,723,819	1,214,203	4,059,071	375,456	1,557,452
Gordon	1,232,196	1,015,793	1,558,004	991,978	673,039
Inverclyde	2,338,073	3,034,850	1,526,513	1,758,914	789,531
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey	5,053,256	3,039,533	5,186,174	3,635,730	2,640,375
Kilmarnock and Loudoun	1,854,903	717,726	2,639,309	829,489	1,305,478
Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath	1,462,355	1,465,313	4,292,996	1,872,372	575,204
Lanark and Hamilton East	1,563,836	3,104,378	4,218,507	1,982,258	1,672,516
Linlithgow and East Falkirk	1,764,498	3,141,181	5,090,395	737,967	454,395
Livingston	338,811	1,360,578	2,461,900	1,434,710	1,073,703
Midlothian	1,590,418	2,696,104	2,125,144	2,543344	2,149,982
Moray	2,288,763	1,121,254	1,272,033	1,655,520	811,160
Motherwell and Wishaw	652,219	1,075,979	622,697	1,687,138	1,747,877
Na h-Eileanan an Iar	1,008,149	5,169,902	3,430,980	3,149,371	895,401
North Ayrshire and Arran	4,281,117	4,143,729	1,479,909	924301	1,182,297
North East Fife	2,781,645	958,945	1,460,715	638,469	307,768
Ochil and South Perthshire	2,931,586	127,448	1,280,524	453,893	1,212,981
Orkney and Shetland	2,841,405	4,467,791	3,036,032	1,373,932	2,009,453
Paisley and Renfrewshire North	2,291,349	1,103,553	1,919,707	506,689	991,195
Paisley and Renfrewshire South	2,543,660	1,405,297	3,222,817	862,099	1,688,460
Perth and North Perthshire	1,640,794	1,152,444	3,390,324	3,233,256	347,456
Ross, Skye and Lochaber	1,997,718	5,622,565	3,474,868	2,052,186	2,741,779
Rutherglen and Hamilton West	1,000,152	2,144,984	2,871,790	482,547	1,188,197
Stirling	1,517,145	1,159,783	3,619,547	2,424,912	3,763,935
West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine	837,694	851,775	1,333,893	281,276	307,644
West Dunbartonshire	3,734,431	1,525,411	2,261,017	1,984,845	827,469
Total for Scotland	144,560,712	119,559,887	201,559,954	112,250,167	146,991,931

This information is derived from the Department's Lottery awards database, searchable at www.lottery.culture.gov.uk, which uses information supplied by the lottery distributors.

Opinion Research/Public Relations

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the value was of *(a)* public opinion research and *(b)* public relations contracts awarded by her Department in 2004–05 in (i) each (A) nation and (B) region of the UK and (ii) London. [35942]

Mr. Lammy: *(a)* The Department commissioned two pieces of research containing a component of public opinion research:

1. A survey of participation and attendance across DCMS sectors, 'Taking Part', was commissioned in 2005. In addition to asking about respondent's participation in areas of DCMS responsibility, there are a small number of questions on the survey which can be classified as relating to public opinion. On average, the survey takes 40 minutes to complete, and we estimate that one and a half minutes of this is taken up by public opinion questions.

The total cost of the survey is £2.5 million, but only a small proportion of this relates to public opinion research.

2. A survey of live music provision was commissioned in June 2004. Although primarily focussed on collecting information from venue operators about the extent of live music provision in their establishment, it contained a number of questions about changes to the licensing regime, their awareness of this and their perceptions of the impact it would have upon them.

The total cost of the survey was £127,252.

(b) The spend on public relations contracts in 2004–05 was £100,000.

The campaign proved to be excellent value for money as it enabled us to access over 236,000 (advertising value equivalent—AVE) of space in high profile consumer publications on a targeted national and regional scale for zero cost.

It is not possible to give the value by nation, region of UK and London as the contract was not specified in this way and we could provide this information only at disproportionate cost.

Regulatory Reform Orders

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many regulatory reform orders her Department has laid before Parliament in each of the last five calendar years. [46802]

Mr. Lammy: The Department has laid five Regulatory Reform Orders before Parliament in the last five calendar years. The details are listed as follows.

SI number	SI title
2001/3937	The Regulatory Reform (Special Occasions Licensing) Order 2001
2002/1602	The Regulatory Reform (Golden Jubilee Licensing) Order 2002
2002/3205	The Regulatory Reform (Special Occasions Licensing) Order 2002
2003/3275	The Regulatory Reform (Gaming Machines) Order 2003
2004/1939	The Regulatory Reform (Museum of London) (Location of Premises) Order 2004

Statutory Instruments

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the statutory instruments introduced by her Department since 6 May 2005. [46208]

Mr. Lammy: A list of statutory instruments introduced by this Department since 6 May 2005 is set out in the following table.

Statutory Instruments

Number	*Title*
2005/1464	The European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production (Amendment) (No.2) Order 2005.
2005/1519	The Public Lending Right Scheme 1982 (Commencement of Variations) Order 2005.
2005/1522	The Royal Parks (Regulation of Specified Parks) Order 2005.
2005/1748	The Safety of Sports Grounds (Designation) Order 2005.
2005/1751	The Football Spectators (Seating) Order 2005.
2005/1830	The Olympic Lotteries (Declaration that London is to host the 2012 Olympic Games) Order 2005.
2005/1831 (C.78)	The Horserace Betting and Olympic Lottery Act 2004 (Commencement No.3) Order 2005
2005/1974	The Protection of Wrecks(Designation) (England) Order 2005
2005/2090 (C.91)	The Licensing Act 2003 (Commencement No.6) Act 2005
2005/2091	The Licensing Act 2003 (Second appointed day) Order 2005
2005/2366	The Licensing Act 2003 (Personal licence: relevant offences) (Amendment) Order 2005.
2005/2470	The Millennium Commission (Reduction in Membership) Order 2005.
2005/2425 (C.101)	The Gambling Act 2005 (Commencement No.1) Order 2005.
2005/2455 (C.103)	The Gambling Act (Commencement No.2 and Transitional Provisions) Order 2005.
2005/2632 (C.108)	The Human Tissue Act 2004 (Commencement No.2) Order 2005.
2005/2775	The Gaming Machines (Maximum Prizes) Regulations 2005.
2005/2776	The Gaming Act 1968 (Variation of Monetary Limits) Order 2005.
2005/2868	The Royal Parks (Establishment of Eligibility for Transfer and Termination of Employment) Regulations 2005.
2005/3235	The New Opportunities Fund (Specification of Initiatives) (No.2) Order 2005.
2005/2918	The Licensing Act 2003 (Permitted Temporary Activities) (Notices) Regulations 2005.
2005/3027	The Licensing Act 2003 ((Amendment of the Gaming Act 1968) (transfer of Gaming Machine Permits) Order 2005
2005/3028	The Licensing Act 2003 (Amendment of the Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976) (Transfer of Amusements With Prizes Permits) Order 2005.
2005/3048	The Licensing Act 2003 (Consequential Amendments) Order 2005.
2005/3056 (C131)	The Licensing Act 2003 (Commencement No. 7 and Transitional Provisions) Order 2005.

Statutory Instruments

Number	*Title*
2005/3274	The Parks for People (England) Joint Scheme (Authorisation) Order 2005.
2005/3351	The Public Lending Right Scheme 1982) (Commencement of Variation) (No.2) Order 2005.
2005/3439 (C.144)	The Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005 (Commencement No.3) Order 2005.
2006/218	The Safety of Sports Grounds (Designation) Order 2005

World Rowing Championships

Angela Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will be attending the world rowing championships at Dorney Lake in August. [49450]

Mr. Caborn: To date I have not received an invitation to attend this event. Should I do so, my decision to be present will be determined by my diary commitments.

Angela Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what support her Department is providing to the world rowing championships that are to take place in the UK in August; and if she will make a statement. [49451]

Mr. Caborn: These championships have received significant financial support from a number of sources. In May 2002, UK Sport made an award of up to £1.15 million of lottery funding towards the bidding and staging costs. In addition, funding has been provided to contribute to completion of the construction of the Dorney Lake Start and Finish Towers to bring it up to the required international and Olympic standard. At the beginning of 2005, Sport England granted £250,000 of lottery funding to the Amateur Rowing Association; UK Sport contributed £112,000 exchequer funding and the London Development Agency and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport provided combined exchequer funding of £88,000.

Worship Grant Scheme

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the Listed Places of Worship Grant scheme has cost in each year since 2001. [49233]

Mr. Lammy: The Listed Places of Worship Grant scheme returns to faith groups the equivalent of the VAT incurred in making repairs to listed places of worship. The cost per year of the scheme is represented in the table.

£

	2001-02	*2002-03*	*2003-04*	*2004-05*
Grants disbursed	1,193,237.39	8,049,941.63	9,006,413.95	10,444,277.82
Administration costs	50,549.20	205,526.00	215,072.74	230,747.57
Total	1,243,786.59	8,255,467.63	9,221,486.69	10,675,025.39

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Accounts Modernisation Directive

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what he expects to be the financial implications for business of not proceeding with the operating financial review and introducing the business review under the accounts modernisation directive. [47376]

Alun Michael: Based on the Regulatory Impact Assessment which accompanied the Companies Act 1985 (Operating and Financial Review and Directors' Report etc), Regulations 2005 (S.I. 2005/1011), removing the statutory requirement for quoted

companies to produce an operation financial review, thus removing duplication so that quoted companies are required only to produce a business review, should reduce the burden on business by an estimated £33 million per annum, primarily by reducing audit compliance costs.

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received on the proposed restructuring of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and the potential loss of UK scientific research capacity; and if he will make a statement. [49093]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* The Department has received a number of letters from Members of Parliament, trade unions, environmental organisations, members of the public and others, about the Natural Environment Research Council's (NERC) proposal to restructure the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. NERC is being made aware of the views expressed.

Clean Coal Technology

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent steps he has taken to promote *(a)* clean coal technology and *(b)* carbon sequestration. [49203]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* The Government announced £25 million for the demonstration of Carbon Abatement Technologies as part of the "Carbon Abatement Technology Strategy for Fossil Fuel Use", published in June 2005. CATs include Clean Coal Technology and Carbon Capture and Storage. The Chancellor announced a further £10 million for demonstration in his pre-Budget Statement in November 2005, bringing the total Government support for demonstration to £35 million. The money will be available from April 2006 for 4 years. We expect to receive proposals from industry for projects in late spring 2006.

In addition to this, CAT projects have been included as part of the November 2005 call for R&D proposals under the DTI's Technology Programme supporting collaborative R&D. Around £13 million is being made available for energy based technologies with some of this being allocated to the successful CAT projects.

Clear Skies Grants

Mr. Walter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the Clear Skies grants made to projects in Dorset since the scheme was introduced. [45752]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* Since the start of the Clear Skies programme, grant support has been approved for 195 household projects in Dorset, 136 of which have completed and received grant funding. In terms of community projects, four have been approved for grant funding, of which one has completed and received funding, two are yet to complete and one has withdrawn. A list of community projects supported under Clear Skies can be accessed at http://www.clear-skies.org/communities/ApplicationGuidelines.aspx There is not a publicly available list for household projects.

Commission for Equality and Human Rights

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government are taking to ensure that there will be *(a)* a race committee and *(b)* black and minority ethnic commissioners on the Commission for Equality and Human Rights. [47561]

Meg Munn: At Report Stage of the Equality Bill on 16 January we made a clear commitment to urgently progress work to identify how race equality work will be undertaken in the new Commission. This work will also seek to establish how the new Commission's work in these areas will fit within the Government's wider framework of activity on community cohesion, race equality and relations with faith communities, and will be undertaken jointly with the Home Office, to ensure coherent and effective delivery that meets the needs and of all our black and minority ethnic communities.

We also made clear our confidence that the provisions in the Bill, requiring appointments to the Commission to be made on the basis of knowledge or experience in the specific areas of discrimination, will ensure that the Commission is a diverse and reflects the full breadth of the communities and interests with whom it will work, including black and minority ethnic communities.

We welcome the opportunity to engage further with the BME communities on this important agenda and, further to these commitments, I have agreed to meet with 1990 Trust, Operation Black Vote, the CRE and the Greater London authority. This meeting will take place shortly.

Correspondence

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he will reply to the letter of 25 July 2005 from the hon. Member for North East Bedfordshire in relation to driving offences committed by foreign hauliers; and if he will make a statement. [47748]

Alan Johnson: This case was transferred to the Department of Transport, who I understand have replied to the hon. Member.

Kitty Ussher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the Minister for Employment Relations will reply to the letter of October 2005 from the hon. Member for Burnley regarding a constituent Mr. Morrison. [47956]

Alan Johnson: The matter raised by my hon. Friend's constituent is not a matter for this Department and has been transferred to the FCO. I apologise that there was a delay in doing so, due to an administrative error.

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he will reply to the letter dated 3 November 2005 from Mr. John Waterman, a constituent of the hon. Member for Sittingbourne and Sheppey. [48400]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* I am awaiting technical information to enable me to provide a comprehensive answer to the concerns of my

hon. Friend's constituent. I hope to have that information within the next week and apologise for the delay.

Energy from Waste Plants

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry why energy from waste plants accepting mixed waste will not be eligible for renewable obligation certificates. [47813]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government made clear in the statutory consultation document on the 2005–06 review of the renewables obligation that the majority of new energy from waste projects should not need the support of the obligation to be economic. For this reason the Government does not propose to introduce an amendment to eligibility, which would allow the majority of new projects using conventional technologies to claim renewable obligation certificates (ROCs) from mixed waste.

The statutory consultation document also made clear that whilst the majority of new energy from mixed waste plants, utilising conventional combustion technology, should be economic without the support of the obligation, energy from mixed waste plants, which utilise combined heat and power (CHP), would be likely to face additional capital costs in relation to the supply of heat. Given the carbon abatement benefits arising from the use, rather than the waste of heat from the combustion process, the Government proposes to extend ROC eligibility to electricity generated from the biomass fraction of mixed waste, which uses CHP. This change will take effect from 1 April 2006.

Energy from mixed waste, using advanced conversion technologies such as pyrolysis, gasification and anaerobic digestion, remains eligible for support under the renewables obligation.

A copy of the statutory consultation document on the 2005–06 review of the renewables obligation is available from the Libraries of the House.

Mobile Telephones (Charges)

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures are being taken by his Department to prosecute companies who charge people for a service they did not want on their mobile telephone. [48380]

Alun Michael: The Government's aim is have in place controls which give the consumer sufficient safeguards but which do not unduly hamper the development of the market. Unsolicited text (SMS) messages are illegal under new statutory controls, which were introduced as part of the new Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003. The Independent Committee for the Supervision of Standards of Telephone Information Services (ICSTIS) is responsible for administering Premium Rate Services (PRS) and can fine companies and bar access to services.

As a result of various PRS scams during 2004, the Government asked the communications and media regulator, Ofcom to carry out a review of PRS regulation. In December 2004 Ofcom published a report, which contained a set of recommendations to reduce the scope for consumer harm. Most of Ofcom's recommendations have already been implemented to improve the PRS regulatory regime, including raising the maximum penalty for breaches of the ICSTIS Code of Practice from £100,000 to £250,000.

The recommendations focus on:

Enforcement—tightening up the regulatory regime to give the regulator, ICSTIS, more powers to act more quickly against those abusing the PRS payment mechanism.

Consumer redress—improving the likelihood of consumers being able to get their money back where they are the subject of a PRS fraud.

Consumer information—informing consumers better about how to avoid being the victim of PRS fraud.

One key recommendation that has already been implemented is to slow down the flow of funds from network operators to service providers, by making operators withhold payment for 30 days from when a PRS call is made. New rules on compensation for consumers who have been subject to a scam are also being implemented. Then, if there are complaints, it will be possible to hold back funds for a longer period, thus ensuring that fines and repayments can be paid. This will reduce the likelihood of a quick gain being made through the provision of unwanted or unacceptable practices. The new requirement will allow ICSTIS to have suspect services cut off at an earlier stage using its emergency procedure and prevent service providers from being paid for fraudulent services. The commencement date for this new requirement was 15 September 2005.

The Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) is an independent body set up by the advertising industry to police the rules laid down in the advertising codes. ASA receives and upholds many complaints from parents whose children have received large phone bills because they downloaded ringtones without realising the financial commitment involved.

The industry itself announced in January 2005 that consumers must be clearly informed by text about what they have subscribed to, the cost, and how to stop the service (a consumer "must" be able to switch off the service with the universal "stop" command). All the UK mobile operators have signed up to these new safeguards and agreed to require those content providers using their networks to comply with them. In other words *all* content providers have to comply with the new safeguards or will face the suspension of their services (and therefore the blocking and loss of revenue).

National Minimum Wage

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which companies have been found not to be paying their employees the national minimum wage in each year since 2001; and what penalties were imposed. [48398]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply.

HM Revenue and Customs do not routinely reveal the identity of the employers found not to be paying the minimum wage.

North Sea Gas

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry why natural gas from UK offshore North Sea sources has been depleted at a faster rate than was envisaged in the 2003 Energy White Paper; and if he will place his Department's calculations in the Library. [46566]

Malcolm Wicks: The 2003 Energy White Paper did not specifically forecast the rate of depletion of UK gas but it did say that "it is . . . likely that the UK will become a net importer of gas on an annual basis by around 2006" (paragraph 6.13). This was in line with the projections of outside analysts. For example, Wood Mackenzie, in its August 2001 multi-client report entitled "Running Short of Gas: The Outlook for UK and Irish Gas Markets", had said "It is probable that the UK will become a net importer of gas in either 2005 or 2006." The following table compares the Department's central view of both production and demand at the time of the Energy White Paper with its current central view. This shows that our own gas production from the North Sea declined faster than expected in 2004, with declining production from existing fields not being offset by production from new, smaller fields, and we moved to being a small net gas importer.

bcm

	Energy White Paper projected Net UKCS gas production	*Current actual[1]/projected net UKCS gas production*	*Energy White Paper projected net UK gas demand*	*Current actual[1]/projected net UK gas demand*
2001	105	[1]104	95	[1]95
2002	102	[1]102	96	[1]93
2003	102	[1]102	96	[1]94
2004	102	[1]95	96	[1]96
2005	99	89	97	94
2006	94	90	97	94
2007	83	86	98	94
2008	72	80	98	95

[1] Actual.

Nuclear Fuels

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many tonnes of nuclear fuel were imported into the UK in the latest year for which records are available, broken down by country of export. [48022]

Malcolm Wicks: Spent nuclear fuel is imported into the UK for reprocessing services. The precise details of deliveries from individual customers are commercially confidential. I can, however, confirm there have been no such imports in the financial year 2005–06.

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what nuclear fuels have been consumed in the UK in each of the last three years; and how many tonnes of each type of fuel were consumed in each of those years. [48023]

Malcolm Wicks: British Nuclear Fuel and British Energy have informed me that their generating reactors have used the following volumes of Uranium over the last three-year period for which figures are available:

BNFL

	Tonnes uranium
2003	423.557
2004	354.489
2005	408.260

British Energy

	Tonne uranium
2002	267
2003	269
2004	212

Nuisance Text Messages

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints Ofcom has received regarding nuisance text messages sent by companies in the last 12 months. [48381]

Alun Michael: Under Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003, which came into force on 11 December 2003, the Information Commissioner's Office and not Ofcom has responsibility for the consideration of complaints relating to unsolicited marketing text messages. I am advised by his office that the following complaints were received in relation to Regulation 22, which covers unsolicited marketing text messages going back to the introduction of the present casework management system in 2004, although due to the nature of the casework management system previously used by his office figures are not available before this date:

	Number of complaints
2004	931
2005	479
2006	[1]16

[1] To date.

Palm Oil

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will take steps to ensure that UK power stations will not earn renewable obligation certificates by using palm oil as part of its fuel mix. [48363]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* Under the Renewables Obligation (RO) palm oil, as a biomass fuel, is eligible for renewable obligation

certificates (ROCs). All biomass fuels are eligible for ROCs and the Government have no plans to amend this position at the present time.

Petroleum Imports

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what was the total volume of oil and petroleum imports into the UK during the last year for which figures are available; and what were the countries of origin of the imports. [48614]

Malcolm Wicks: The table shows imports into the UK of primary oil and petroleum products by country of origin for 2004.

Total imports of primary oil into the UK in 2004 were 62 and a half million tonnes, with Norway accounting for about two thirds (64 per cent.) of primary oil imports. Total imports of petroleum products into the UK in 2004 were 19 and a half million tonnes, with two countries (Saudi Arabia and Russia) accounting for 22 per cent. of product imports.

Imports of oil and petroleum products into the UK in 2004, by country

Thousand tonnes

Country of Origin	*Total primary oil*	*Percentage of total oil imports*	*Total petroleum products*	*Percentage of total product imports*	*Total imports*	*Percentage of total imports*
France	818	1	1,201	6	2,019	2
Kuwait	[1] —	[1] —	1,731	9	1,731	2
Latvia	450	1	890	5	1,340	2
Netherlands	329	1	1,055	5	1,384	2
Norway	39,884	64	1,440	7	41,324	50
Russia	9,199	15	2,116	11	11,315	14
Saudi Arabia	1,357	2	2,077	11	3,435	4
United Arab Emirates	[2] —	[2] —	1,773	9	1,773	2
Other	10,479	17	7,201	37	17,680	22
Total Imports	62,516	100	19,485	100	82,001	100

[1] Indicates zero imports.
[2] Value less than one thousand tonnes.
Source:
Digest of UK energy statistics 2005 and company data.

Regulatory Reform

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many regulatory reform orders his Department has laid before Parliament in each of the last five calendar years. [46811]

Alan Johnson: My Department has laid five regulatory reform orders (which have subsequently been made) in the last five calendar years. These are listed as follows:

The Regulatory Reform (Removal of 20 Member Limit in Partnerships etc.) Order 2020

The Regulatory Reform (Sunday Trading) Order 2004

The Regulatory Reform (Patents) Order 2004

The Regulatory Reform (Unsolicited Goods and Services Act 1971) (Directory Entries and Demands for Payment) Order 2005

The Regulatory Reform (Trading Stamps) Order 2005

Renewable Energy

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on his renewable heat strategy. [48017]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to my previous answer to the right hon. Member for West Dorset (Mr. Letwin) on 7 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 36W.

The Government Biomass Group considering the recommendations of the Biomass Task Force will be reporting in April.

Social Enterprises

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to encourage the development of social enterprises. [47812]

Alun Michael: The Government published a strategy for social enterprise in 2002. Since then we have provided funding to help establish the Social Enterprise Coalition as a representative body for social enterprises, and carried out a major survey to determine the size of the sector. We have introduced the "Community Interest Company" to provide businesses operating primarily for a social purpose a tailor-made limited company model, and we are working with the regional development agencies to ensure that social enterprises are well-served by publicly funded business support available through Business Link.

We have produced a guide for banks entitled "Lending to the Social Enterprise sector" and sponsored the excellent "Matchwinners" publication which exemplifies commercial collaboration between social enterprises and the private sector.

We are currently refreshing the strategy for social enterprise, and will launch a new action plan in the spring. The action plan will focus on four key areas:

confirming the value of social enterprise

embedding social enterprise as a recognised business model

opening markets to social enterprise, and

encouraging new entrants to the sector.

Actions will include ensuring social enterprises are well served by publicly funded business support, improving access to public procurement, new research into the impact of social enterprise, and promoting social enterprise to potential entrepreneurs.

Supermarkets

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether he plans to review the Supermarket Code of Practice; and whether he plans to

give advice to the Office of Fair Trading in respect of establishing a regulator to monitor breaches of the Code of Conduct by supermarkets. [48142]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The prime responsibility for operating our competition regime rests with the independent competition authorities. In the specific case of supermarkets it is the Office of Fair Trading (OFT). The OFT is currently responsible for keeping under review the Code of Practice governing supermarket's relations with their suppliers and for dealing with any other competition issues in the sector.

Complaints regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Practice will be investigated by the OFT who will take appropriate action where necessary.

THORP

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to his answer of 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2355W, on THORP, whether ministerial approval is required in the event that the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and the British Nuclear Group agree the plant should restart. [48765]

Malcolm Wicks: The Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP) has been shut since a major leak in April 2005. Once the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate is satisfied that its safety requirements are met, the decision as to when to re-start the operation of THORP would be for the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority to take, in conjunction with plant operator BNG.

The NDA has been given a direction to operate THORP under the Energy Act 2004. A decision by the NDA to re-start the operation of THORP would therefore be in compliance with this direction. Further ministerial approval would not be required provided plans to re-start THORP are within the current operating plan for the plant.

DEFENCE

Administration Costs

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's administration costs limit was for financial year 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [49783]

John Reid: The Ministry of Defence is not subject to an administration cost limit.

Afghanistan

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the strength of the Afghan National Army is; what the expected rate is of annual increase in manpower; and what assessment his Department has made of what additional armaments will be required in order to meet the target of a fully functioning Army with a strength of 70,000 personnel by 2010. [49279]

Mr. Ingram: Over 27,000 Afghan troops have been trained at the Kabul Military Training Centre, and the Afghan Minister for Defence recently estimated there were now 34,000 soldiers, NCOs and officers in the Afghan National Army. The future growth of the Afghan National Army, and the equipment it may require, are a matter for the Government of Afghanistan and the United States, as the G8 Lead Nation responsible for assisting the Afghans to rebuild their Army.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what powers of arrest and detention are available to British troops engaged in peacekeeping in Afghanistan. [42999]

John Reid: Troops deployed under international security assistance force (ISAF) are able to arrest and detain by virtue of the authorisations permitting use of all necessary measures to fulfil its mandate contained in, most recently, UNSCR 1623 (2005), and by agreement with the Government of Afghanistan. ISAF policy is that individuals should be transferred to the Afghan authorities at the first opportunity and within 96 hours or released.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many troop-carrying movements were made by air in Afghanistan in 2005 in aircraft which were not fitted with defensive aids systems; how many such movements are expected to be made in *(a)* 2006 and *(b)* 2007; and if he will make a statement. [49427]

Mr. Ingram: No UK military flights carrying troops in Afghanistan were flown without defensive aid suites in 2005 and we do not plan to move troops without such protection in the future.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence under which command a detachment of six Harrier GR7 aircraft is operating in Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [45169]

John Reid: The United Kingdom's six Harrier GR7 aircraft are commanded by the UK Air Component Commander. The aircraft routinely support the NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the US-led Coalition Forces Command (Afghanistan), according to operational priorities. The GR7s operate under UK Rules of Engagement at all times.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions he has had with the *(a)* Foreign Secretary and *(b)* Secretary of State for International Development regarding the linking of the military deployment with (i) political engagement and (ii) development efforts in Helmand Province, Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [45146]

John Reid: I have regular discussions with the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for International Development regarding the Government's plans to participate in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Stage 3 expansion, and will continue to do so.

Any UK deployment to Helmand is predicated upon a fully integrated military and civilian plan designed to improve security, build local Afghan capacity, address the problem of narcotics and improve development opportunities working closely with the Governor and his team. Planning has been co-ordinated across Government including these three Departments. The UK's preliminary operations team, which comprises military, FCO, DFID and PCRU members, continues to refine plans for UK activity in the province.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what role UK forces will play in counter-narcotics activities in Helmand province, Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [45147]

John Reid: Counter-narcotics (CN) operations are the responsibility of the Government of Afghanistan. The UK is the lead G8 nation for counter narcotics assistance in Afghanistan. UK forces deployed under the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Helmand will contribute to the broader CN effort by providing the secure environment in which the rule of law can be applied, reconstruction can take place and legal rural livelihoods can be developed.

Under NATO's operational plan for the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, UK forces under ISAF provide, within means and capabilities, training and operational support to Afghan CN forces. They do not have a direct role in targeted interdiction operations or in eradication of opium poppy in the fields.

Apache Helicopter

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many qualified pilots for the Apache AH Mk1 helicopter there were *(a)* on the last date for which figures are available and *(b)* in 1997. [48776]

Mr. Ingram: As at January 2006 there were 100 qualified pilots, with a further 15 due to be fully trained in April 2006 following their successful completion of a conversion to type training course. There were no trained pilots in 1997 as the Ministry of Defence did not take delivery of the Apache Mk 1 until 15 March 2000.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the full complement is of *(a)* pilots and *(b)* engineers for the Apache helicopter fleet; and how many are in post in each category. [43862]

Mr. Ingram: The establishment for Apache pilots is 217. As at January 2006, there are 100 trained Apache pilots, with a further 15 pilots due to be fully trained on Apache aircraft in April 2006, following their successful completion of the current conversion to type training course.

The establishment for engineers for the Apache fleet is 539. There are currently 318 engineers in post. There are 15 Apache engineering courses programmed for 2006.

The Army Air Corps is approximately halfway through the conversion programme to the Apache helicopter. The current establishment and ongoing training of pilots and engineers is in line with this conversion programme.

Armed Forces Deployment

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of each of the three services he expects to be *(a)* serving abroad and *(b)* deployed on front-line duties between 24 December 2005 and 2 January 2006; and what percentage of the trained strength of each service each of these figures represents. [38763]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 16 December 2005]:* The following table gives the numbers of personnel deployed on operations and the numbers serving overseas (but not on operations) at 14 December 2005. The figure did not rise significantly over the Christmas period, however staff taking leave may have caused both numbers to fall.

The number of personnel categorised as "serving overseas, but not on operations" remaining away from the United Kingdom over the Christmas period was likely to be significantly smaller, as personnel in Germany and Cyprus for example, may have chosen to take their leave back in the UK. Some personnel deployed on operations will have taken rest and recuperation (R + R) during this time and the figures do not reflect these temporary fluctuations.

The percentage for trained strength is based on a total that includes regular forces and the regular and volunteer reserves. The figures do not include individuals liable for recall in a crisis, university or cadet forces.

Service	*Number deployed on operations*	*Number serving overseas not on operations*	*Total*	*Percentage of trained strength*
Naval Service	1,320	120	1,440	1.5
Army	8,213	22,786	30,999	9.2
Royal Air Force	2,768	2,506	5,292	5.3

Departmental Estimates

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will break down the *(a)* main estimate, *(b)* winter supplementary estimate and *(c)* spring supplementary estimate Request for Resources 1 provision for each of his Department's top level budget holders by (i) direct resource departmental expenditure limit (DEL) and (ii) indirect resource DEL for financial years 1999–2000 to 2004–05. [49769]

John Reid: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Departmental Expenditure Limit

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will break down the Request for Resources 1 outturn for each of his Department's top level budget holders by *(a)* direct resource departmental expenditure limit (DEL) and *(b)* indirect resource DEL for financial years 1999–2000 to 2004–05. [49770]

John Reid: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the distribution in each region and country of the UK of *(a)* regular service personnel, *(b)* direct civilian employees of his Department and *(c)* civilian personnel in the UK defence agencies and trading funds was at the latest date for which figures are available. [48658]

Mr. Touhig: For information on the distribution of service personnel, I refer my hon. Friend to Tri Service Publication 10, UK Regular Forces Distribution across the UK (TSP 10).

Copies of TSP 10 are held in the House of Commons Library and also available at www.dasa.mod.uk

The following tables shows the number of civilian personnel directly employed in the Department and UK Defence agencies and trading funds as at 1 January 2006 by Government office region.

Civilian personnel[1] in UK Defence agencies and MOD—owned trading funds by Government office region and country, at 1 January 2006

Number: FTE

	North East	North West	Yorkshire and Humber	East Midlands	West Midlands	Eastern	London	South East	South West
MOD Total excluding Agencies and Trading Funds	440	570	1,490	1,770	1,410	5,270	4,590	7,140	10,500
Total Agencies and Trading Funds	90	2,240	2,380	760	4,640	1,990	2,500	9,620	13,240
Agencies									
Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	50	130
Army Training and Recruitment Agency	—	20	930	20	210	110	40	1,380	990
British Forces Post Office	—	—	—	—	10	10	240	30	20
Defence Analytical Services Agency	—	—	—	—	—	—	70	10	120
Defence Bills Agency	—	540	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Defence Communications Service Agency	—	20	50	10	90	520	310	500	1,820
Defence Estates	10	50	130	50	490	350	200	460	380
Defence Medical and Education Training Agency	—	—	10	—	30	10	100	420	10
Defence Procurement Agency	20	160	10	10	50	60	80	110	3,190
Defence Storage and Distribution Agency	—	260	40	10	1,590	40	—	1,180	380
Defence Transport and Movements Agency	—	—	—	—	—	—	50	90	—
Defence Vetting Agency	—	—	320	—	—	—	—	—	—
Disposal Services Agency	—	—	—	—	—	20	60	—	10
Duke of York's Royal Military School	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	120	—
Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency	40	130	530	100	300	650	640	2,030	1,470
Naval Recruiting and Training Agency	10	10	—	—	10	—	10	520	80
Pay and Personnel Agency	—	350	—	—	—	—	—	—	500
RAF Training Group Defence Agency	10	30	190	460	620	30	20	450	140
Service Children's Education	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Veterans' Agency	—	630	10	10	10	—	10	20	70
Trading Funds									
Army Base Repair Organisation[2]	—	—	130	—	970	140	—	100	790
Defence Aviation Repair Agency	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	810	—
Defence Science and Technology Laboratories	—	—	—	20	230	—	650	1,150	1,040
Meteorological Office	—	30	30	60	30	40	10	200	1,150
UK Hydrographic Office	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	950
Locally engaged civilian staff	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) staff	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Civilian Level 0 Total	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Number: FTE

	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Unknown	Overseas	Total
MOD Total excluding Agencies and Trading Funds	760	3,740	2,980	750	1,060	42,470
Total Agencies and Trading Funds	2,440	3,220	360	230	1,460	45,200
Agencies						
Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency	—	30	—	—	—	210
Army Training and Recruitment Agency	140	60	10	—	—	3,930
British Forces Post Office	—	10	—	—	—	310
Defence Analytical Services Agency	—	—	—	—	—	200
Defence Bills Agency	—	—	—	10	—	550
Defence Communications Service Agency	20	150	10	10	130	3,630
Defence Estates	40	210	290	—	140	2,810
Defence Medical and Education Training Agency	—	—	—	—	—	590
Defence Procurement Agency	10	110	10	20	120	3,960
Defence Storage and Distribution Agency	210	680	—	10	10	4,410
Defence Transport and Movements Agency	—	—	—	—	—	150
Defence Vetting Agency	—	—	—	—	—	320
Disposal Services Agency	—	—	—	—	—	100
Duke of York's Royal Military School	—	—	—	—	—	120
Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency	190	1,330	—	—	—	7,420
Naval Recruiting and Training Agency	70	10	20	—	—	750
Pay and Personnel Agency	—	—	—	—	—	860
RAF Training Group Defence Agency	100	50	—	—	—	2,110
Service Children's Education	—	—	—	—	1,010	1,020
Veterans' Agency	10	10	10	—	—	790
Trading Funds						
Army Base Repair Organisation[2]	20	170	—	—	—	2,310

Number: FTE

	Wales	*Scotland*	*Northern Ireland*	*Unknown*	*Overseas*	*Total*
Defence Aviation Repair Agency	1,610	280	–	20	–	2,720
Defence Science and Technology Laboratories	–	–	–	150	–	3,230
Meteorological Office	30	110	20	–	30	1,740
UK Hydrographic Office	–	–	–	–	–	960
Locally engaged civilian staff	•	•	•	•	•	16,150
Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) staff	•	•	•	•	•	2,350
Civilian Level 0 Total	•	•	•	•	•	106,150

– = Denotes less than 5.

[1] This table uses the revised definition of civilian personnel (see www.dasa.mod.uk).

[2] From the 1 January 2006 reporting, DASA has been able to identify a methodology to correctly identify all of the ABRO staff. Civilian Level 0 and overall figures by Government office region and country are unaffected by this change.

Notes:

1. All figures are rounded to the nearest 10, as a result totals may not always equal the sum of the parts.
2. Figures include values for part-time staff proportionate to those of full-time staff.

Source:

DASA(Civilian).

Extraordinary Rendition

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* prisoners of war, *(b)* civilian internees and *(c)* civilian detainees captured by United Kingdom forces in (i) Iraq and (ii) Afghanistan and transferred to the United States as the accepting power have been removed to territories outside Iraq. [45389]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* We are unaware of any individuals originally detained by United Kingdom armed forces in Iraq or Afghanistan and subsequently transferred by the United States to any country.

Gibraltar

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which army regiments have visited Gibraltar in the last 12 months. [44534]

Mr. Ingram: The following regiments have visited Gibraltar in the last 12 months:

104 Regiment (Royal Artillery)(Volunteers)

20 Field Squadron, 36 Royal Engineer Regiment

Royal Ghurkha Regiment

503 Specialist Team Royal Engineers Fuel Infra

East of England Regiment

30 Signal Regiment; 3rd Military Intelligence Battalion (Volunteers)

104 Logistic Support Regiment (Volunteers)

Scottish Transport Regiment (Volunteers)

35 Signal Regiment (Volunteers), Bowman Conversion Team

Royal School of Military Engineering

1st Battalion Welsh Guards

47th Regiment Royal Artillery

22 (Gibraltar) Battery, 32 Regiment Royal Artillery

HELEN Laser

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much *(a)* revenue and *(b)* capital expenditure has been allocated to the HELEN laser at AWE Aldermaston in each of the last five years. [47820]

John Reid: The expenditure allocated to the HELEN laser in each of the last five years is set out in the following table:

£ million

	Capital	*Revenue*
2000–01	0	4
2001–02	0	4
2002–03	1	4
2003–04	3	4
2004–05	3	5

Note:

All figures are at out-turn prices.

Iraq

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many non-infantry personnel have served in an infantry role in Iraq. [43420]

Mr. Ingram: Since July 2003 , approximately 5,280 non-infantry personnel have served in Iraq in an infantry role. It is not unusual for non-infantry personnel to deploy in an infantry role; every soldier in the British Army is trained as infanteer first, and as a specialist second.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information he has received concerning the rocket attack on Basra Airport on the night of 6 January; and what arrests followed the attack. [49423]

Mr. Ingram: On the evening of 6 January 2006 two rockets were fired at Basra Air Station. Neither caused any significant damage. No casualties were sustained and no arrests have been made yet.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether an Iraqi national, Al-Saokhi, was detained and then released by British forces in 2005. [49424]

Mr. Ingram: We have no record of an Iraqi national named Al-Saokhi being detained and then released by United Kingdom forces in 2005. However UK forces do not routinely keep records of individuals they detain temporarily.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many troops each country which has participated in the operation in Iraq has provided for active service in each year since the start of the war. [49448]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence does not keep records of coalition troop deployments. The current troop deployments of multinational partners in the UK's area of responsibility in Multi-national Division (South East) are as follows:

	Number
Australia	550
Czech Republic	100
Denmark	400
Italy	2800
Japan	550
Lithuania	50
Romania	600

More detailed information on coalition troop contributions is held by the individual countries that have deployed forces to Iraq.

The following table provides information relating to UK troop deployments.

Roulement	*Dates*	*Number of troops deployed*
Telic 1	February-June 2003	46,000
Telic 2	July-October 2003	10,000
Telic 3	November 2003-April 2004	8,900
Telic 4	May-October 2004	8,200
Telic 5	November 2004-April 2005	[1]9,200
Telic 6	May-October 2005	8,500
Telic 7	November 2005-April 2006[2]	8,000

[1] increase due to Op Bracken—Black Watch deployment
[2] roulement is ongoing

NATO ISAF

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what assessment he has made of the effects of NATO ISAF operation being integrated more closely with Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement; [45165]

(2) what progress has been made in establishing a mechanism for increased alignment of the NATO ISAF mission and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan; and if he will make a statement. [45167]

John Reid: As NATO seeks to expand its International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) further across Afghanistan, there are clear benefits in seeking greater synergy with the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) mission. These include less duplication of effort between the two missions, a more concerted approach to support for the reconstruction of Afghanistan, and simplified coordination with the Government of Afghanistan of the international community's military involvement in the country.

ISAFs mission is focused on reconstruction, though ISAF forces need also to be sufficiently robust to defend themselves against terrorists, insurgents and other illegally armed groups. The OEF mission also has a significant reconstruction element, though counter-terrorism is its core objective. ISAF does not, and will not, conduct counter-terrorism operations. NATO's revised operational plan for Afghanistan seeks to ensure greater synergy between the ISAF and OEF missions as ISAF expands, particularly in the field of support to reconstruction. The plan also incorporates clear command arrangements for coordination and, where necessary, deconfliction of operations under the respective missions.

Naval Deployment (Somalia)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will deploy Royal Navy ships off the coast of Somalia to prevent piracy. [49854]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Navy routinely deploys vessels and aircraft to the Horn of Africa, and many other regions as part of ongoing work to counter terrorism and crime on the high seas worldwide.

Rest and Relaxation

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the rest and relaxation flights for troops serving on *(a)* Op Telic and *(b)* other operations have been reduced. [49118]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* No. Flight schedules for operational theatres are maintained at a level sufficient to meet operational requirements, including rest and relaxation, and priority is given to aircraft serviceability to ensure that any interruptions or delays are kept to an absolute minimum.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he is taking to ensure that flights returning troops from theatre for periods of rest and relaxation are as short as possible. [49121]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* Usually, Rest and Relaxation (R and R) trooping flights will return to the Main Operating Base in the UK, RAF Brize Norton. Flights take the most direct route available, having due regard to political, weather and safety considerations, which may from time-to-time affect the route. Aircraft may also pick-up/drop-off in other airports such as Durham Tees Valley and Hannover, Germany, depending on the location of where the troops are normally stationed and the availability of aircraft and crews to undertake any additional flying required.

Rwanda

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* training and *(b)* support is being provided for the Rwandan military by UK forces. [49218]

Mr. Ingram: The UK provides a small amount of training annually for the Rwandan Defence Force (RDF). This is focused on increasing Rwanda's capacity to contribute to international Peace Support Operations (PSO).

Training activities this year have included sending Short Term Training Teams to Rwanda, as well as selected personnel to the British Peace Support Team (East Africa) in Karen, Kenya to attend United Nations sponsored and other relevant PSO courses. We have additionally provided training on courses in the UK. There are currently 140 Rwandan military engineers attending a course in humanitarian de-mining techniques at the British funded International Mine Action Training Centre in Nairobi.

Our Defence Adviser in Kampala, who is accredited to Kigali, provides advice to the RDF on related military matters.

Troop Deployment

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many troops are deployed in *(a)* Germany, *(b)* Iraq, *(c)* Afghanistan, *(d)* Bosnia and Kosovo, *(e)* Cyprus, *(f)* the Falklands, *(g)* Gibraltar, *(h)* Ascension Island, *(i)* Diego Garcia and *(j)* Northern Ireland. [49174]

Mr. Ingram: As of 2 February 2006, the United Kingdom had the following military contingents deployed overseas:

Overseas	*Troops*
Germany	20,885
Iraq	8,077
Afghanistan	871
Bosnia and Kosovo	829
Cyprus	3,458
The Falklands and Ascension Island (South Atlantic Islands)	1,212
Gibraltar	564
Diego Garcia	37

As of 31 December 2005, the United Kingdom had 9,943 troops deployed in Northern Ireland.

Type 23 Frigate

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1983W, on the Type 23 frigate, which Type 23 frigates will not be converted to operate Merlin and Lynx helicopters; and what the reasons are for not converting them. [47966]

Mr. Ingram: All Type 23 frigates are capable of operating Lynx helicopters. HMS Norfolk, HMS Marlborough and HMS Grafton will all have left naval service by the end of March 2006 and will not therefore have been modified to operate Merlin helicopters. 12 of the remaining 13 Type 23 frigates are included in the modification programme and this will enable the military requirement to be met. There is currently no operational requirement to modify HMS Argyll, but this will be kept under review.

Warships

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* surface ships, *(b)* submarines and *(c)* auxiliary vessels are (i) available to and (ii) deployable by the Royal Navy; and what the equivalent numbers were in 1997. [48773]

Mr. Ingram: The information requested is as follows:

	Available		*Deployable*	
	1997	*31 January: 2006*	*1997*	*2006*
Surface	92	76	70	62
Submarine	12	11	6	5
Auxiliary	23	18	21	16

Available vessels are taken to be those within the total force structure. Deployable vessels are those in Fleet time that have achieved their mandatory collective training.

CABINET OFFICE

Public Appointments (Vetting)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what steps he has taken to ensure that those appointed to public bodies have received *(a)* a Criminal Records Bureau check and *(b)* a higher level clearance where appropriate; and if he will ensure those who have not been positively vetted are not appointed. [46141]

Mr. Jim Murphy: It is for individual departments to consider whether national security vetting, or other checks, should be applied to those who are appointed to the boards of their public bodies. The Cabinet Office issues guidance on public appointments to departments in its publication 'Making and Managing Public Appointments', available on the Public Appointment Unit's website www.publicappointments.gov.uk/publications. This advises departments to consider during their recruitment of appointees to public bodies whether they need to obtain a Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau because of the nature of the appointment. This will be particularly relevant to appointments to public bodies which work closely with children and vulnerable adults.

Security vetting is carried out in accordance with HM Government policy, as set out in the (then) Prime Minister's statement to the House on 15 December 1994, *Official Report*, columns 764–66W. It is a fundamental principle that security vetting is applied proportionately according to the requirement for an individual to have access to sensitive Government information, or sites assessed to be at risk of terrorist attack.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many antisocial behaviour orders were *(a)* issued and *(b)* breached in each quarter of 2005; [47972]

(2) how many antisocial behaviour orders had been issued up to the latest date for which figures are available, in respect of people aged *(a)* 10–17 years, *(b)* 17–20 years and *(c)* 21 years and over; and how many of those orders have so far been breached; [47973]

(3) how many antisocial behaviour orders were issued during 2004, broken down by magistrates court area. [47974]

Hazel Blears: The number of antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) issued, as reported to the Home Office, is currently available up to 30 June 2005. In the first and second quarters of 2005, the number of ASBOs issued at all courts were 910 and 918 respectively.

From one April 1999 up to 31 May 2000 ASBO data were collected on aggregate numbers only by police force area. From 1 June 2000 up to 30 June 2005 the number of ASBOs issued to persons aged 10–17 years is 2,801; persons aged 18–20 years is 952; and persons aged 21 and over is 2,552.

The information held centrally, on the Court Proceedings Database, as held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform, only covers breach proceedings where there has been a conviction. Antisocial behaviour order (ASBO) breach data are currently available from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 for ASBOs issued since 1 June 2000. During this period 392 persons aged 10–17, 137 persons aged 18–20, and 264 persons aged 21 and over breached their ASBO on one or more occasions.

The number of ASBOs issued in 2004 at all courts, as reported to the Home Office, is 2,660. A table giving a breakdown by age and criminal justice system area is available on the Crime Reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk. This table gives data by quarter and year since ASBOs were introduced, up to 30 June 2005 (latest available).

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what systems are in place to communicate information to police forces on individuals who are subject to antisocial behaviour orders with conditions which apply to the whole of England and Wales. [47571]

Hazel Blears: Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) as a disposal type are recorded on the conviction page of the police national computer (PNC) although around half of the ASBOs issued are not part of a conviction. All ASBOs are recorded on the PNC which is accessible by all forces. Prohibitions are also recorded there.

Asylum Seekers

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum-seekers under the age of 18 years are detained in Government detention centres in the UK. [47066]

Mr. McNulty: Information on the number of persons detained solely under Immigration Act powers is available from a snapshot taken on the last Saturday of the quarter and is published in the Quarterly Asylum Statistics publications. The last published data show that 75 persons recorded as being under 18-years-old, who had sought asylum at some stage, were being detained in the UK solely under Immigration Act powers as at 24 September 2005.

The next available data as at 31 December 2005 will be published on 28 February 2006.

This information is available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training is provided to the police on identifying injury caused by carbon monoxide poisoning. [28955]

Hazel Blears: As part of the Initial Police Learning Development Programme, police recruits undertake a two and half day module in First Aid Training. Training on the general nature of poisons forms a module of the First Aid Training. The module looks at the general nature of poisons and how to spot the signs and symptoms of poisoning as well as how such an injury should be treated. There is no specific training in relation to carbon monoxide poisoning.

Chief Constables

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will issue guidance to chief constables so that operational decisions taken by them across England and Wales are consistent. [48403]

Hazel Blears: I do not plan to issue such guidance because chief constables have operational responsibility for the direction and control of their force. In carrying out their functions chief constables and other police officers and police staff must have regard to any statutory codes of practice or guidance, for example, codes of practice issued under section 66 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 or section 39A of the Police Act 1996. Plus, they must take into account any non-statutory guidance issued by the National Centre for Policing Excellence, the Association of Chief Police Officers and others.

Child Protection

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in Essex were given a caution for having indecent pictures of children on their computers in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [48542]

Paul Goggins: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform for the number of offenders cautioned for possession of an indecent photograph of a child in (i) England and Wales, (ii) Essex in each of the past five years is shown in the table. It is not possible to identify those cases involving photographs on computers as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Number of offenders cautioned for possession of an indecent photograph of a child[1] in (i) England and Wales, and (ii) Essex, 2000–04[2]

Area	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
(i) England and Wales	25	32	53	205	162
(ii) Essex	—	—	2	21	8

'—' = Nil.

[1] Offences under the Criminal Justice Act 1988, section 160 as amended by the Criminal Justice and Services Act 2000, section 41(3). (previously 181/06)

[2] All data given refer to the principal offence only.

Citizenship

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to ensure that those seeking UK citizenship are required *(a)* to know the words of the National Anthem and *(b)* to have knowledge of the flags and patron saints of the nations of the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement. [48856]

Mr. McNulty: The questions for the Life in the UK Test are based on the information in chapters two, three and four of the handbook "Life in the United Kingdom: A journey to Citizenship." Details of National days and patron saints of the four nations are included in Chapter 3.

Both the playing and participation in the singing of the national anthem is encouraged at Citizenship Ceremonies, but is not compulsory.

Community Support Officers

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police community support officers are employed in each police force. [45973]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is as at 30 September 2005 and is contained in the following table.

Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) strength by English Government office regions and Wales (full-time equivalents)[1]— September 2005

	Full-time equivalent
North East	300
Cleveland	86
Durham	72
Northumbria	143
North West	680
Cheshire	77
Cumbria	19
Greater Manchester	264
Lancashire	159
Merseyside	161
Yorkshire and the Humber	647
Humberside	20
North Yorkshire	69
South Yorkshire	125
West Yorkshire	433
East Midlands	390
Derbyshire	43
Leicestershire	119
Lincolnshire	78
Northamptonshire	38
Nottinghamshire	112
West Midlands	450
Staffordshire	62
Warwickshire	56
West Mercia	86
West Midlands	247
Eastern	563
Bedfordshire	43
Cambridgeshire	92
Essex	193
Hertfordshire	135
Norfolk	67
Suffolk	33

Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) strength by English Government office regions and Wales (full-time equivalents)[1]— September 2005

	Full-time equivalent
London	2,067
London, City of	14
Metropolitan Police	2,053
South East	568
Hampshire	23
Kent	103
Surrey	102
Sussex	231
Thames Valley	109
South West	377
Avon and Somerset	146
Devon and Cornwall	75
Dorset	56
Gloucestershire	62
Wiltshire	38
Wales	282
Dyfed-Powys	24
Gwent	81
North Wales	61
South Wales	116
Total PCSO strength	6,324

[1] This table contains full-time equivalent figures that have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Because of rounding, there may be an apparent discrepancy between totals and the sums of the constituent items.

Correspondence

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, of 21 December 2005 on behalf of Basma Rahman, wife of Mazen Abdul Kareem Kadoora (Home Office Reference K1149709, acknowledgement reference MS7216). [49853]

Mr. McNulty: I wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood on 3 February 2006.

Criminal Appeal Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the operation of the Criminal Appeal Act 1995. [47384]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Criminal Appeal Act 1995 amended provisions relating to appeals and references to the Court of Appeal and established the Criminal Cases Review Commission as a non-departmental public body . The Act sets out the structure of the Commission, the number of Commissioners and conditions of their appointment. It lays down circumstances where the Commissioners may refer a case; where they should conduct an investigation; their supplementary powers, their access to documents or materials, their power to appoint investigating officers; the conditions under which the Commission is able to disclose information; and makes detailed provision for the appointment of the Chairman and Commissioners and staff and the production of Annual Reports and Accounts. There are no current plans to amend the substantive provisions of the Act.

DNA Database

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate he has made of the number of additional profiles which are likely to be added to the National DNA database as a result of the extension of police powers of arrest under section 110 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005. [47564]

Andy Burnham: The provisions governing the taking of DNA samples in section 63 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE), as amended, provide that the police may take a non-intimate sample without consent from all persons who have been arrested for, charged with, informed that they will be reported for or convicted of a recordable offence. Section 24 of PACE as amended by section 110 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 provides a single power of arrest for all offences but does not affect the above power which allows a DNA sample to be taken only from persons arrested, charged or convicted of a recordable offence. It is not expected to have any significant impact on the number of persons who may have a DNA sample taken and added to the national DNA database.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what response he *(a)* has made and *(b)* plans to make to the recommendations in the Select Committee on Science and Technology's Seventh Paper, Forensic Science on Trial, HC96 2004–05, that the Government commission a cost-benefit analysis of the possibility of moving the national DNA database from a 10 marker system to a 16 marker system. [47541]

Andy Burnham: The Home Secretary responded to the Committee's recommendations in oral evidence given by Andy Burnham, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, to the Select Committee on 23 November 2005. The Home Secretary remains open to commissioning a cost-benefit analysis of the possibility of moving the National DNA Database from a 10 marker to a 16 marker system but considers that a necessary preparation for this analysis is the development of a strategy which ensures that any move to a system using more markers in the UK is compatible with similar moves in other European countries, to avoid closing off options for international co-operation in use of DNA in crime fighting in the future.

This has been agreed with Professor Sir Alec Jeffreys, the inventor of DNA profiling.

The European Network of Forensic Science Institutes and the European DNA Profiling Group have been working on such a strategy and have produced a paper outlining how all current European DNA Databases could move to a 15 marker system by varying routes depending on the technologies they currently use, but substantial further work is needed to develop this in detail. The timescale for the development of a new system would be a commercial decision for the companies which make the profiling technology by was estimated in late 2005 to be 2–3 years.

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any police force in England and Wales requests DNA samples from its officers. [47307]

Hazel Blears: Regulation 19 of the Police Regulations 2003 requires that every newly appointed member of a police force shall in accordance with the directions of the chief officer have a DNA sample taken.

Criminal Cases Review Commission

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases have been examined by the Criminal Case Review Commission in each year since its inception; and in how many cases *(a)* convictions have been found unsafe and *(b)* sentences have been found unfair. [47796]

Fiona Mactaggart: Since its inception the Commission had reviewed 7,590 cases by 31 December 2005, including 308 cases which had been referred to the appeal courts. 252 of the 308 referred cases had been heard by the appeal courts which had quashed 156 convictions and reduced 22 sentences. The breakdown by year is set out in the following table.

	Number of complaints	*Number of complaints upheld*
1997–98	11	7
1998–99	15	2
1999–2000	34	9
2000–01	63	14
2001–02	69	10
2002–03	76	11
2003–04	67	8
2004–05	69	13
1 April–31 December 2005	44	[1]3

[1] Five are still under consideration

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the cases considered by the Criminal Cases Review Commission in each year since 1996, broken down by *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful applications. [47383]

Fiona Mactaggart: Since April 1997 when the Commission came into existence, it has completed its considerations in 7,590 cases, the outcomes of which are listed in the following table. Of the 308 cases that had been referred, 252 had been heard. Of these, 178 had been successful, 73 unsuccessful and judgment had not been given in the remaining appeal.

	Cases completed (not referred)	*Cases completed (referred)*
1997–98	299	11
1998–99	461	31
1999–2000	979	36
2000–01	1,065	45
2001–02	1,164	38
2002–03	952	35
2003–04	871	30
2004–05	780	45
31 March–31 December 2005	711	37

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the complaints made by *(a)* members of the public, *(b)* hon. Members and *(c)* members of the House of Lords about the conduct of the Criminal Cases Review Commission in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available; and what the outcome of each complaint was. [47386]

Fiona Mactaggart: The total number of complaints and their outcomes since the Commission's inception in 1997 are set out in the following table. Most complaints are made by applicants or by family members or representatives on behalf of applicants. Where a Member of Parliament takes up a complaint on the request of an applicant the complaint is treated as if it had been made by the applicant. Complaints made by Members of Parliament are not recorded separately.

	Number of complaints	*Number of complaints upheld*
1997–98	11	7
1998–99	15	2
1999–2000	34	9
2000–01	63	14
2001–02	69	10
2002–03	76	11
2003–04	67	8
2004–05	69	13
1 April–31 December 2005	44	13[1]

[1] Five are still under consideration

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff were employed by the Criminal Cases Review Commission, broken down by *(a)* sex and *(b)* grade in each year since 1996. [47387]

Fiona Mactaggart: Figures prior to 2000 are not readily available. Since 2000 the breakdown is as in the following table.

	Executive		*Case review managers*		*Administration*	
Date	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*
31 March 2000	5	5	19	17	21	1
31 March 2001	4	5	22	25	28	4
31 March 2002	5	4	26	24	32	5
31 March 2003	6	4	23	21	33	4
31 March 2004	5	6	23	24	33	6
31 March 2005	5	6	23	22	33	6

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many members of the Criminal Cases Review Commission took *(a)* voluntary early severance and *(b)* early retirement in each year since 1997. [47388]

Fiona Mactaggart: No Commissioners have taken voluntary early severance or early retirement since 1997. In 2001 three Commissioners resigned their appointments before their period of appointment came to an end.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many disciplinary actions against officials employed by the Criminal Cases Review Commission were *(a)* commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years for which information is available. [47389]

Fiona Mactaggart: There have been two disciplinary actions against staff employed by the Commission. Both resulted in a sanction being applied. One was in 2001 and the other in 2003.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many investigating officers, and at what grade, were appointed by the Criminal Cases Review Commission during the period from 31 March 1997 to 31 March 2005. [47403]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Commission has required the appointment of 27 Investigating Officers to make inquiries to assist the Commission in 36 individual cases between 1 April 1997 and 31 March 2005. One was a deputy chief constable, four were detective chief superintendents, 12 were detective superintendents, six were detective chief inspectors and four were detective inspectors.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the circumstances in which the Criminal Cases Review Commission may refer cases to the Court of Appeal; and if he will make a statement. [47411]

Fiona Mactaggart: The powers and duties of the Commission are set out in detail in sections 9–13 of the Criminal Appeal Act 1995. The main test in considering whether to refer a case to the appeal court is whether the CCRC consider that there is a real possibility that the conviction, verdict, finding or sentence would not be upheld.

Forensic Science

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the professional forensic bodies' register of members who are suitably qualified to act as an expert witness. [49163]

Andy Burnham: There are a number of organisations (which could be described as "professional forensic bodies") that maintain lists of persons who act as expert witnesses or, in some manner, are recommended as expert witnesses. The Home Office has no responsibility for these lists and has not undertaken any assessment of them.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the work of the Home Office Policy Advisory Board for Forensic Pathology. [49165]

Andy Burnham: The Policy Advisory Board for Forensic Pathology was created in 1991 following the "Wasserman Report" on the provision of forensic pathology in England and Wales. The role of the board was to advise the Home Secretary on forensic pathology matters with particular reference to the national aspects of forensic pathology services in England and Wales,

such as appointment and accreditation, quality assurance, training and research and development. In response to the "Leishman Review" of forensic pathology the role of the board has been transferred to other bodies. The board still exists and one of its sub-committees is still responsible for matters related to complaints but the transfer of functions is expected to be completed imminently. At that point the board shall be disbanded.

FRANK Campaign

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has commissioned on the effectiveness of the FRANK campaign. [47703]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office and Department of Health have jointly commissioned three pieces of ongoing research to study the effectiveness of the FRANK campaign: a campaign tracking survey; a stakeholder satisfaction survey; and research to inform the development of campaign messages. There has also been a single wave of research into caller satisfaction with the FRANK helpline.

Harmondsworth Detention Centre

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many detainees have been detained in Harmondsworth Detention Centre over the last three years for over *(a)* three months, *(b)* six months and *(c)* 12 months. [47072]

Mr. McNulty: The Home Office does not hold information on the total number of persons who were detained over the last three years for specific periods of time. It would only be available by examination of individual case files at disproportionate cost.

Quarterly snapshots are published showing the number of persons detained solely under Immigration Act powers on the last Saturday of each quarter.

A table showing the numbers detained at Harmondsworth as at the last Saturday of the third quarter of the last three years is shown, as the published data does not show the length and place of detention in one table.

Further information about persons detained can be found on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Persons recorded as being held in Harmondsworth Immigration Service Removal Centre in the United Kingdom solely under Immigration Act powers, by length of detention[1,2]

Length of detention[3,4]	*Number of individuals as at:*		
	27 September 2003	*26 June 2004*[5]	*24 September 2005*
14 days or less	45	60	175
15 to 29 days	35	70	85
1 month to less than 2 months	40	95	80
2 months to less than 3 months	20	35	40
3 months to less than 4 months	10	25	35
4 months to less than 6 months	10	35	35
6 months to less than 1 year	10	45	40
1 year or more	10	15	5
Total	170	375	490

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5, with * = 1 or 2, may not sum due to rounding and exclude persons detained in police cells and those detained under both criminal and immigration powers.
[2] Relates to current period of detention only.
[3] 2 months is defined as 61 days; 4 months is defined as 122 days; 6 months is defined as 182 days.
[4] There were no detainees in Harmondsworth on 25 September 2004, due to a major incident that occurred in July of this year, resulting in temporary closure.
[5] Due to a fire and subsequent refurbishment at Harmondsworth, no detainees were being held there as at 25 September 2004, so figures as at 26 June 2004 have been provided.

National Probation Directorate

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Director of Probation of the National Probation Directorate is entitled to performance-related bonuses; and if he will make a statement. [48112]

Fiona Mactaggart: The director of the National Probation Directorate is eligible for a performance related bonus each year, based on performance against objectives. This is in line with normal pay award arrangements for the senior civil service.

Neighbourhood Wardens

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether neighbourhood wardens will operate in rural areas outside villages and towns; and if he will make a statement. [44958]

Jim Fitzpatrick: I have been asked to reply. Wardens can function anywhere. It is for local authorities to decide whether warden schemes are appropriate to their area and where they might operate.

Indecent Images (Cautions)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cautions were issued for the offence of having indecent pictures of children in each of the last five years. [48501]

Paul Goggins: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform for the number of offenders cautioned for possession of an indecent photograph of a child in (i) England and Wales, (ii) Essex in each of the past five years is shown in the table.

It is not possible to identify those cases involving photographs on computers as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Number of offenders cautioned for possession of an indecent photograph of a child[1] in (i) England and Wales, and (ii) Essex, 2000-04[2]

Area	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
(i) England and Wales	25	32	53	205	162
(ii) Essex	—	—	2	21	8

[1] Offences under the Criminal Justice Act 1988, section 160 as amended by the Criminal Justice and Services Act 2000, section 41(3) (previously 181/06).
[2] All data given refer to the principal offence only.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will publish his five year plan for the National Offender Management Service; and whether the National Probation Service will remain part of it. [46512]

Fiona Mactaggart: I plan to publish shortly a five year strategy for reducing re-offending and the work of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). The strategy will provide a vision for the whole of NOMS and its constituent parts, including the National Probation Service.

Police

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what plans he has to create further police anti-terrorist units; [43412]

(2) when the regionalisation programme for special branches is expected to be completed. [43414]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Special Branch regionalisation programme continues to develop in line with police counter-terrorism commitments. Special Branch Regional Intelligence Cells (RICs) have been in place since April 2003, further to recommendations made in the HMIC Thematic Inspection of Special Branch and Ports Policing. They are now operating in all ACPO regions enabling greater efficiency and cross regional co-ordination. They continue to develop.

A Counter-Terrorist Support Unit (CTSU) was established in the West Midlands RIC in 2004 to provide intelligence analysis support for the East and West Midlands regions. The police are currently giving further consideration to extending the CTSU concept to other force regions.

The Government remain committed to ensuring that the Police Service has the necessary resources to meet its CT commitments. The additional police counter-terrorism funding, which amounts to £173 million over the next two years, announced on the 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 57WS, will strengthen the Police Service's intelligence and investigative capability both in the capital and in local and regional policing.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will rank each *(a)* English police force and *(b)* English Basic Command Unit by the ratio of burglaries to households in their area in the latest reporting period for which information is available; and if he will make a statement. [45575]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is given in the following table.

Basic command unit (BCD)—burglary in a dwelling per 1,000 households 2004-05

Police force area	*Basic command unit*	*England Burglary dwelling offences per 1,000 households 2004-05*
Hampshire	Isle of Wight	4
Norfolk	Norfolk Western	4
Essex	Braintree	5
Hampshire	New Forest	5
Suffolk	Suffolk Eastern	5
Suffolk	Suffolk Western	5
Norfolk	Norfolk Eastern	5
Cumbria	Barrow and Kendal	5
Essex	Chelmsford	6
Derbyshire	Buxton (B Division)	6
Hampshire	West Hampshire2	6
Wiltshire	Chippenham (C)	6
Dorset	Dorset Eastern	6
Hampshire	Central Hampshire	6
Hampshire	Solent East 2	6
Dorset	Poole	6
Hampshire	North East Hampshire	6
West Mercia	Shropshire (F Division)	6
Devon and Cornwall	Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	6
Thames Valley	Northern Oxfordshire	7
Wiltshire	Salisbury (A)	7
Essex	Tendring	7
Essex	Rayleigh	7
Sussex	North Downs	7
Lancashire	Lancashire Southern	7
Devon and Cornwall	North and East Devon	7
Essex	Colchester	7
Metropolitan Police	Kingston upon Thames	7
Cambridgeshire	Central	7
North Yorkshire	North Yorkshire Eastern	7
Surrey	West Surrey	7
Avon and Somerset	Somerset West	7
North Yorkshire	North Yorkshire Western	7
Cumbria	Workington and Whitehaven	7

Basic command unit (BCD)—burglary in a dwelling per 1,000 households 2004–05

Police force area	*Basic command unit*	*England Burglary dwelling offences per 1,000 households 2004–05*
Sussex	West Downs	8
Staffordshire	Chase	8
Norfolk	Norfolk Central	8
Dorset	Dorset Western	8
Lancashire	Lancashire Northern	8
Avon and Somerset	Somerset East	8
Lincolnshire	South Lincolnshire	8
Cheshire	Congleton and Vale Royal	8
West Mercia	Hereford (E Division)	8
Hampshire	Havant	8
Thames Valley	Southern Oxfordshire	8
Gloucestershire	Cotswold and Stroud	8
Cumbria	Carlisle and Penrith	8
Kent	South-East Kent	8
Essex	Thurrock	8
Staffordshire	North Staffordshire	8
Surrey	East Surrey	8
Suffolk	Suffolk Southern	8
Thames Valley	West Berkshire	8
Durham	South Durham	8
Surrey	North Surrey	9
Kent	Maidstone	9
Warwickshire	Southern	9
Humberside	East Riding of Yorkshire	9
Hampshire	Southampton	9
Kent	Canterbury	9
Kent	Weald	9
Metropolitan Police	Sutton	9
Devon and Cornwall	South and West Devon	9
Thames Valley	Aylesbury Vale	9
Cambridgeshire	Southern	9
Kent	West Kent	9
Avon and Somerset	Bath and North East Somerset	9
West Mercia	South Worcestershire (C Division)	10
Cheshire	Crewe	10
Sussex	East Downs	10
Surrey	North-West Surrey	10
Metropolitan Police	Havering	10
Cheshire	Halton	10
Cheshire	Chester and Ellesmere Port	10
Northamptonshire	Northamptonshire Western	10
Avon and Somerset	North Somerset	10
Lincolnshire	East Lincolnshire	10
Thames Valley	Milton Keynes	10
Lincolnshire	West Lincolnshire	11
Kent	Medway	11
Durham	North Durham	11
Metropolitan Police	Bexley	11
West Midlands	West Midlands J2	11
Staffordshire	Trent Valley	11
Hertfordshire	Hertfordshire Eastern	11
Essex	Harlow	11
Kent	Swale	11
Cheshire	Macclesfield	11
Derbyshire	Chesterfield (C Division)	11
Leicestershire	East Leicestershire	11
Gloucestershire	Cheltenham and Tewkesbury	11
Hertfordshire	Hertfordshire Western	11
West Mercia	North Worcestershire (D Division)	12
Metropolitan Police	Merton	12
Avon and Somerset	South Gloucester	12
Nottinghamshire	Nottinghamshire Area B	12
Bedfordshire	Dunstable	12
Northamptonshire	Northamptonshire Eastern	12
Kent	North Kent	12
Lancashire	Lancashire Western	12
Sussex	Hastings and Rother	12
Cheshire	Warrington	12
Leicestershire	North Leicestershire	12
Cleveland	Langbaurgh (Redcar and Cleveland)	13
North Yorkshire	North Yorkshire Central	13
Thames Valley	Thames Forest	13
Essex	Southend	13
Essex	Basildon	13
Bedfordshire	Bedford	13
Lancashire	Lancashire Eastern	13
Devon and Cornwall	Plymouth	13
South Yorkshire	Rotherham	13
Kent	Thanet	13
Wiltshire	Swindon	13

Basic command unit (BCD)—burglary in a dwelling per 1,000 households 2004–05

Police force area	*Basic command unit*	*England Burglary dwelling offences per 1,000 households 2004–05*
Derbyshire	Alfreton (A Division)	13
West Midlands	West Midlands H2	14
Hampshire	Portsmouth	14
West Yorkshire	Calderdale	14
West Yorkshire	Dewsbury	14
Merseyside	Wirral	14
Metropolitan Police	Richmond upon Thames	14
Lancashire	Pennine	14
Dorset	Bournemouth	14
Merseyside	Sefton	14
Merseyside	St. Helens	14
South Yorkshire	Barnsley	14
West Yorkshire	Huddersfield	14
Gloucestershire	Forest and Gloucester	14
West Midlands	West Midlands G1	15
West Yorkshire	Keighley	15
Metropolitan Police	Bromley	15
Hertfordshire	Hertfordshire Central	15
Metropolitan Police	Croydon	15
Cambridgeshire	Northern	15
West Midlands	West Midlands F1	15
Thames Valley	Chiltern Vale	15
West Mercia	Telford and the Wrekin (G Division)	15
West Midlands	West Midlands D2	15
West Midlands	Solihull	15
Warwickshire	Northern	16
Derbyshire	Derby (D Division)	16
West Yorkshire	Wakefield	16
Leicestershire	West Leicestershire	16
West Midlands	West Midlands K1	16
Northamptonshire	Northamptonshire Northern	16
West Midlands	West Midlands M1	16
Metropolitan Police	City of Westminster	17
Greater Manchester	Wigan	17
West Midlands	West Midlands H1	17
Metropolitan Police	Barking and Dagenham	17
Metropolitan Police	Harrow	17
Staffordshire	Stoke on Trent	17
Thames Valley	Oxford	18
Cleveland	Stockton	18
Lancashire	Lancashire Central	18
Merseyside	Knowsley	18
Greater Manchester	Bury	18
Sussex	Brighton and Hove	18
Metropolitan Police	Redbridge	18
West Midlands	West Midlands J1	18
West Midlands	West Midlands M3	18
Metropolitan Police	Kensington and Chelsea	18
Metropolitan Police	Greenwich	19
Metropolitan Police	Tower Hamlets	19
Metropolitan Police	Waltham Forest	19
South Yorkshire	Sheffield South	19
Metropolitan Police	Enfield	19
West Yorkshire	City and Holbeck CA	19
Greater Manchester	Trafford	20
West Midlands	West Midlands G2	20
Thames Valley	Reading and Wokingham	20
Metropolitan Police	Newham	20
Metropolitan Police	Barnet	20
West Midlands	West Midlands F3	20
Metropolitan Police	Hillingdon	20
West Midlands	West Midlands E2	20
Nottinghamshire	Nottinghamshire Area D	21
Metropolitan Police	Wandsworth	21
Humberside	North Lincolnshire	21
Greater Manchester	Tameside	21
Metropolitan Police	Hounslow	21
West Midlands	West Midlands E3	21
West Midlands	West Midlands K2	21
West Midlands	West Midlands M2	22
Nottinghamshire	Nottinghamshire Area A	22
Greater Manchester	Rochdale	22
Metropolitan Police	Ealing	22
Northumbria	Newcastle Central	22
South Yorkshire	Sheffield North	22
West Midlands	West Midlands F2	22
Cleveland	Hartlepool	22
Greater Manchester	Oldham	23
West Midlands	West Midlands D3	23
Metropolitan Police	Southwark	23

Basic command unit (BCD)—burglary in a dwelling per 1,000 households 2004–05

Police force area	*Basic command unit*	*England Burglary dwelling offences per 1,000 households 2004–05*
Metropolitan Police	Lewisham	23
Greater Manchester	Stockport	23
West Midlands	West Midlands E1	24
Metropolitan Police	Lambeth	24
Metropolitan Police	Camden	24
South Yorkshire	Doncaster	24
West Midlands	West Midlands D1	24
West Yorkshire	Bradford North	25
Metropolitan Police	Brent	25
West Yorkshire	Bradford South	26
Metropolitan Police	Hammersmith and Fulham	26
Bedfordshire	Luton	26
Northamptonshire	Northampton	26
South Yorkshire	Sheffield Central	27
Leicestershire	Central Leicestershire	27
Merseyside	North Liverpool	28
West Yorkshire	Chapel Town AC	28
Greater Manchester	Salford	28
Cleveland	Middlesbrough	28
Metropolitan Police	Islington	29
Metropolitan Police	Hackney	30
West Yorkshire	Killingbeck BB	30
Humberside	North East Lincolnshire	30
Thames Valley	Slough and District	30
Merseyside	South Liverpool	30
Humberside	Kingston upon Hull	31
Greater Manchester	Bolton	31
Metropolitan Police	Haringey	32
Greater Manchester	North Manchester	34
West Yorkshire	Pudsey and Weetwood AA	39
Greater Manchester	South Manchester	41
Nottinghamshire	Nottinghamshire Area C	55
London, City of	Bishopsgate	•
London, City of	Snowhill	•
Avon and Somerset	Bristol[1]	—
Avon and Somerset	Central Bristol[1]	—
Avon and Somerset	North Bristol[1]	—
Avon and Somerset	South Bristol[1]	—
Durham	Darlington[1]	—
Durham	Derwentside[1]	—
Durham	Durham[1]	—
Durham	Easington[1]	—
Durham	Sedgefield[1]	—
Durham	Wear-Tees[1]	—
Essex	Stansted Airport	—
Hampshire	Andover[1]	—
Hampshire	Basingstoke[1]	—
Hampshire	Basingstoke and Deane[1]	—
Hampshire	Eastleigh[1]	—
Hampshire	Fareham[1]	—
Hampshire	Gosport[1]	—
Metropolitan Police	Heathrow	—
Northumbria	Gateshead[1]	—
Northumbria	Gateshead East[1]	—
Northumbria	Gateshead West[1]	—
Northumbria	Newcastle East[1]	—
Northumbria	Newcastle North[1]	—
Northumbria	Newcastle West[1]	—
Northumbria	North Northumberland[1]	—
Northumbria	North Tyneside[1]	—
Northumbria	Northumberland[1]	—
Northumbria	South Tyneside[1]	—
Northumbria	South-East Northumberland[1]	—
Northumbria	South-West Northumberland[1]	—
Northumbria	Sunderland[1]	—
Northumbria	SunderlandCity[1]	—
Northumbria	Sunderland West[1]	—
Northumbria	Tynemouth[1]	—
Northumbria	Wallsend[1]	—
Northumbria	Washington[1]	—
Sussex	Gatwick	—

[1] Changes in BCU boundaries mean that figures for 2003–04 and 2004–05 are not comparable.

Notes:

1. Metropolitan police figures will not agree with totals published in 'Crime in England and Wales 2004–05' since not all crimes are assigned to BCUs.
2. Offence rates are not applicable for airports as they have no resident population.
3. All crime rates are based on mid-2003 population estimates supplied by the Office for National Statistics.

4. Caution needs to be taken when considering crime rates of city centre areas due to the very small population and household levels in these areas. The very high reported crime rates in city centres are partly due to the use of small resident population and household figures as the denominator of the crime rate. The 'transient population' that migrates into these areas on a daily basis, either for work or leisure, will not be reflected in the resident population figures. Changes in population estimates between years must also be borne in mind when comparing changes in crime rates.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there have been in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [47790]

Hazel Blears: Police officer numbers have increased by 15,588 (12 per cent.) between March 2001 and September 2005. The following table sets out the year by year numbers and the increase. In addition to police officers, at the end of September 2005 there were 6,324 community support officers and a record 71,967 police (support) staff involved in the delivery of policing.

Police officer strength March 2001 to September 2005

As at 31 March	*Police officer strength*	*Increase/ decrease*	*Police staff strength*	*Increase*	*Community Support Officer strength*
2001	125,682	1,512	54,588	1,361	
2002	129,603	3,921	58,909	4,321	
2003	133,366	3,763	62,172	3,263	1,176
2004	139,200	5,834	67,581	5,409	3,417
2005	141,278	2,087	70,687	3,106	6,261
2005 (30 September)	141,270	-8	71,967	1,280	6,324

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance is given to the police on procedures to follow when they need to verify the identity of a suspect whose face is covered for religious reasons. [45542]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Section 64A of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984 provides that photographs can be taken of persons detained at a police station and elsewhere than at a police station. Under the PACE Code of Practice for the Identification of Persons by Police Officers (Code D), the officer proposing to take a detainee's photograph may require the person to remove any item or substance worn on, or over, or any part of, their head or face. If the person does not comply with such a requirement, the officer may remove the item or substance. In order to obtain a suspect's consent and co-operation to remove an item of religious headwear or face covering to take a photograph, officer should consider whether in the removal of the situation the removal of the headwear or covering and the taking of the photograph should be by an officer of the same sex as the person. It would be appropriate for these actions to be conducted out of public view.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date he received a business plan from the police authorities of Wales relating to the creation of a single strategic force in Wales. [44278]

Hazel Blears: A single joint submission from all four Welsh police forces and authorities was received by the 23 December 2005 deadline.

Prisoners

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* escapes and *(b)* unapproved absences there have been from each English prison in each year since 1996–97; and if he will make a statement. [45767]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data on the number of escapes and absconds broken down by prison establishment in England and Wales from 1996–97 to 27 January 2006 is shown in tables which have been placed in the Library. The total number of absconds and release on temporary licence failures is also detailed. However, a breakdown by establishment could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The number of temporary release failures compared to the actual number of releases on Release On Temporary Licence (ROTL) per year is very low. In 2002, 287,732 ROTL licences were granted and in 2003 there were 328,780. The corresponding temporary release failures were 316 and 405 respectively.

Prisoners released on ROTL are risk assessed before any release takes place. A Prison Governor will not release any prisoner who is considered to be a risk to the public or who is unlikely to be able to comply with the terms of the ROTL licence. Any failure of ROTL is taken seriously and will be taken into consideration with any further ROTL applications.

Prison staff are vigilant in their day-to-day activities in preventing escapes. This is supported by Prison Service Orders, professional expertise and regular internal reminders of the need to manage prisoners decently while preventing their escape. The level of escapes continues to be well below the Key Performance Indicator target. In the period April to 31 December 2005 there have been no escapes from prison establishments, three from prison escorts and two from court escorts bringing the overall total to five. This compares favourably to last year's total of 15 escapes for the same period.

Each abscond from an open or semi open prison is investigated locally and findings inform both local and national policy.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners held in Her Majesty's prisons *(a)* are non-British EU nationals, *(b)* are non-EU foreign nationals, *(c)* are seeking leave to remain in the United Kingdom and *(d)* have been UK residents for less than 10 years. [45898]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the number of *(a)* non-British Nationals and *(b)* non-EU foreign nationals as recorded in the Prison Service IT system is provided in the table. Full statistics on the nationality of

prisoners within prisons in England and Wales are available in the Population in Custody Quarterly Brief, April to June 2005, on the Home Office website.

Regarding parts *(c)* and *(d)* of the question, the Immigration and Nationality Directorate does not keep central records of prisoners presently seeking leave to remain in the United Kingdom or of their length of residence in the United Kingdom.

Prison population showing non-British nationals, 30 June 2005

Category of foreign national	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
non-British EU nationals	1,439	173	1,612
non-EU Foreign nationals	7,336	701	8,037

Prisoners Visits

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Winchester of 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2034W, on prisoners, whether *(a)* HMP Nottingham, *(b)* HMP Holme House, *(c)* HMP Usk, *(d)* HMP Prescoed, *(e)* HMP Durham and *(f)* HMP Doncaster comply with the minimum visit requirements for prisoners on the basic regime. [47575]

Fiona Mactaggart: Each of the establishments is compliant. The following table sets out the entitlement for convicted and unconvicted prisoners on the basic level of the incentives and earned privileges scheme.

Prison	*Visits—convicted prisoners*	*Visits—unconvicted prisoners*
Nottingham	2 x 1 hour per 28 days	3 x 30 minutes per week
Holme House	1 x 1 hour per week	3 x 1 hour per week
Usk	2 x 2 hours per week	No unconvicted prisoners
Prescoed	2 x 1 hour per 28 days	No unconvicted prisoners
Durham	2 x 1 hour per 28 days	3 x 1 hour per week
Doncaster	2 x 1 hour per 28 days	Daily x 30 minutes Monday to Friday

Prisons

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances cases of visitors and staff found in possession of drugs across the prison estate are not routinely referred to the police for investigation; and if he will make a statement. [47134]

Fiona Mactaggart: Since 6 December 2005 the policy on action to be taken when visitors or staff are found to be in possession of classified drugs on entry into a public sector Prison Service establishment is that all cases will routinely be referred to the police for investigation.

If there are wholly exceptional circumstances which could justify divergence from this policy the case must be referred to a Prison Service director for consideration.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have been assaulted by other prisoners in Coldingley prison in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [47399]

Fiona Mactaggart: The figures in the following table are those incidents where assaults have been reported on the Incident Reporting System.

Coldingley prisoner on prisoner assaults

	Number
1996	4
1997	0
1998	0
1999	1
2000	0
2001	6
2002	2
2003	0
2004	16
2005	7
Total	36

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many escapes have taken place from Coldingley prison in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available; and how many of these escapees were subsequently recaptured. [47400]

Fiona Mactaggart: One prisoner escaped from Coldingley prison in 1998 and was recaptured.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff were employed at Coldingley prison in each of the last six years for which figures are available, broken down by rank. [47401]

Fiona Mactaggart: The following table contains details of the number of staff employed at HMP Coldingley (on a headcount basis) in each year since 1999, broken down by grade. The figures represent a snapshot of staffing levels on 31 December each year.

Coldingley staffing levels by rank

Grade group/grade	*31 December*						
	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Unified							
Senior Manager B	—	—	1	1	1	—	—
Senior Manager C	—	1	—	—	—	1	1
Manager E	—	1	1	1	2	3	2
Manager F	—	3	3	4	4	3	1
Manager G	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Governor 2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Governor 4	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Governor 5	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
Governor five APS	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
Principal Officer	7	6	7	8	4	6	5
Principal Officer IDS	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Senior Officer	21	21	21	19	18	20	20
Senior Officer IDS	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Prison Officer	70	66	65	66	72	68	64
Prison Officer IDS	—	—	—	—	—	—	1

Coldingley staffing levels by rank

Grade group grade	*31 December*						
	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
OSG							
Operational Support Grade	45	33	33	30	36	30	32
Admin							
Senior Manager D		1	1	1	1	1	1
Grade 7	1						
Manager E			1	1	2	2	2
Manager F		1	1	1	1	1	2
Manager G							1
HEO	2						
EO	2	3	3	3	3	4	4
AO	11	12	13	13	15	16	12
AA	3	3	2	4	3	3	4
Personal Secretary	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Typist	1						
Chaplaincy							
Chaplain	2	3	3	3	2	3	2
Healthcare							
Nursing Grades	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
Medical Officer	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Psychology							
Psychological Assistant	1						
Industrial							
Manager G						1	
Industrial	15	16	16	18	18	19	18
Non Industrial							
Manager F						1	
Manager G		3	3	3	3	3	4
Catering Manager	2	1	1	1	1	1	
Higher Instructional Officer	2						
Instructional Officer	16	16	16	16	14	15	14
Prof and Tech Officer	2	3	3	2	3	2	2
Technical Officer		2	2	2	2	2	2
Support Band 2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	215	200	201	203	210	210	200

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the amount of Brazilian beef procured for *(a)* prisons and *(b)* young offender institutions during the last year for which figures are available. [47470]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service procured from contracted sources 7,836 kilos of Brazilian beef for prisons and 2,319 kilos for young offenders institutions from February 2005 to January 2006—all in the form of corned beef.

Corned beef is not manufactured in the UK.

Probation Service

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice he has received on the restructuring of the probation service from *(a)* former employees of the probation service, *(b)* the author of "Managing Offenders, Reducing Crime" and *(c)* advisers to the Government on crime. [46503]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government's proposals for restructuring probation are based on Lord Carter's analysis of the correctional services as set out in the paper "Managing Offenders, Reducing Crime". These proposals were set out in the consultation paper "Restructuring Probation to reduce re-offending", published on 20 October 2005. We plan to publish a summary of responses to the consultation—which included responses from some former employees of the probation service—within three months of its conclusion on 20 December.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many responses there have been to the consultation paper on restructuring probation to reduce re-offending; and how many of these supported the introduction of contestability into the national probation service. [48191]

Fiona Mactaggart: We have received 748 responses to the consultation on restructuring probation to reduce re-offending. Work analysing the responses is not yet complete. We will publish a summary of responses and the key points raised within the three month timescale set out in the Cabinet Office guidelines on public consultations.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he intends to retain the 42 probation areas under National Offender Management Service arrangements. [48194]

Fiona Mactaggart: We will consider how best the probation service, as well as the wider criminal justice system, can take into account changes to police

structures once final decisions on future police boundaries have been taken. Co-terminosity in the criminal justice system remains an important principle.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the role of the national probation service within the National Offender Management Service five year plan. [48195]

Fiona Mactaggart: A five year strategy for reducing reoffending and the work of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) will be published shortly. The strategy will provide a vision for the whole of NOMS and its constituent parts, including the national probation service.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department under what legislation he is restructuring the Probation Service in England and Wales. [48980]

Fiona Mactaggart: We intend to bring forward legislation to restructure probation services as soon as the parliamentary timetable allows.

Prosecutions (Suicide)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions have been brought under section 2(1) of the Suicide Act 1961 in each year since 1976. [47509]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data from the Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform shows the number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts for aiding or abetting suicide under section 2 of the Suicide act 1961 in England and Wales from 1976 to 2004.

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts for offences of 'Aiding Suicide', England and Wales, 1976–2004

	Total proceeded against
1976	—
1977	2
1978	—
1979	—
1980	1
1981	4
1982	2
1983	2
1984	1
1985	—
1986	1
1987	2
1988	1
1989	5
1990	11
1991	1
1992	4
1993	3
1994	—
1995	3
1996	3
1997	4
1998	1
1999	2
2000	4
2001	2
2002	2
2003	3
2004	3

[1] An offence under the Suicide Act 1961, sec.2(1)

Note:
These data are provided on the principal offence basis.
Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Rape

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of contested prosecutions for rape in the Avon and Somerset police force area have resulted in a conviction in the last five years. [44110]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of defendants pleading not guilty of rape and the number and percentage of these found guilty of rape at the Crown court in Avon and Somerset police force area, is provided in the attached table. Figures are presented for the years 2000–04.

Number of defendants pleading not-guilty of rape and the number and percentage of these found guilty of rape at the Crown court, Avon and Somerset police force area, 2000–2004[1]

	Not guilty pleas	Found guilty	Conviction rate (percentage)
2000	25	3	12
2001	28	9	32
2002	22	7	32
2003	48	13	27
2004	40	13	33

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
Note: Rape includes rape of a female and male.

Rehabilitation of Offenders

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans the Government have to implement the recommendation of his Department's publication "Breaking the Circle: A Report of the Review of the Rehabilitation of Offenders", published in July 2002; and what assessment has been made of the impact of the decision to date not to implement these recommendations on the rehabilitation of offenders. [47568]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government have accepted the majority of the review's recommendations and will legislate when parliamentary time allows.

We are also considering what might be necessary for the disclosure regime in the light of the Bichard report which dealt with criminal records in the context of the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

No assessment has been made regarding the impact of non-implementation. However, the Criminal Records Bureau's Code of Practice requires that employers receiving disclosure information do not unfairly discriminate against applicants on the basis of previous convictions.

Scottish Intelligence Database

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what use is made by English police forces of the Scottish Intelligence Database. [48167]

Hazel Blears: The National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) have full access to the Scottish Intelligence Database (SID) through their Scottish Regional Office. Protocols exist to disseminate

intelligence through NCIS to forces in England and Wales. A memorandum of understanding is currently being developed that may be used to grant full access on a force-by-force basis in England and Wales.

Sexual Abuse

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to support the recovery of children and adults who have suffered childhood sexual abuse. [47549]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government are putting real investment into supporting victims of sexual violence, including childhood sexual abuse. Over the last two years £4 million from the Home Office Victims Fund has been used to strengthen specialist services. A further £1.25 million will be made available specifically for the development of voluntary sector sexual violence services in 2006–07.

A mapping exercise of service provision is currently being conducted. This will provide valuable information about the level and strength of specialist services available to victims of sexual violence in England and Wales.

Special Branch

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the staffing levels of Special Branch were in each police force in each year since 1997. [44709]

Hazel Blears: For security and operational reasons the Home Office does not comment on the distribution of police resources and staffing levels in relation to counter-terrorism.

Published information on police strength by police force area is available for rank, gender and ethnicity but not function. Figures on police strength are published in Home Office statistical bulletins, copies of which can be found in the library or on the internet site: www.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received from chief constables on the size of Special Branch within police forces. [44711]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I have not received any representations. Each police force has its own special branch and the resource allocation, in terms of staffing and associated costs, to special branch is the responsibility of chief officers in each force.

The Government remains committed to ensuring that the police service has the necessary resources to meet its CT commitments. The additional police counter-terrorism funding announced on the 25 January will strengthen the police service's intelligence and investigative capability both in the capital and in local and regional policing.

Timber

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the use of Indonesian rainforest plywood in the new Home Office building. [45562]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department's 2 Marsham Street Headquarters has been procured via a 29-year PFI contract with Annes Gate Property plc which commenced on 26 March 2002. AGP has confirmed that it has complied with the Department's policy on the use of timber from sustainable sources as required by its contract with the Department. AGP has sourced any plywood that it has procured for the building from a sustainable supplier certified under the Forestry Stewardship Council scheme. The Department clarified its timber purchasing policy in mid-2003 to make clear that it also applied to any timber used in the construction process that would not be used in the completed building. Following this clarification AGP decided that any previous use of Indonesian plywood in the construction process should cease. Since the building opened AGP's facilities management sub-contractor has had its environmental management system certified under ISO 14001.

Violent Assaults

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many violent assaults where the perpetrators recorded the incidents with mobile phone cameras have been reported in each local authority area in each of the last two years; and if he will make a statement. [46299]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not available from the recorded crime statistics.

Worker Registration Scheme

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many workers from EU accession countries have *(a)* applied and *(b)* been accepted under the worker registration scheme since 1 May 2004. [47659]

Mr. McNulty: The latest published Accession Monitoring Report covers the period May 2004 to September 2005 and sets out the number of citizens from the EU accession countries (A8 nationals) who have applied to register with the worker registration scheme (WRS) during this period. This report is available on the Home Office website at: http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/ind/en/home/about_us/reports/accession_monitoring.html.

The next report, which will cover the period May 2004 to December 2005, will be published on 28 February 2006.

Table one (page five) of the report shows that during May 2004 to September 2005, 293,215 A8 nationals applied for registration, of which 277,060 were accepted and issued with work cards and certificates.

The figures shown in the report are for initial applications only; they do not include multiple applications, where a worker is doing more than one job simultaneously, or re-registrations, where a worker has changed employers.

The data has been obtained from local management information using the WRS database. They have not been provided under national statistics protocols and are therefore provisional and subject to change.

TREASURY

Biodiesel Duty

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the definition is of *(a)* diesel quality liquid fuel, *(b)* biomass and *(c)* waste cooking oil for the purposes of assessing the eligibility of fuels for the reduced rate of duty for biodiesel; [48818]

(2) what the criteria are by which users of cooking oil and straight vegetable oil have been judged not to qualify for the reduced rate of fuel duty applicable to biodiesel. [48819]

John Healey: I refer the right hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Birmingham, Yardley (John Hemming) on 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2265W.

Community Development Finance Institutions

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the outcome was of the consultation on extending the community investment tax relief scheme to investments in community development finance institutions' personal lending activities. [49260]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The outcome of the consultation on extending Community Investment Tax Relief to the personal lending activities of community development finance institutions was announced in the pre-Budget report 2005. The consultation indicated support for an extension and highlighted a range of practical issues that need addressing. The Government are continuing to consider the case for, and practicalities of, this extension.

Credit Unions

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment his Department has made of the impact of raising the maximum rate of interest that credit unions can charge on loans on *(a)* the availability of credit and *(b)* the rate of take up of loans. [49258]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The pre-Budget report 2005 announced the intention to increase the maximum interest rate that credit unions can charge on loans from 1 per cent. a month to 2 per cent. a month, following consultation. This increase is designed to give all credit unions the flexibility to better serve low-income groups. The consultation provided strong evidence to suggest that this change will have a positive effect on the availability of credit union loans for those encountering exclusion from mainstream financial services, and will facilitate an expansion in credit union membership to those currently unable to access credit at affordable rates.

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the *(a)* benefits and *(b)* costs to (i) businesses and (ii) the Department of having different rules for the eligibility for enhanced capital allowances for energy efficient (A) display light fittings and (B) general light fittings. [48583]

John Healey: No such assessment has been made. The rules for 100 per cent. first-year enhanced capital allowances for energy saving plant and machinery do not distinguish between display light fittings and general light fittings.

Film Tax Credit

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when details of the new film tax credit to replace the section 48 credit will be announced; and if he will make a statement. [48482]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Chancellor made a number of key announcements regarding the new film tax incentives at the pre-Budget report on 5 December 2005, including revised rates and levels of relief. The Government are aiming to publish draft legislation as soon as is possible, so as to provide the UK film industry with certainty on the further details of the new incentives. Full legislation will appear in Finance Bill 2006.

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what total sum has been received by his Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48487]

John Healey: The Treasury has not received any monies for the provision of information under the FOI Act in its first year of operation.

Insurance Premium Tax

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to reform the insurance premium tax. [49461]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Member to the answer my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury gave him on 22 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1908W.

Intrastat

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what purpose HM Revenue and Customs collects statistics on behalf of Intrastat on the weight of goods imported from other EU member states; and what assessment he has made of the cost to businesses of collating this information. [48582]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: All member states have a legal requirement to collect Intrastat statistics on the weight of goods imported from other EU countries. These statistics are used by the European Union, the UK Government and private sector for economic monitoring and informing business decisions. This information is also used by HM Revenue and Customs to assure the Intrastat information provided. The cost to businesses of collating this information cannot be identified separately from the costs calculated for Intrastat information in totality. From 1 January 2006 member states may decide to remove the need for 'net mass' information where the 'supplementary unit' is required. A third of all commodity codes are included in this simplification which HM Revenue and Customs is implementing in the UK.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what guidance HM Revenue and Customs gives to businesses that are required to complete the Instrastat statistical returns. [48584]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: HM Revenue and Customs provides an Intrastat Education Pack for all businesses required to complete Intrastat returns. Included in this pack is a copy of Notice 60—The Intrastat General Guide. Additional information is also available from their dedicated website (www.uktradeinfo.com) as well as a telephone help-line (Tel: 01702 366493) and e-mail inquiry address (uktradeinfo@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk).

Iraq

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the Government's most recent estimate is of the cost to the Exchequer of combat operations in Iraq in each month since the start of the conflict; and if he will make a statement. [48739]

Mr. Des Browne: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2260–61W.

Job Statistics (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* private sector jobs in (i) manufacturing and (ii) the service sector and *(b)* public sector jobs there were in Tamworth constituency in each year since 1997. [48661]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 7 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about private and public sector employment in Tamworth. I am replying in her absence. (48661)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics for the United Kingdom of public sector employment from a quarterly survey of public sector organisations. However, estimates at local area level are not available.

Information at local area level is only available from the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS)/Annual Population Survey (APS) of individual people in households. However, in this source, the categorisation of employment in the public or private sector depends upon the responses from the individuals interviewed. As reported by ONS in October 2005 in the publication "Public Sector Employment Trends" some individuals tend to misreport private sector employment as being in the public sector hence leading to overestimates of the share of public sector employment.

With this reservation about the data quality, the attached table shows the number of persons in private sector and public sector employment, for people resident in the Tamworth Parliamentary Constituency as shown by the annual local area LFS for the 12 month periods ending February 1999 to February 2004, and from the APS for the 12 months ending December 2004. Estimates are not available for 1997.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Persons in employment resident in the Tamworth parliamentary constituency by private-public sector split[1]

Thousands

12 months ending	*Private sector*			*Public sector*	*Total*
	Manufacturing	*Services*	*Other industries*[2]		
February 1999	14	23	4	7	47
February 2000	15	25	5	5	49
February 2001	15	21	5	8	50
February 2002	13	26	3	7	50
February 2003	13	28	3	6	50
February 2004	11	22	4	9	46
December 2004	11	24	5	8	48

[1] Public/private sector split based on responses from individuals responding to the annual local area Labour Force Survey. This generally results in overestimates of public sector employment.
[2] Other industries are Agriculture, Fishing, Energy and Water and Construction.
Note:
Estimates are subject to sampling variability. Changes from year to year should be treated with particular caution.
Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey; Annual Population Survey.

National Census

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many complaints have been made about the last national census; how many of those complaints have been upheld; and what action has been taken to address them. [48883]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 7 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your question about how many complaints have been made about the 2001 Census, how many of those have been upheld and what action has been taken to address them. I am replying in her absence. (48883)

In responding to your question we haw interpreted complaints to mean all correspondence that has been received expressing concern either about the 2001 Census population estimates for England and Wales or the 2001 Mid Year Population Estimates (MYEs) for England and Wales which are based upon the 2001 Census. We have not included issues or complaints raised in the run up to the 2001 Census on questionnaire content and other logistical matters in carrying out a Census.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has received letters of concern regarding 48, out of the total of 376, Local Authorities in England and Wales.

Following the 2001 Census ONS undertook an extensive programme of work to establish the reasons for the difference between the 2001 Census and the MYEs at both a national and local level. This research included a series of Local Authority studies carried out in 2004 which were designed to improve the MYEs in the areas that proved hardest to count in the 2001 Census in England and Wales. The results of these studies showed that

better estimates of the population could be made in 15 areas and an adjustment was made to the MYEs in these areas. For the great majority of areas the 2001 Census based population estimate remains the best estimate of the population. A full report on these Local Authority Studies can be found at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/LAStudy_FullReport.pdf

Of the 48 Local Authorities where concern was expressed about the 2001 Census, there were 10 cases where an adjustment was made to the 2001 based MYEs.

In addition to the 2004 Local Authority Studies, ONS is now investing substantially in a project to Improve Migration and Population Statistics (IMPS). Further information on this project can be found at: www.statistics.gov.uk/IMPS .

The key aim of this project is to reduce the size of the difference between population estimates and mid-year estimates for 2011 when the next Census is undertaken and to better understand any difference that does remain.

The IMPS project is allowing ONS to investigate possible ways to improve the accuracy of the population estimates and to establish where it is possible to introduce changes to data sources and methods that will improve the quality of the statistics. This work includes an evaluation of administrative data sources that might inform the population estimates process and further case studies with a small number of Local Authorities.

Public Sector Accounts

Mike Penning: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will list the changes made to the definitions of capital spending in the Public Sector Accounts since May 2001. [47521]

Mr. Des Browne: There have been none.

Royal Mint

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff the Royal Mint employs in *(a)* London, *(b)* each region of England, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland; how much the Royal Mint paid (i) in rates and (ii) in other accommodation costs in each location in 2004–05; what the total administration costs were in each location in 2004–05; and how much funding the Royal Mint received from the Government for 2005–06. [48835]

John Healey: In 2004–05, the Royal Mint employed, on average, 991 staff. Until August 2004, one employee was located in London. Since then, all members of staff have been employed in Wales.

The Royal Mint paid £452,000 in rates to the local Council. The total of accommodation costs and administrative costs in 2004–05 (excluding costs directly attributable to factory activities but including rates) is captured as Common Costs in the Annual Report which are equal to £7.145 million. Due to commercial sensitivity, the Royal Mint cannot provide a more detailed breakdown.

The Royal Mint has not received any funding from Government in this financial year (2005–06).

Small Business Relief Scheme

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses have applied for the small business relief scheme in each of the last five years; how many were eligible in each year; and how many of those were successful in each year. [49697]

John Healey: The small business rate relief scheme came into effect from 1 April 2005. Applications for small business rate relief may be made up to six months after the end of the financial year to which the application relates, or six months from notification of an alteration to a rateable value that makes the hereditament eligible for relief. Information is not held centrally on the number of businesses that applied for and were granted relief in 2005–06.

Special Reserve

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when each payment *(a)* into and *(b)* out of the special reserve was made in each year since 2000; what each payment was for; and if he will make a statement. [48740]

Mr. Des Browne: Allocations to the special reserve are announced and recorded in Budgets and pre-Budget reports. The 2002 pre-Budget report made a special contingency allocation of £1 billion, increased to £3 billion in Budget 2003. In the 2003 pre-Budget report the Government announced that the remaining £2 billion of this special reserve would be carried forward to 2003–04. A further £500 million was set aside for the financial year 2003–04 and a further £820 million for 2004–05 as a prudent allowance for continuing spending on Iraq, Afghanistan and our other international commitments. In Budget 2005, a further £340 million was added to the special reserve for 2004–05 and £400 million for the special reserve in 2005–06. The 2005 pre-Budget report allocated a further £580 million to the special reserve in 2005–06. Costs and provision will continue to be reviewed at Budgets and pre-Budget reports.

The reserves, including the special reserve, are managed together as a mechanism for future budgetary planning, rather than to account for past expenditure. Past expenditure is accounted for through outturn information provided in Departmental accounts, which do not discriminate between spending provided for in Departmental spending review settlements and spending provided for from the reserves.

Spirits

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment the Government have made of the merits of introducing a sunset clause for the new spirit labelling scheme; [48595]

(2) what the estimated total costs are of implementing the Government's proposed spirit label stamp scheme; and for what reasons these costs have not been set out in the regulatory impact assessment. [48642]

John Healey: Spirits fraud continues to be a significant problem, and the Duty Stamps scheme is central to the Government's strategy for tackling it. Duty stamps remain a proportionate response to the problem. Since the original regulatory impact assessment was published in April 2004, industry compliance costs have been reduced from £23 million set-up costs and £54 million per annum ongoing costs to £6 million set-up costs and £4 million per annum ongoing costs. These revised costs were published in an update to the original regulatory impact assessment, which was laid before the House on 9 January 2006

alongside the Duty Stamps (Amendment of paragraph 1 (3) of Schedule 2A to the Alcoholic Liquor Duties Act 1979) Order 2006. The Government have allocated £36 million over a three-year period to HM Revenue and Customs to implement its enhanced alcohol strategy, which includes the duty stamps scheme. These costs were included in the explanatory memorandum which was also laid alongside the order.

With the cooperation of the UK spirits industry, the duty stamps scheme remains on course to be implemented in full during 2006–07. The scheme will, in due course, be the subject of a post-implementation review and a review of the regulatory impact assessment.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the spirit fraud seizures and detections during the last 12 months which involved revenue evasions in excess of £1 million. [48596]

John Healey: HMRC made no confirmed spirits fraud detections involving revenue in excess of £1 million during the past 12 months. Individual freight seizures of illicit spirits are unlikely ever to exceed £150,000 in revenue value, as a 40' container or trailer will normally hold a maximum of 14,000 litres (1,500 cases) of product.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what share of the UK spirit market will be exempt from the spirit label stamp scheme because it falls below the 30 per cent. alcohol by volume threshold. [48633]

John Healey: About 14 per cent. according to figures provided by the spirits industry, during consultations on the duty stamps scheme.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many entities outside the UK have registered for spirit label stamps; what estimate he has made of the number of stamps which HM Revenue and Customs will distribute to non-UK entities; what steps the Government are taking to ensure the credentials of those applying for stamps abroad; and whether HM Revenue and Customs will police the application and use of stamps overseas. [48634]

John Healey: HM Revenue and Customs have so far received 37 applications for registration for duty stamps from businesses outside the UK. All applications are closely scrutinised to ensure that applicants are eligible to be registered for the scheme. For businesses outside the UK, based in the European Union only approved excise warehousekeepers, whose details are confirmed by the other member states' authorities can apply for registration. For businesses outside the European Union, only those in very specific trade categories are eligible to register.

Registered businesses can make commercial choices as to whether to incorporate the duty stamp into bottle labels or to affix freestanding stamps distributed by HM Revenue and Customs' contractor. For imported spirits, the stamps can be applied outside the UK or in the UK once imported. The number of freestanding stamps distributed to non-UK entities is dependent on these commercial choices and is not possible to estimate at this stage.

For registered businesses based outside the European Union, HM Revenue and Customs will exercise control over goods as they enter and within the UK and can seek targeted assistance from the authorities of other countries under long-standing agreements between World Customs Organisation members. For businesses based in other member states of the EU, existing arrangements for mutual assistance between fiscal authorities will be used.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what recent assessment he has made of the scope for worldwide *(a)* theft and *(b)* counterfeiting of UK duty stamps once the spirit label stamp scheme is introduced; [48635]

(2) what steps he has taken to ensure that the spirit label stamp scheme will not be undermined by the use of stolen or fake stamps. [49271]

John Healey: HM Revenue and Customs assess that the risk from theft of duty stamps is low. Businesses using duty stamps are required to keep a record of stamps obtained and used and to report any theft of stamps to HM Revenue and Customs.

HM Revenue and Customs have utilised state of the art security print technology in the design of the freestanding duty stamp, which will make successful counterfeiting difficult and expensive.

So far as duty stamps incorporated within bottle labels are concerned, one of the factors that the Government took into account before deciding to permit label stamps was their potential effect on counterfeiting. As industry representatives pointed out when advocating label-stamps, they make counterfeiting a less viable proposition than would have been the case with traditional strip stamps, since fraudsters would need to obtain not only the label stamps but also bottles of spirits without labels. Alternatively, fraudsters would have to incur the cost of removing any existing labels before being able to use counterfeit label stamps.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent assessment he has made of the reasons for the level of spirit fraud *(a)* seizure, *(b)* detection and *(c)* prosecution rates. [48636]

John Healey: Details of illicit spirits seized and prosecutions for spirits offences are contained in the HMRC annual report for 2004–05 published in December 2005.

Individual output measures relating to selected elements of HMRC's activity to tackle spirits fraud cannot be taken as a proxy measure of impact.

More important than such activity indicators are the figures published alongside the pre-budget report in December 2005 which show that the Government have succeeded in reducing the UK illicit spirits market from 9 per cent. in 2001–02 to 7 per cent. in 2003–04.

The Government announced an enhanced strategic approach to tackling alcohol fraud in its 2004 pre-budget report, setting HMRC the tough target of reducing spirits fraud by half by 2008.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how his Department calculates spirit fraud VAT losses within total revenue loss estimates; and whether it is assumed that all illicit bottles pay no VAT as well as no excise duty. [48637]

John Healey: For the purposes of its revenue loss estimates, HMRC makes the cautious assumption that illicit bottles of spirits pay no UK VAT as well as no UK excise duty. An average rate of VAT loss in pounds per litre of spirits sold in the UK is derived from data provided by market research organisations. This rate is subsequently multiplied by the amount of the estimated illicit volume in order to obtain the total VAT loss.

The approaches used for measuring VAT losses are outlined in the HMCE report: "Measuring Indirect Tax Losses—November 2002". This can be accessed through the following link: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/389/E5/admeas02_297kb.pdf.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what evidence the Government have collected to support their estimates of the scale of spirit fraud. [48638]

John Healey: The methodology used to estimate the scale of spirits fraud was subject to an independent review by the Office for National Statistics, the details of which were published in July 2005. HMRC has made a number of refinements to its approach in response to the findings of the ONS review and these are reflected in the estimates published alongside the 2005 pre-Budget report. HMRC's operational activity and intelligence supports our understanding that spirits fraud continues to be a major threat.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his most recent estimate is of the value of revenue losses caused by spirit fraud; and what the statistical lower bound estimate is for spirit fraud. [48639]

John Healey: The most recent estimates of the value of revenue losses caused by spirits fraud, and associated margins of error, are set out in "Measuring Indirect Tax Losses"—2005 published alongside the pre-Budget report in December 2005.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment his Department has made of the Office of National Statistics' review of spirits fraud published on 21 July 2005; and whether he has accepted its conclusions in respect of previous Government estimates of revenue evasion. [48640]

John Healey: The Department welcomes the report. Following detailed assessment of the report, the Department has adopted a number of refinements to the method for estimating the level of revenue losses attributable to spirits fraud. These are set out in "Measuring Indirect Tax Losses"—2005, published alongside the 2005 pre-Budget report.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment he has made of the effect of introducing a spirit label stamp scheme on illegal spirit sales; [48641]

(2) what estimate he has made of the reduction in spirit fraud which will result from Government plans to introduce a label stamp scheme. [48643]

John Healey: Duty stamps for spirits were announced at Budget 2004 as part of a package of measures for tackling the revenue lost through spirits excise duty fraud. The scheme complements and supports the other strands of the strategy such as Memoranda of Understanding with the spirits industry and enhanced operational activity. These measures were introduced to halve the level of spirits fraud by 2007–08.

The projected revenue benefit of the alcohol strategy as a whole is £85 million. However, it is not possible to estimate the revenue benefit of each individual strand of the strategy, as it is the combination of the whole package that determines the total effect.

Suicides

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many suicides were committed by people aged 14 to 25 years in each region in the last three years, broken down by sex; and if he will make a statement. [48376]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl, dated 7 February 2006:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many suicides were committed by people aged 14 to 25 years in each region in the last three years, broken down by sex. I am replying in her absence. (48376)

In routine statistics, ONS defines suicides as deaths from both intentional self-harm and 'injury of undetermined intent'. The most recent available figures are for the calendar year 2004. The figures in the table below show the number of deaths from intentional self harm and injury of undetermined intent by sex among those aged 14 to 25 for the calendar years 2002 to 2004.

Number of deaths among people aged 14 to 25 years from intentional self harm[1] and injury of undetermined intent[2], by sex for government office regions[3] in England and Wales, 2002 to 2004[4]

Government Office Region	2002	2003	2004
Males			
North East	27	23	29
North West	51	59	57
Yorkshire and The Humber	27	28	35
East Midlands	34	37	30
West Midlands	46	35	37
East of England	39	42	31
London	54	58	48
South East	48	67	46
South West	36	35	34
Wales	37	44	26
Females			
North East	5	6	6
North West	14	10	17
Yorkshire and The Humber	10	8	10
East Midlands	13	11	12
West Midlands	8	9	11
East of England	10	8	24
London	19	14	15
South East	21	18	18
South West	9	4	11
Wales	6	9	4

[1] The cause of death for intentional self harm was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes X60-X84.

[3] The cause of death for injury of undetermined intent was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) cades Y10-Y34 excluding Y33.9 where the Coroner's verdict was pending. It is assumed likely that most of these deaths are cases where the harm is self-inflicted but there was insufficient evidence to prove that the deceased deliberately intended to kill themselves.

Deaths were selected using final underlying cause of death.

[4] Usual residents of these areas.

[5] Deaths occurring in each calendar year.

Tax Credits

Mr. Randall: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit claimants there have been in Uxbridge constituency since the scheme began, broken down by those who were *(a)* underpaid, *(b)* overpaid and *(c)* paid the correct amount. [48514]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Mid-Bedfordshire (Mrs. Dorries) on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 321W.

Anne Main: To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit claimants there have been in St Albans constituency since the scheme began, broken down by those who were *(a)* underpaid, *(b)* overpaid and *(c)* paid the correct amount. [49330]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Mid-Bedfordshire (Mrs. Domes) on 10 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 321W.

Transport

Chris Grayling: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of total projected public expenditure on transport in each year from 2006 to 2015. [48100]

Mr. Des Browne: The Government are committed to providing significant resources to maintain and modernise the transport network. Spending Review 2004 set out estimates of UK public expenditure on transport of £20.1 billion for 2006–07 and £19.3 billion for 2007–08. These totals included £13.6 billion and £12.9 billion allocated to the Department for Transport for 2006–07 and 2007–08 respectively. The remainder in each year is estimated expenditure by local authorities and the devolved Administrations. Actual local and devolved transport expenditure will be made according to their own spending decisions.

Over the period 2008–09 to 2014–15, a Long Term Funding Guideline has been agreed with the Department for Transport to provide a stable financial framework within which to plan transport improvements. This guideline is set out in "The Future of Transport: A network for 2030," published by the Department for Transport in July 2004. This guideline does not include projections of future expenditure on transport by local authorities and the devolved Administrations, which they will determine according to their own spending priorities.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 354W, on the Valuation Office Agency, what plans the Government have to use *(a)* computer assisted mass appraisal and *(b)* the automated valuation model for the next scheduled business rates revaluation. [47939]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Valuation Office Agency is considering setting up a feasibility study into whether the automated valuation model might be used to support some elements of the next business rates revaluation in 2010.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 529–30W, on the Valuation Office Agency, whether HM Revenue and Customs staff have access to the information and data collected for council tax valuation purposes for its general use in collecting taxes; and what guidelines apply to the use of that data. [49269]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The use of information by HMRC is governed by sections 17 to 21 of The Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005.

The use of information and data collected for council tax valuation purposes is covered under the general guidance on the use of information within HMRC, and all HMRC staff are bound by strict confidentiality safeguards which protect HMRC information from being misused.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Legal Aid (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the availability of civil legal aid to people living in Tamworth constituency. [48660]

Bridget Prentice: The Legal Services Commission contracts with service providers throughout England and Wales to provide a range of legal and advice services across different categories of law.

There are currently three service providers with a contract to undertake civil legal aid work in Tamworth. Service providers in Tamworth may help people who live outside the area, and people who live in Tamworth may visit a service provider in a different area.

Any person residing in England or Wales can access free quality legal advice and information through Community Legal Service Direct. This service is available direct to the public through a telephone line, website and information leaflets.

Public Defender Service

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans the Government have to extend the Public Defender Service. [49826]

Bridget Prentice: The operation of the Public Defender Service will be reviewed in light of the independent research into the pilot which is expected to be published shortly.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what comparison the Government have made of the costs of the Public Defender Service and those of legal aid-funded solicitors. [49827]

Bridget Prentice: The independent research that has been commissioned to report on the Public Defender Service will compare and analyse the costs of the Public Defender Service with those of private practitioners specialising in criminal legal aid work. It is expected that the research will be published shortly.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Academies

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of pupils at each academy achieved *(a)* five A* to C GCSE grades or equivalent, *(b)* five A* to C GCSE grades and *(c)* five A* to C GCSE grades in English and Mathematics in 2005; and what the equivalent figures were for the predecessor school of each academy in its last year of operation. [43048]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 23 January 2006]*: The information requested is shown in the tables.

2005[1]

Academy	*Number of 15-year-old pupils*[2]	*% achieving 5+A*-C GCSE and equivalents*	*% achieving 5+A*-C GCSE only*	*% achieving A*-C in English and mathematics*
The Business Academy Bexley	123	29	12	17
Greig City Academy Haringey	132	54	13	10
Unity City Academy	203	16	4	6
Capital City Academy	127	17	17	14
The City Academy Bristol	170	52	23	19
West London Academy	111	28	14	11
Manchester Academy	114	25	15	12
The King's Academy	182	43	29	24
Djanogly City Academy Nottingham	237	57	18	18
The Academy at Peckham	164	22	22	20
Walsall Academy	57	67	7	21
London Academy	170	48	35	24
Stockley Academy	98	19	8	13
Northampton Academy	198	34	28	18

[1] Figures from 2003/04 includes GCSEs and a range of equivalent qualifications approved pre-16. Figures for earlier years includes GCSE GNVQ only.
[2] Age at the start of academic year i.e. 31 August.

Predecessor schools	*Last year of operation*[1]	*Number of 15-year-old pupils*[2]	*% achieving 5+A*-C GCSE and equivalents*	*% achieving 5+A*-C GCSE only*	*% achieving A*-C in English and mathematics*
Thamesmead Community College	2002	100	6	6	5
St. David and St. Katherine CofE	2002	147	26	24	19
Keldholme	2002	112	21	3	10
Langbaurgh	2002	73	11	10	8
Willesden High School	2003	156	7	5	6
St. George Community Centre	2003	186	25	13	9
Compton Sports College	2003	142	37	21	15
Ducie High School	2003	130	12	11	8
Coulby Newham School	2003	135	28	24	19
Brackenhoe	2003	110	15	14	12
Djanogly CTC	2003	171	60	30	27
Forest School	2002	82	20	18	80
Warwick Park School	2003	167	16	14	11
TP Riley School	2003	83	49	1	7
Edgware School	2004	213	32	32	21
Evelyns Community School	2004	126	17	13	13
Lings Upper School	2004	214	30	25	14

[1] Figures for 2004/05 are revised. Figures for earlier years are final.
[2] Age at the start of academic year i.e. 31 August
City of London, Lambeth and Mossbourne Academies did not have any pupils taking GCSEs and are omitted from the table.

Civil Servants (Overseas Visits)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what costs were incurred by her Department as a result of sending civil servants on overseas visits in each of the last 10 years. [46285]

Bill Rammell: The information requested is set out in the following table. The figures are taken from the Department's financial systems for the years in question. The figures include overseas visits by Ministers who are not classified as civil servants and could be separated only at disproportional cost. All travel by civil servants complied with the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code.

Expenditure on overseas visits

	£000
1996–97	883
1997–98	663

Expenditure on overseas visits

	£000
1998–99	773
1999–2000	789
2000–01	832
2001–02	506
2002–03	243
2003–04	218
2004–05	180

These figures reflect the Department as constituted at the time the accounts were produced and so are not adjusted for Machinery of Government changes. Figures before 1996–97 are not available.

Colleges (Suspended Accreditation)

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether students who are enrolled on and have paid fees for courses for which colleges have had their accreditation suspended *(a)* are still able to qualify through external assessment and *(b)* are entitled to have their fees refunded. [48123]

Phil Hope: In these circumstances, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) would expect colleges to make alternative arrangements for the learners, either by offering alternative qualifications accredited with another awarding body or by arranging for an alternative college with the relevant accreditation to take over the provision to these learners.

Depending on the alternative educational arrangements, as set out above, for the learner to gain their qualification the college would be expected to consider whether a fee refund was appropriate for the learner. The LSC would expect colleges to consider, sympathetically, learner requests for fee refunds where they were not satisfied with the alternatives being offered. If the course fee included an element of examination fee then that should be refunded.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many further education colleges have had NVQ accreditation status removed or suspended by the City and Guilds in the last 12 months; and what the NVQ subject areas were. [48124]

Phil Hope: This is a matter for City and Guilds of London Institute. I understand that Chris Humphries, Director General at City and Guilds of London Institute, has corresponded on this matter with the hon. Member.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether further education colleges are allowed to *(a)* advertise and promote and *(b)* enrol students onto courses for which their NVQ accreditation has been suspended. [48125]

Phil Hope: The Government would not expect any college to enrol any new learners onto any programme for which their accreditation had been lost or suspended. We would also not expect advertising or promotion of such courses.

Consultants

Ms Katy Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many consultants have been engaged by her Department since March 2005; and at what cost. [43684]

Bill Rammell *[pursuant to the reply, 26 January 2006, Official Report, c. 228W]:* I am providing an amended response. The Department for Education and Skills spent £2.2 million from administration costs and £7.4 million from programme expenditure on consultants since March 2005 to date (April – December 2005–06 accounting period).

Criminal Record Checks

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the number of requests for enhanced disclosures that will be generated as a result of making Criminal Records Bureau checks mandatory for all new appointments of school staff. [45245]

Ruth Kelly: These new arrangements will generate demand for additional checks on top of the existing annual total of 2.9 million checks. However, making CRB checks mandatory which were previously strongly advised in guidance should not, in itself, lead to a significant increase in the number of requests for checks and on this basis the CRB is confident that it will be able to cope with the change without any reduction in its standards. We will work with them as they continue to monitor the situation.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will set out a timetable for *(a)* laying the regulations and *(b)* implementing the regulation to make it a mandatory requirement for Criminal Record Bureau checks on all new school staff. [45246]

Ruth Kelly: Work is currently in hand to make on-appointment CRB checks compulsory for all new appointments to the schools work force and to introduce a parallel requirement that all supply agencies have a CRB disclosure for all staff who work in schools. In the meantime, I have written to all schools setting out how the checking system will work so that heads are clear about their responsibilities.

Dedicated Choice Advisers

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which organisation will employ the dedicated choice advisers referred to on page eight of the White Paper, Higher Standards, Better Schools for All. [46452]

Jacqui Smith: Choice advisers may be employed by schools, local authorities or voluntary and community sector organisations.

Education Costs

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her latest estimate is of the average total cost to public funds of educating a pupil *(a)* from primary school to age 16 and *(b)* from primary school to and through university; and if she will make a statement. [41440]

Jacqui Smith: The information is as follows.

(a) The estimated average cost of educating a pupil from primary school to age 16 is £55,000.

(b) It is not possible to produce a reasonable estimate of the average total cost of educating a pupil from primary school to and through university because the length of further and higher education courses varies considerably. However annual unit cost figures can be estimated and are produced in this year's departmental annual report. These show that the average annual cost of funding a further education place is £5,410, while the cost of funding a higher education place is £4,630.

Notes:

1. The cost of educating a pupil to age 16 has been calculated as follows. Per pupil funding figure for 3 to 10-year-olds in England in 2005–06 have been multiplied by eight (for the eight years of funding a child would receive between the age of three and 10) and by five for age 11 to 15. These are then summed together to give the total cost of educating a pupil to 16.

2. All figures in 2005–06 prices. As a result, HE figures quoted differ from those quoted in the departmental annual report.

3. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES departmental expenditure limits relevant to pupils aged three to 15 and exclude education maintenance allowances (EMAs) and grants not allocated at LEA level.

4. The pupil numbers used to convert £ million figures to £ per pupil are those underlying the EFS settlement calculations.

5. Figures are based on eight years of funding for pupils aged three to 10 and five years of funding for pupils aged 11 to 15.

Examination Results

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to her answer of 3 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1326W, on vocational qualifications, how many 15-year-olds achieved five or more A* to C grades at GCSE or equivalent including a full intermediate GNVQ *(a)* as a proportion of all 15-year-olds and *(b)* as a proportion of all 15-year-olds who achieved five or more A* to C grades at GCSE or equivalent. [36027]

Jacqui Smith: Out of the 636,796 15-year-old[1] pupils on roll in 2005 7.8 per cent. achieved five A*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent including a full intermediate GNVQ. Of the 358,413 pupils who achieved any five A*-C grades in 2005,13.9 per cent. achieved this level including a full intermediate GNVQ.

Of course, these pupils may still have achieved this level even if they had not taken the GNVQ.

[1] Age at the beginning of the academic year (i.e. 31 August).

Forensic Science

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many individuals have started forensic science-related National Vocational Qualifications since 1997; and what percentage have completed the course. [49132]

Bill Rammell: Two NVQs for "Forensic Science" at Levels 4 and 5 were accredited by QCA in January 1998, expired on 30 June 2000 and reached their certification end date on 30 June 2003. Information is not collected on how many learners started NVQs—however, no certificates were awarded for either of these qualifications.

General Teaching Council

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many disciplinary cases were heard by the General Teaching Council in each year since 2000; [48134]

(2) what the average period between referral to the General Teaching Council and a disciplinary hearing taking place was in each year since 2000; [48139]

(3) how many teachers were referred for disciplinary action before the General Teaching Council in each year since 2000. [48140]

Jacqui Smith: According to information provided by the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) 161 teachers were referred to the Council for disciplinary action in 2001–02. This figure rose to: 217 in 2002–03, 267 in 2003–04 and 322 in 2004–05. For 2005 to date there have been 265 referrals.

These figures relate to the receipt of all referrals made to the Council. The Council has the power to take disciplinary action on teacher incompetence, and on cases of teacher misconduct which do not relate to child protection.

Cases are scrutinised by the Council's Investigating Committee before being recommended for a full formal hearing before a professional conduct or professional competence committee. Based on the latest information available from the Council, the number of full hearings dealt with by these committees is set out in the table:

	Number of hearings
2001–02	[1]3
2002–03	20
2003–04	43
2004–05	40
2005–31 January 2006	53

[1] The first regulatory hearing of the Council was convened in January 2002

The GTCE does not hold the data about the average period between referral of a case to the Council and a disciplinary hearing taking place in a readily accessible form. However, the Council estimates that the average waiting period is currently around 12 months.

Head Teachers

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what powers school governors have to regulate head teachers' *(a)* work-life balance and *(b)* holiday periods. [49312]

Jacqui Smith: Governing bodies have a statutory duty, in their management of the head teacher, to have regard to his/her work-life balance. Members of the leadership group, as well as some other teachers, are not subject to the working time provisions which apply to full-time classroom teachers through the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, and it is for governing bodies to establish their expectations regarding holiday periods, having regard to the general duties required of different classes of teacher.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she has taken to ensure that the regulation of head teachers' work-life balance by school governors is applied consistently. [49313]

Jacqui Smith: Following on from my previous response to the hon. Member today, the issue of regulating the work-life balance of head teachers falls to the governing body who would be expected to agree suitable arrangements with the head. With over 20,000 schools across the country there will of course be a range of differing measures and practices adopted by schools, head teachers and governing bodies to ensure that the work-life balance of their head teachers is appropriately agreed and addressed. We are confident in the professionalism of our head teachers and in the skills and judgment of school governors across the country. We would expect that they will work collaboratively to ensure that the work-life balance of the head and indeed the whole school workforce is addressed accordingly.

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46756]

Bill Rammell: The Department celebrates a range of diversity events and publicise them to staff via personal invites on the Department's intranet system. Some events are generated by staff themselves. In 2005 we have provided, ongoing mandatory, cultural awareness training events for staff, which cover issues on religion and belief and highlight legislation.

Prisons

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she plans to take to increase the uptake of educational opportunities and skills learning in the prison estate; and if she will make a statement. [48430]

Phil Hope: We are introducing a new offender learning and skills service that is more learner-centred and flexible, with better links between education and vocational training. This is intended to motivate more offenders in custody to address their learning and skills needs. The new service is already being delivered by the Learning and Skills Council in three development regions and will be rolled out in the remaining six English regions from 31 July 2006.

Looking further ahead, the Government have set out a strategy to improve the skills and job prospects for offenders in the Green Paper "Reducing Re-Offending Through Skills and Employment", published on 15 December. The document was published jointly on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills, the Home Office and the Department for Work and Pensions. We have now embarked on an extensive period of consultation, running until the end of May, during which we welcome a full range of views.

Private Tutors

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures she is proposing to ensure the safety of children taught by private tutors. [45177]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 24 January 2006]*: Where an individual is barred from working with children under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 on the grounds that he or she is "unsuitable to work with children", it is a criminal offence to work or seek work in any position that includes training or being in sole charge of a child or children. A person guilty of this offence is liable, on summary conviction, to imprisonment for up to six months and/or a fine and, on indictment, to imprisonment for up to five years and/or a fine.

The Department would strongly advise parents to verify the credentials of any person employed to provide private tuition for a child, particularly if that person is likely to be alone with the child at any time. For example, parents could ask prospective tutors for references from a recent employer.

The Department is fully aware that parents currently have limited access to information. The new scheme to be implemented as part of the Bichard Inquiry Recommendations will allow parents to access relevant information on people they wish to employ as home tutors.

I made clear in my statement to the House on 12 January, we are committed to implementing Sir Michael Bichard's recommendations to tighten the system of vetting and barring people who wish to work with children and that will entail the ability for parents to check whether tutors, nannies, and other individuals whom they employ, are barred or disqualified.

School Attendance

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2286W, on fast track to attendance, if she will revise the 2003 guidance Ensuring School Attendance to include joint assessment and support working between Children's and Adult Services. [49300]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 6 February 2006]*: A general duty is placed on local authorities by section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under 18 who are in need by providing a range of services appropriate to meeting those needs. Assessments undertaken by local authorities of children should focus on the needs of the child, the capacity of the parents and wider environmental factors.

"Ensuring Regular School Attendance: Guidance on the Legal Measures available to Secure Regular School Attendance" is a short document the purpose of which is to give an overview of the various legal measures available. This guidance refers to the importance of investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance and to joined-up working between agencies but it is not a suitable vehicle for setting out case working procedures in more detail.

My Department issued Effective Attendance advice last year to local authorities and to schools. It stressed the need for all parts of local authorities to be co-ordinated to identify and meet the needs of vulnerable children and families. It highlighted the need for schools to have support systems in place for vulnerable pupils, including young carers. It also emphasised multi-agency support meetings to agree appropriate action. In

addition guidance (available since 1999) on "Managing Behaviour and Attendance: Groups at Particular Risk" highlights the particular needs of young carers.

Truancy

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the 10 schools in each local education authority with the highest rates of truancy. [46380]

Jacqui Smith: The Department does not collect figures on truancy. However school level information on unauthorised[1] absence (of which truancy forms a part) can be found in the 2005 Achievement and Attainment Tables website, primary schools can be found at the following address: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/performancetables/primary_05.shtml and secondary schools at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/performancetables/schools_05.shtml.

[1] Unauthorised absence includes other forms of absence such as lateness, holidays during term time not authorised by the school, absence where reason is not yet established and truancy. Truancy forms only one part of the unauthorised figures.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Design for Manufacture

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 253W, on Design for Manufacture, how many and what proportion of homes in each development will be sold at market rates; and how many will be available for *(a)* affordable rent and *(b)* shared equity. [47000]

Yvette Cooper: At this stage of the competition the actual numbers of affordable rent and shared equity homes that will be provided under Design for Manufacture are still subject to detailed negotiation between English Partnerships, developers and local authorities. Across the 10 sites it is anticipated that about 30 per cent. of all the homes will be affordable homes.

Provisional estimates of the total number of homes intended to be affordable on each site to date are listed as follows. However, English Partnerships are also in the process of negotiating the shared equity allocations, which may change these numbers:

Oxley Park, Milton Keynes, Phase 2 site, total number homes 145, of which 43 homes, or 30 per cent., will be affordable

Oxford Road, Former TA Centre, Aylesbury Vale, total number of homes 100, of which 30 homes, or 30 per cent., will be affordable

Upton, Northampton, Site D2, total number of homes 165, of which 36, or 22 per cent., will be affordable

Allerton Bywater Millennium Community, Leeds, Yorkshire, total homes 150, of which 30, or 20 per cent., will be affordable

School Road, Hastings, total homes 12—number of affordable homes to be determined

Horns Cross, Stone, Dartford, total homes 37, of which 11, or 30 per cent., will be affordable

Former Rowan High School site, Merton, London, total homes 210 of which up to 63, or 30 per cent., will be affordable (these figures update the estimated figures given to the hon. Member on 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1689W

Former Renny Lodge Hospital, London Road, Newport Pagnell, Bucks, total homes 60, of which 20, or 33% per cent., will be affordable

Former Park Prewett Hospital, Kingsclere Rd, Basingstoke, total homes 137, of which 47, or 34 per cent., will be affordable

Former Linton Hospital site, Maidstone, total homes 123, of which 43, or 35 per cent., will be affordable.

Fire Services

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 202W, on fire services, what assessment the Government have made of the expenditure by the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority on the fire control centre for London; and whether the Government made any additional payment to the Authority to finance the cost. [48159]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has made no specific assessment of the expenditure by the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) on the current London regional fire control centre. The ODPM has received 10 year expenditure forecasts from all 46 fire and rescue authorities in England (including London) for the costs of operating their control centres, which informs the business case for the FiReControl project. No additional payments were made by ODPM to finance the costs of the current London control centre.

Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether it is his policy to encourage the housing market renewal pathfinders in England to form themselves into limited companies; and if he will make a statement. [44608]

Yvette Cooper: Housing market renewal pathfinders are non-statutory partnerships and it is for each partnership to decide the governance arrangements which are best for its circumstances. There is therefore a variety of governance arrangements for pathfinders with which the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has been content to enter into funding agreements. At present these include one company limited by guarantee, for Elevate East Lancashire.

Local Government Finance

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many full-time equivalent staff worked within section LGF 3G—Council Tax Revaluation and Balance of Funding Review Analysis Branch in each year since its creation. [48048]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Two full-time equivalent staff worked within section LGF 3G—Council Tax Revaluation and Balance of Funding Review Analysis Branch—from its creation in September 2003 until the conclusion of the Balance of Funding review.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what work his Department's Local Government Finance Working Group on Local Government Financial Statistics has conducted on council tax revaluation in *(a)* England and *(b)* Wales; [48050]

(2) whether his Department has a Local Government Finance Working Group on Local Government Financial Statistics. [48155]

Mr. Woolas: The Working Group on Local Government Financial Statistics (WGLGFS) discussed council tax revaluation twice at recent meetings.

At the meeting held on 26 January 2005, a paper was presented by a representative of the Welsh Assembly Government on "Revaluation of council tax in Wales".

At the meeting held on 20 July 2005 an oral report was presented on "Data and timing issues associated with Council Tax revaluation and the Lyons Inquiry".

Papers and minutes of these meetings are published on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at: http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/stats/wglfs/index.htm .

Peter Luff: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what factors explain the reduction in the final financial settlement for 2006–07 to Worcestershire county council from the provisional figures; and what the percentage increase is between *(a)* 2005–06 and 2006–07 and *(b)* 2006–07 and 2007–08 for non-education services. [49657]

Mr. Woolas: There are a number of factors which explain the reduction of £19,692, or 0.03 per cent., in formula grant for Worcestershire county council between consultation and settlement. These are described briefly as follows:

(a) A 0.1 per cent. decrease in the 2005–06 Adjusted Local Education Authority Central Functions Formula Spending Share. This was due mainly to a downward revision of the control total for this service block which affected all relevant authorities. A smaller downward revision was also made to the teachers pay grant adjustment for Worcestershire.

(b) A further transfer of £12.269 million for the WEEE directive was added into the 2006–07 formula grant between Consultation and Settlement. In order to ensure a like-for-like comparison between 2005–06 and 2006–07, an adjustment of £11.974 million was made to the County-Level Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services Formula Spending Share in 2005–06. This led to a 0.3 per cent. increase for all authorities.

(c) A 0.1 per cent. decrease in the 2005–06 Adjusted Capital Financing Formula Spending Share due to a change in the methodology of adjusting for the Education SCE(R) programme which transferred to capital grant in 2006–07. The SCE(R)'s for Building Schools for the Future were excluded from this adjustment thereby increasing the 2005–06 Adjusted Capital Financing Formula Spending Share for those authorities that received a Building Schools for the Future SCE(R) in 2005–06, and decreasing the 2005–06 Adjusted Capital Financing Formula Spending Share for those authorities that did not receive a Building Schools for the Future SCE(R) in 2005–06, like Worcestershire.

The combined effect of the adjustments shown in *(a)* to *(c)* led to a decrease of £19,307 in the Adjusted Formula Grant for 2005–06.

(d) The number of pupils aged 3 to 18 increased by 7 pupils for Worcestershire between consultation and settlement due to the inclusion of pupils aged 16 and over on Form 8b. However as these had previously not been included for all authorities, this had a negligible effect on Worcestershire's Local Authority Central Education Functions Relative Need Formula.

(e) A further transfer of £12.269 million for the WEEE directive was added into formula grant. This increased all upper-tier authorities', including Worcestershire's, County-Level Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services Relative Needs Formula by approximately 0.3 per cent.

(f) A 0.2 per cent. decrease in Capital Financing Relative Needs Formula. At consultation, the Capital Finance Relative Needs Formula is calculated with provisional SCE(R) data and this is expected to change at settlement. Extra SCE(R)s were included in the calculation of the settlement that were not included at consultation. This results in a lower scaling factor for all authorities i.e. those authorities who see an increase in their SCE(R) allocation take a larger slice of the fixed control total so reducing the Capital Financing Relative Needs Formula for other authorities. Although Worcestershire did receive an increase in SCE(R) allocations at settlement, this increase was not enough to counter the reduction in Relative Needs Formula resulting from the reduced scaling factor.

(g) The changes to both the Adjusted 2005–06 Formula Grant and the 2006–07 Relative Needs Formulae, led in turn to changes in both the share of taxbase for authorities with education and personal social services responsibilities, and in the split between the Relative Needs Amount, the Relative Resource Amount and the Central Allocation blocks.

The combined effect of the changes shown in *(d)* to *(g)* led to a decrease in formula grant before floor damping of £10,880. The combined effect of the changes shown in *(a)* to *(g)* led to a decrease in formula grant after floor damping of £19,692.

In 2006–07 Worcestershire received an increase in Formula Grant of 3.8 per cent. on a like-for-like basis, after adjusting for changes in funding and function. However, we are also making Amending Reports for both 2004–05 and 2005–06 at the same time as the 2006–07 Settlement. Worcestershire's 2004–05 Amending Report Formula Grant was £1,007,385 less than the 2004–05 Settlement Formula Grant; Worcestershire's 2005–06 Amending Report Formula Grant was £196,583 less than the 2005–06 Settlement Formula Grant. Therefore the net change in Formula Grant for Worcestershire in 2006–07 is 2.0 per cent. Worcestershire is a floor authority: it receives £3,381,779 formula grant from the floor damping mechanism.

In 2007–08 Worcestershire received an increase in Formula Grant of 2.7 per cent. Again Worcestershire is a floor authority: it receives £2,958,439 formula grant from the floor damping mechanism.

Planning Policy Guidance

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what substantive changes to density regulations were introduced by the publication of Planning Policy Guidance 3 in 2000; and if he will make a statement on his proposals for reform of such regulations in the forthcoming Planning Policy Statement 3. [48055]

Yvette Cooper: Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: "Housing" (PPG3), published in 2000, introduced the objective into planning for housing policy that development should make the best use of land. It also introduced a policy that local planning authorities should avoid housing developments which make inefficient use of land (those of less than 30 dwellings per hectare net); encourage developments which make more efficient use of land (between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare net); and seek greater intensity of development at places with good public transport accessibility.

Draft Planning Policy Statement 3 "Housing" (PPS3), published for consultation in December 2005, maintains the Government's objective to make the most efficient use of land. It asks local authorities to develop density

policies having regard to Annex C of draft PPS3, which sets out indicative density ranges for different types of location, to help local planning authorities develop density policies for their plan area with local stakeholders and local communities. The presumption is that the minimum density of development should be no less than 30 dwellings per hectare.

Regulatory Reform Orders

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many regulatory reform orders his Department has laid before Parliament in each of the last five calendar years. [46807]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is tabled as follows:

Department	*RRO*	*Initial scrutiny start*	*Outcome*
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)	Housing: Private sector renewal	13 December 2001	Made
ODPM	Business Tenancies (England and Wales)	22 July 2002	Made
ODPM	Assured Periodic Tenancies (Rent Increases)	16 October 2002	Made
ODPM	Housing Management Agreements	4 November 2002	Made
ODPM	Schemes under Section 129 of the Housing Act 1988 (England)	10 March 2003	Made
ODPM	Fire Safety	10 May 2004	Made

Social Enterprises

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what additional help he is planning to make available to encourage social enterprises working with local authorities. [47801]

Mr. Woolas: The Government are preparing an action plan around social enterprise. Building on the many good examples of social enterprises working in partnership with local authorities to deliver local public services such as social housing, leisure services, community transport, regeneration and recycling, we are exploring how to widen the opportunities for the third sector in the delivery of local public services and the community ownership or management of local assets. We are also providing £300 million through a new Local Enterprise Growth Initiative which will provide many organisations and businesses, including social enterprises, with new opportunities for delivering local economic outcomes.

Standards Board

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 2239W, on the Standards Board, if he will place in the Library copies of the full text of each judgment. [48161]

Mr. Woolas: Judgments made in High Court cases are matters for the High Court itself, and not the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Questions about the dissemination of such judgments, including whether they should be placed in the Library of the House, would be for the Lord Chancellor to consider.

Statutory Instruments

John Bercow: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the statutory instruments introduced by his Office since 6 May 2005. [46205]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has introduced 45 statutory instruments since 6 May 2005. A list containing details of these statutory instruments has been deposited in the Library of the House.

	Statutory Instrument
2005 No. 1451	Housing, England The Housing Act 2004 (Commencement No. 3) (England) Order 2005
2005 No. 1509	Housing, England The Residential Property Tribunal (Right to Buy Determinations) Procedure (England) Regulations 2005
2005 No. 1541	Regulatory Reform, England and Wales The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
2005 No. 1552	Town and Country Planning, England The North Northamptonshire Joint Committee Order 2005
2005 No. 1635	Acquisition of Land, England; Compensation, England The Home Loss Payments (Prescribed Amounts)(England) Regulations 2005
2005 No. 1729	Housing, England The Housing Act 2004 (Commencement No. 4 and Transitional Provisions)(England) Order 2005
2005 No. 1735	Housing, England The Housing (Right to Buy) (Information to Secure Tenants) (England) Order 2005
2005 No. 1736	Housing, England The Housing (Right to Buy) (Prescribed Forms) (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2005
2005 No. 1903	Pensions, England and Wales The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations 2005
2005 No. 1917	Housing, England The Housing (Right of First Refusal) (England) Regulations 2005
2005 No. 1995	Housing, England The Housing (Right to Buy)(Designated Rural Areas and Designated Regions) (England) Order 2005
2005 No. 2004	Pensions, England and Wales The Local Government Pension Scheme and Management and Investment of Funds (Amendment) Regulations 2005
2005 No. 2032	Council Tax, England The Council Tax Limitation (England) (Maximum Amounts) Order 2005
2005 No. 2081	Town and Country Planning The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Commencement No. 5 and Savings) Order 2005
2005 No. 2085	Town and Country Planning The Town and Country Planning (Isles of Scilly) Order 2005
2005 No. 2087	Town and Country Planning, England The Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) (England) Order 2005
2005 No. 2115	Tribunals and Inquiries, England The Town and Country Planning (Major Infrastructure Project Inquiries Procedure) (England) Rules 2005
2005 No. 2416	Local Government, England The Local Authorities (Categorisation) (England) (No. 2) Order 2005
2005 No. 2518	Housing, England The Liverpool Housing Action Trust (Dissolution) Order 2005
2005 No. 2572	Urban Development The Thurrock Development Corporation (Planning Functions) Order 2005

	Statutory Instrument
2005 No. 2581	Local Government, England The West Lindsey (Parishes) Order 2005
2005 No. 2582	Local Government, England The Wellingborough (Parishes) Order 2005
2005 No. 2721	Urban Development The London Thames Gateway Development Corporation (Planning Functions) Order 2005
2005 No. 2847	Town and Country Planning, Wales The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Commencement No.6, Transitional Provisions and Savings) Order 2005
2005 No. 2863	Housing, England The Social Landlords (Additional Purposes or Objects) (Amendment) (England) Order 2005
2005 No. 2865	Council Tax, England The Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) (Amendment) (England) Order 2005
2005 No. 2866	Council Tax, England The Council Tax (Civil Partners) (England) Regulations 2005
2005 No. 2876	Housing, England The Housing (Right to Buy) (Prescribed Forms) (Amendment) (England) (No. 3) Regulations 2005
2005 No. 2908	Housing, England The Housing (Right to Buy) (Designated Rural Areas and Designated Regions) (England) (No. 2) Order 2005
2005 No. 2931	Local Government, England The South Bucks (Parishes) Order 2005
2005 No. 2935	Town and Country Planning, England The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 2005
2005 No. 2980	Fire and Rescue Services, England; Pensions, England The Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Amendment) (England) Order 2005
2005 No. 3069	Pensions, England and Wales The Local Government Pension Scheme (Civil Partnership) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2005
2005 No. 3199	Pensions, England and Wales The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2005
2005 No. 3208	Housing, England The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations 2005
2005 No. 3228	Fire and Rescue Services, England and Scotland; Civil Partnership, England and Scotland The Firefighters' Pension Scheme (Civil Partnership Amendments) (England and Scotland) Order 2005
2005 No. 3307	Housing, England The Approval of Code of Management Practice (Private Retirement Housing) (England) Order 2005
2005 No. 3323	Housing, England The Housing Renewal Grants (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2005
2005 No. 3326	Housing, England The Housing Renewal Grants (Prescribed Form and Particulars) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2005
2005 No. 3333	Rating and Valuation, England The Non-Domestic Rating Contributions (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2005
2006 No. 61	Local Government, England The Stratford-on-Avon (Parishes) (Amendment) Order 2006
2006 No. 69	Local Government, England The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2006
2006 No. 87	Local Government, England and Wales The Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) (Amendment) Regulations 2006
2006 No. 88	Local Government, England and Wales The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006
2006 No. 91	London Government ; Contracting Out The Transport for London (Best Value) (Contracting Out of Investment and Highway Functions) Order 2006

NORTHERN IRELAND

Adult Literacy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many adults in the province are deemed to be functionally illiterate, broken down by *(a)* Northern Ireland local Government district and *(b)* parliamentary constituency. [49389]

Angela E. Smith: Information relating to adult literacy levels in Northern Ireland is not available at local Government district or parliamentary constituency level.

The International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS), which was conducted in 1996, indicated that 2 per cent. of the adult population in Northern Ireland performed at the lowest level of literacy.

In response to the IALS report, the Department for Employment and Learning launched the Essential Skills for Living Strategy in October 2002 and has met its interim target of supporting 25,000 adults to improve their levels of literacy and numeracy by March 2005.

Asbestos-related Illness

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people died of an asbestos-related illness in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [48284]

Angela E. Smith: The table gives the number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland in each year between 2000 and 2004 where the underlying cause of death was recorded as mesothelioma[1] or 'asbestosis'[2].

[1] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision code C45 for years 2001–2004 and Ninth Revision codes 158.9 or 163.9 for year 2000.

[2] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes J61 and J92.0 for years 2001–04 and Ninth Revision code 501 for year 2000.

Number of registered deaths by year in Northern Ireland resulting from asbestos related illnesses (mesothelioma and 'asbestosis')

Registration year	*Mesothelioma*	*'Asbestosis'*	*Total*
2000	37	6	43
2001	54	9	63
2002	42	12	54
2003	46	9	55
2004	51	14	65

Belfast City Hospital (Radiotherapy)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many patients from *(a)* Northern Ireland, *(b)* the Irish Republic and *(c)* elsewhere have received radiotherapy treatment at Belfast City Hospital in each of the last six months. [49392]

Mr. Woodward: The number of patients from *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* the Republic of Ireland receiving radiotherapy treatment at Belvoir Park Hospital from July 2005 to December 2005 is shown in the following table:

	(a) Northern Ireland	(b) Republic of Ireland
July	266	0
August	261	0
September	284	0
October	306	0
November	272	0
December	274	3

Notes

1. No patients outside of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland received radiotherapy treatment.

2. Belvoir Park Hospital is part of Belfast City Hospital Health and Social Services Trust.

Source

Belfast City Hospital Health and Social Services Trust.

Brain Injury Unit (Castlereagh)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the work of the Reconnect-acquired brain injury rehabilitation unit in Castlereagh; how much funding the unit has received from Government in each of the last three years; and how much funding has been allocated to the unit for the next three years. [49391]

Mr. Woodward: Reconnect provide valuable rehabilitation support for people with acquired brain injuries.

I also understand that Reconnect has recently reshaped their service comprehensively and further developments are under way to expand the scope of the organisations activities via the person-centred, social inclusion reintegration model.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in conjunction with the Eastern Health and Social Services Board provided funding in 2004–05 and 2005–06 of £300,000. At present, no decisions have been taken on future funding.

Child Poverty in Northern Ireland

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what measures are in place to tackle child poverty in Northern Ireland. [47536]

Angela E. Smith: New Targeting Social Need (NTSN) is Northern Ireland's high level policy for tackling poverty and social exclusion by directing efforts and resources, within existing departmental programmes, towards people, groups and areas in greatest social need.

In line with a commitment of the previous Northern Ireland Executive, Government have recently reviewed its policy in this area, and in light of this, will soon announce its priorities for tackling poverty, including child poverty in Northern Ireland. In addition, the Children's and Young People's Unit of OFMDFM is also currently developing a 10-year strategy for children and young people. One of the high level outcomes will be linked to the reduction in child poverty.

Government already targets significant resources at tackling child poverty in Northern Ireland, for example working tax credit, and child tax credit, both provide financial assistance for working families on low incomes. In addition working tax credits also provide help for childcare, benefiting around 11,000 families with an average of around £58 per week.

In addition, Government are placing significant emphasis on initiatives that focus on the early years of life, such as the Sure Start and Book Start and the Pre-School Education Expansion Programme. Building on these initiatives, the Northern Ireland priorities and budget 2006–08, launched on 14 December 2005, established two new ring fenced priority funding packages—the children and young people, and the skills and science funds.

These funds, worth around £96 million over the next two years, will play an important role in giving children the best start in life, and tackling child poverty. Government will announce further details on these funds shortly.

Children (Strangford)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children resident in Strangford constituency travel outside the constituency to attend grammar school. [49388]

Angela E. Smith: In 2004–05, there were 3,111 pupils who were resident in the Strangford constituency and travelled outside the constituency to attend a grammar school.

Children's Commissioner

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost was of the Children's Commissioner for Northern Ireland in the last year for which figures are available. [45945]

Angela E. Smith: The cost of the Commissioner for Children and Young People's office for the financial year 2004–05 was £1.725 million.

Contraception

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many females *(a)* aged 16 and *(b)* 15 years or less have received contraceptive injections or implants in the Province in each of the last three years. [49399]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not available in totality due to contraceptive injections and implants being available from a number of health facilities where either the data are not collected centrally or are not collected in the age bands stipulated in the question.

The only contraceptive information collected centrally by age breakdown is for Family Planning Clinics. Please note contraceptive injections and implants are also available from general practitioners—information is only available on the number of prescriptions rather than the number of females and no age breakdown is available.

Both contraceptive injections and implants are available at specialist clinics such as Family Planning Clinics; this does not involve issuing a prescription. The available information for this service is the number of first attendances in each financial year for the age groups

under 16 and 16–19 by main method of contraception (see following table). Please note data are not yet available for 2004–05.

Number of first attendances in each financial year, 2001–02 to 2003–04

Main method of contraception	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Contraceptive Injections			
Under 16	33	35	17
Aged 16–19	391	515	407
Contraceptive Implants			
Under 16	6	3	2
Aged 16–19	60	72	77

Note:
The information is recorded in respect of the first visit during the financial year, therefore the figures equate to the total number of females attending these clinics during the year. The main method of contraception used refers to the method currently in use or to be started immediately after the consultation.

Day Case Procedures

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average cost of a hospital day case procedure was in each health trust in the Province in 2004–05. [49405]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not yet available. I will write to the hon. Lady with the information as soon as it is available and place a copy in the Library.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many day case procedures were conducted in 2004–05 in each health trust in the Province. [49408]

Mr. Woodward: The number of day case procedures[1] conducted at each health trust in Northern Ireland in 2004–05 are shown in the following table:

Number of day case procedures[1] carried out in surgical specialties by health trust for the year 2004–05

	Number
Mater Infirmorum	7,309
Belfast City	6,258
Royal Group	25,910
Green Park	3,575
UC&HT	15,170
Down Lisburn	6,705
United	15,301
Causeway	6,344
Craigavon Group	9,721
Newry and Mourne	3,542
Altnagelvin	15,006
Sperrin Lakeland	4,510
Total	119,351

[1] For the purposes of this question a day case procedure has been taken to mean a procedure undertaken within a surgical specialty, where the patient did not require an overnight stay.

Source:
Hospital Inpatient System

Dentistry

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to increase in-patient dental surgery provision in Northern Ireland for individuals with complex needs. [49400]

Mr. Woodward: The vast majority of patients with complex needs requiring dental treatment are treated as out-patients, either in a primary care setting or in a day procedure unit within a secondary care setting. A small number of these patients require to be treated as in-patients and across Northern Ireland as a whole, in-patient provision is considered adequate. There have been problems experienced in the Eastern Health and Social Services Board (EHSSB) recently in identifying adequate in-patient services for learning disabled patients requiring dental treatment under general anaesthetic. The Board has assured the Department that it will improve the in-patient provision available to patients from their area by identifying additional sessions in their area and, if necessary, securing in-patient services from the other Boards.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on access to NHS dentists in the Newry and Kilkeel area. [49320]

Mr. Woodward: I am satisfied with the level of dental provision in the Newry and Kilkeel area both in terms of availability and accessibility. The health service provides a full range of dental services through general dental practitioners, the community dental service and the hospital dental service. No one in that area should be unable to obtain health service dental treatment.

General dental practitioners are the main providers of dental services in Northern Ireland. There is approximately one general dental practitioner for every 2,400 people in Northern Ireland. This compares to one practitioner for every 2,773 people in England, Scotland and Wales.

The full range of dental services they provide is supplemented by the community dental service, operating under the control of health and social services trusts, which has a specific role in treating patients with learning difficulties and screening school children. The community dental service also acts as a 'safety net' in circumstances where the services of a general dental practitioner cannot be obtained. The hospital dental service provides specialist dental services.

Departmental Expenditure

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many widescreen televisions have been purchased by his Department for use in London Headquarters in each of the last five years; and what the cost was in each year. [39146]

Mr. Hain: The Northern Ireland Office has not purchased any wide screen televisions for its London Headquarters in the last five years.

Doctors (National Contract)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether staff grade and associate specialist doctors in the Province will be covered by a national contract for their grades. [49319]

Mr. Woodward: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety is currently not part of the formal negotiation process on a new contract for these doctors. However, officials from the Department attend

the negotiating meetings in an observer status. It is too early to say what the outcome of the negotiations will be and how it may impact in Northern Ireland.

Drug Treatment

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to extend services for the treatment of intravenous drug users in the Province. [49401]

Mr. Woodward: There are no current plans to extend services for the treatment of intravenous drug users. However the form, format and level of current services continue to be assessed, and the newly launched consultation document New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs in Northern Ireland 2006–2011 does contain proposals in respect of the commissioning and provision of such services.

East Londonderry (Employment)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken by Invest Northern Ireland to ensure viable long-term employment opportunities are being introduced to the East Londonderry constituency. [48530]

Angela E. Smith: Since it was set up in 2002, Invest NI has made offers of assistance in the constituency totalling £22 million which will lead to planned total investment in client companies of £61 million; this includes assistance towards a major investment by Seagate at its Limavady plant, which along with a further new investment at Seagate's Londonderry facility will provide 300 new jobs for the area. The agency has also assisted the establishment of over 700 new businesses in the constituency which have the potential to create more than 1,200 new jobs.

Invest NI is currently implementing an Action Plan for the North West of Northern Ireland, including the East Londonderry constituency. This Plan includes a series of actions to address constraints that are inhibiting business growth in the area. It includes actions to improve the area's business infrastructure, to improve levels of innovation and enterprise in local businesses, to increase the rate of new businesses and to attract inward investment to the area.

Invest NI is firmly focused on assisting its client companies become more competitive. In pursuing this objective, the agency's priorities are to help them become more entrepreneurial and innovative and more capable of operating in export markets. Ultimately, success in these areas will lead to more viable, long-term employment opportunities.

Invest NI is committed to maximising the economic development prospects for the East Londonderry constituency and opened an office in Coleraine during 2003 to help strengthen its links with local business interests.

Education (Admissions)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many of the responses to the recent consultation on new post-primary admissions criteria for Northern Ireland supported the retention of academic selection. [49357]

Angela E. Smith: In January 2004 the Government decided that academic selection in Northern Ireland would end after 2008. The consultation on new admission arrangements for post-primary schools invited comments on options for new admission arrangements which would operate following implementation of the Government's decision. The detailed analysis of the responses received focused on the strength of arguments put forward in support of, or against, the options described within the consultation document, and did not take the form of a statistical analysis of views received.

Energy Prices

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent representations he has received from *(a)* industry and *(b)* voluntary group representatives in Northern Ireland on energy prices. [48283]

Angela E. Smith: Representatives of the Federation of Small Businesses, the Confederation of British Industry (Northern Ireland) and the General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland have expressed ongoing concern about high energy prices in Northern Ireland at meetings with myself and officials in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment.

Specific representations have been received by my colleague the Minister with responsibility for the Department for Social Development from National Energy Action (Northern Ireland), the Transport and General Workers' Union and the General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland on the adverse impact that the high energy prices have on the level of fuel poverty in Northern Ireland. In addition, the Northern Ireland Fuel Poverty Advisory Group has reported the outcome of its discussions on energy prices to the Minister for Social Development.

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* religious and *(b)* gender composition is of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. [47669]

Angela E. Smith: A total of 137 are employed by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. 32 per cent. of the staff are male and 68 per cent. female. A breakdown by religion shows that 36 per cent. of the workforce are Protestant and 58 per cent. are Roman Catholic; 6 per cent. have been classified as 'non determined'.

Essential Skills in the Workplace

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2590W, on Northern Ireland Employer Champions, in which locations it has been possible to influence others to take action; what the response has been; how the profile of Essential Skills was raised in the press; which employer-focused events they attended; and how attendance at employer-focused events helped the Department to implement Essential Skills in the Workplace. [46461]

Angela E. Smith: Employer Champions are unpaid, informal appointments and as such the Department for Employment and Learning does not formally monitor their activities and the response to their work.

The Department is, however, aware that the Employer Champions contributed articles to the Belfast Telegraph, the Institute of Directors Newsletter and Business First to help raise awareness of Essential Skills in the workplace. Employer Champions also attended a briefing Seminar for Investors in People Advisers and Assessors, took part in a focus group meeting with other employers and Further Education Providers. They attended a Ministerial discussion which helped to influence the Employer strand of the Essential Skills Strategy.

Farming Households (Income)

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many farming households in Northern Ireland were living below the Government low-income threshold in each year since 1996–97. [49171]

Angela E. Smith: The sources of income for most farming households are varied and inevitably include many non-farm sources, such as other employment, investments and pensions. Although data are available on average agricultural incomes, there are no reliable data on farm household incomes or on the proportion of farm households that may lie below any given threshold.

However, data published by HM Revenue and Customs for 2003–04 indicate that there were 37,000 self-employed individuals assessed for tax in Northern Ireland who had at least one agricultural or horticultural source of income. Their average total income was £16,151, of which, 38 per cent. came from agricultural and horticultural activities.

Firefighters

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many part-time firefighters applied to become full-time firefighters in each Northern Ireland fire service station in each of the last five years; and how many of those applications were successful. [49106]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not held centrally, either within the Department or by the Fire Authority for Northern Ireland and will take time to prepare. I will write to the hon. Gentleman when the information becomes available.

First Responders

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many trained first responders there are in each district council area in the Province. [49318]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number and distribution of trained first responders is not held centrally. However, the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) is aware of the schemes set out in the following table. This should not be regarded as a comprehensive list of first responders.

Scheme	*Location*	*Council*	*Number of volunteers*
Public Access Defibrillation (PAD)[1]	North and West Belfast	Belfast	270 Lay People
	Antrim	Antrim	130 Lay People 24 PSNI
	Ballymena	Ballymena	155 Lay People 35 PSNI
	Magherafelt	Magherafelt	45 Lay People 23 PSNI
St. John Neighbourhood Responder Scheme	Islandmagee	Larne	31
Lifesavers West	Newtownbutler and Rosslea	Fermanagh	24
	Gortin and Plumbridge	Tyrone	10
	Park and Claudy	Londonderry	20

[1] Volunteers in this scheme are cardiac defibrillation trained responders and not fully trained first responders in the recognised meaning of the phrase.

There are approximately 300 volunteers trained in the use of automated external defibrillators by the Cormac McAnallen Trust in the West of the Province. It is understood that this group provide their services at local sporting venues.

Inpatient Procedures (Costs)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average cost of an elective inpatient hospital procedure was in each health trust in the Province in 2004–05. [49406]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not yet available. I will write to the hon. Lady with the information as soon as it is available and place a copy in the Library.

Lyons Inquiry

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1074W, on the Lyons Inquiry, if he will place in the Library a copy of the written submission. [48037]

Angela E. Smith: The Lyons Inquiry is independent of the Government. Sir Michael Lyons will decide what to publish when he makes available his final report.

Mental Health (Crisis Response)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to increase the number of crisis response mental health teams across the Province. [49355]

Mr. Woodward: Crisis response teams will be developed in line with the recommendations from the Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability and the Suicide Strategy.

Mental Health Review

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the final cost of the review of Mental Health and Learning Disability. [49354]

Mr. Woodward: The estimated final cost of the review is around £1.2 million.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the cost of the Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability to date. [49403]

Mr. Woodward: To date, just over £1 million has been spent on the Review

NHS Procedure (Costs)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average cost of an NHS hospital procedure was in each health trust in the Province in 2004–05 [49407]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not yet available. I will write to the hon. Lady with the information as soon as it is available and place a copy in the Library.

Operations

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average number of operations performed by a whole-time equivalent consultant surgeon was in each health trust in the Province in 2004–05. [49409]

Mr. Woodward: The average number of operations[1] carried out by a whole-time equivalent surgeon at each health trust in Northern Ireland in 2004–05 are shown in the following table. These figures do not take into account the patient casemix in each trust.

Average number of operations carried out by a whole-time equivalent surgeon in surgical specialties by health trust for the year 2004–05

	Number
Mater Infirmorum	1,440
Belfast City	1,021
Royal Group	1,095
Green Park	1,175
UC&HT	1,117
Down Lisburn	2,076
United	1,597
Causeway	2,136
Craigavon Group	1,357
Newry and Mourne	1,371
Altnagelvin	897
Sperrin Lakeland	806
Total	1,170

[1] For the purposes of this question an operation has been taken to mean a procedure undertaken within a surgical specialty whilst in hospital.

Source
Hospital Inpatient System

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many operations were performed in each health trust in the Province in 2004–05. [49410]

Mr. Woodward: The number of operations[1] performed at each health trust in Northern Ireland in 2004–05 are shown in the following table:

Number of procedures carried out in surgical specialties by health trust for the year 2004–05

	Number
Mater Infirmorum	10,726
Belfast City	17,826
Royal Group	59,112
Green Park	17,363
UC&HT	35,152
Down Lisburn	10,382
United	23,652
Causeway	10,084
Craigavon Group	18,114
Newry and Mourne	6,853
Altnagelvin	29,702
Sperrin Lakeland	8,057
Total	247,023

[1] For the purposes of this question an operation has been taken to mean a procedure undertaken within a surgical specialty whilst in hospital.

Source
Hospital Inpatient System

Over-80s

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people over the age of 80 years there are in Northern Ireland; and how many he estimates there will be in 2016. [49153]

Angela E. Smith: At mid-year 2004, the official estimate of the Northern Ireland resident population aged 80 years and over was 58,000 people. At mid-year 2016, the Northern Ireland resident population aged 80 years and over is projected to be 78,400 people.

Paediatric Cardiology

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to increase paediatric cardiology provision in the Province. [49398]

Mr. Woodward: I am committed to ensuring that safe, sustainable paediatric cardiology services continue to be available to patients in Northern Ireland.

The paediatric cardiology service is currently provided at the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children (RBHSC) by a team of three consultant cardiologists and support staff. There are currently no plans to increase paediatric cardiology provision in Northern Ireland.

Pathways to Work

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what assessment he has made of the Pathways to Work pilot programmes in Northern Ireland; and when the pilots are expected to finish; [48460]

(2) what criteria were used to decide where the Pathways to Work pilot programmes would be sited in Northern Ireland. [48461]

Angela E. Smith: Pathways to Work pilots began in Northern Ireland on 3 October 2005; it is, therefore, too early to undertake an assessment of their operation or effectiveness. In Northern Ireland the pilots are currently planned to run until March 2008. Interim evaluations will be carried out after 18 months of operation and full evaluations at a later stage. Indications from the Pilots in Great Britain, which began in 2003, suggest that Pathways is enjoying considerable success in stemming the on-flow to long term benefit dependency.

The following criteria were considered when selecting areas for inclusion in the Pathways to Work pilots

the existence of a joint work-focused service delivered through Jobs and Benefits Office in the pilot areas with sufficient available accommodation;

the need to match GB pilot coverage of annual on-flow to incapacity benefit (IB);

the need for wide coverage for evaluation purposes;

the need to target some "IB hot-spots" (i.e. where IB claims are high compared to ISA claims);

the need to avoid "initiative overload" in some areas; and

the capacity of partner organisations, mainly SSA and DHSSPS, to deliver new services in the selected areas within the required timescale.

It is planned to extend Pathways in Great Britain and Northern Ireland to cover 30 per cent. of annual fresh claims by October 2006. An announcement will shortly be made about the additional pilot areas in Northern Ireland.

Radiotherapy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the health trusts in the Province with mobile radiotherapy equipment. [49402]

Mr. Woodward: The Cancer Centre at Belvoir Park Hospital in Belfast provides all radiotherapy services in Northern Ireland. Radiotherapy treatment is provided by linear accelerators which are not mobile. There are no health trusts in Northern Ireland with mobile radiotherapy equipment.

Rates

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the Government's plans are for a phasing out of industrial de-rating in Northern Ireland; and what the average estimated increase is in non-domestic rates for an industrial business as a result. [49268]

Angela E. Smith: The phasing out of industrial derating, which was fully consulted on as part of the overall Review of Rating Policy, came into operation on 1 April 2005 when businesses entitled to industrial derating became liable for rates at 15 per cent. of their full rate assessment.

The percentage amount of the full rate liability payable in 2006–07 will be 25 per cent., in 2007–08 35 per cent., in 2008–09 50 per cent., 75 per cent. in 2009–10 and in 2010–11 with full rates becoming payable from 1 April 2011.

As with all new policies the Government will review the phasing out of industrial derating. In this case a reasonable period of time is considered to be two years from the date of implementation.

The average rate bill for properties entitled to industrial derating in 2005–06 is estimated at £2,290. Over the period of phasing out it is projected to be £3,990 in 2006–07, £5,840 in 2007–08, £8,710 in 2008–09, £13,660 in 2009–10, £14,270 in 2010–11 and £19, 890 in 2011–12.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the *(a)* value significant codes and *(b)* property attribute types the computer assisted mass appraisal system being used in the Northern Ireland rates revaluation has the capacity to store and evaluate. [49270]

Angela E. Smith: A full list of data fields relating to value significant codes and property attributes which are stored and evaluated by the Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal System being used in Northern Ireland will be placed in the Library.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate the Government have made of the *(a)* number and *(b)* proportion of households whose rates bills will (i) increase, (ii) decrease and (iii) remain the same under the planned rates revaluation and shift to discrete capital values. [49345]

Angela E. Smith: This cannot be determined until the Valuation and Lands Agency completes the revaluation process in the spring of 2006. A study published by the University of Ulster in 2003, using sales information, suggested that the proportion whose bills would decrease following the move to discrete capital based rating would be 61 per cent., while 39 per cent. would face an increased bill. The Department's own analysis supports these estimates and indicates that the proportion of properties which will experience a decrease in bill of more than 5 per cent. is 52 per cent., the proportion that will face an increase in bill of more than 5 per cent. is 35 per cent. and the proportion with no change in bill (that is, between + /- 5 per cent.) is 13 per cent.

This assumes overall revenues remain static. Furthermore the estimates do not allow for households which may qualify for housing benefit nor does it take into account the moderating impact of a three year transition scheme and any interim arrangements that may be considered for the treatment of district rates.

School Property (Community Use)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to encourage the use of school property in Northern Ireland for community activities outside school hours. [49397]

Angela E. Smith: The Children and Young People's Funding Package, which will come on stream in April, includes funding for extended schools. A key element of extended schools is the concept of after-school provision and the wider use of school premises by the local community.

Schools (Suspensions/Expulsions)

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many pupils have been expelled or suspended from schools in Northern Ireland for incidents relating to drugs in each of the last 10 years. [48885]

Angela E. Smith: The Department does not hold information on the reasons for suspension and expulsion for each of the last 10 years.

From the 2002–03 school year, statistics on the reasons for suspensions have been gathered annually from each education and library board and relate to the number of individual suspensions not to the number of pupils suspended. In 2002–03, data on substance abuse was combined with alcohol abuse, however in 2003–04 substance abuse was identified separately as shown in the table.

Suspensions

	Substance or alcohol abuse	*Substance abuse*
2002–03	426	—
2003–04	—	272

Suspension statistics in relation to 2004–05 have still to be fully analysed and I will write to the hon. Gentleman providing the details when they become available in March.

Reasons for expulsion were first collected in 2003–04. In 2003–04 data on substance abuse was combined with alcohol abuse, however in 2004–05 substance abuse was identified separately as shown in the following table.

Expulsions

	Substance or alcohol abuse	*Substance abuse*
2003–04	14	—
2004–05	—	10

Each year, data on suspensions and expulsions requested from the boards has become more comprehensive and, from the 2002–03 school year, the Department has been publishing this information on its website, www.deni.gov.uk

Sick Leave

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many of his Department's employees who are within one year of the official retirement age are on extended sick leave; [32594]

(2) when he will provide an answer to Question 32594, on Departmental employees, tabled by the hon. Member for Monmouth on 24 November 2005. [49835]

Mr. Woodward: There are currently no members of staff in the Northern Ireland Office who are within one year of the official retirement age and on extended sick leave.

Ulster Hospital (Development)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on development plans for the Ulster Hospital at Dundonald. [49395]

Mr. Woodward: Since a major redevelopment programme at the Ulster Hospital was announced in 2001 more than £38 million has been invested, including the construction of new Maternity and Renal Units. My Department has also recently approved an additional £62 million which will allow the Trust to complete Phase A of the redevelopment programme. The main feature of Phase A will be a new multi-story critical care block incorporating theatres, critical care unit, laboratories and sterile services. To facilitate this development and to ease car parking congestion on the site, a new 500-space terraced car park will be constructed. The car park is expected to be complete in early 2007 when work on the multi-storey block will commence.

The Trust has also been allocated £1.5 million to invest in conceptual design for the remainder of the hospital site. This includes the appointment of a specialist Exemplar Design Team which will design the new hospital complex and assist with the preparation of a business case that will provide the basis for approving the balance of the planned investment, estimated at £240 million.

Valuation and Lands Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland from which company the computer-assisted mass appraisal application was purchased by the Valuation and Land Agency; and what the total cost was of the contract and associated liabilities. [47899]

Angela E. Smith: The Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal application was purchased by Valuation and Lands Agency from a consortium of companies lead by ESRI Ireland Ltd. and including Almy Gloudemans Jacob and Denne, Noyalis Technologies and Causeway Data Communication Ltd.

The total cost of the contract signed with the consortium was £659,700 including first year annual liabilities in respect of systems support of £57,120.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what training *(a)* videos and *(b)* DVDs the Valuation and Lands Agency has produced for its staff and contractors in relation to (i) domestic and (ii) business rates (A) valuations, (B) revaluations and (C) computer-assisted mass appraisal. [47900]

Angela E. Smith: The VLA has produced no videos or DVDs in any of the above areas for its staff and/or contractors.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1082–3W, on the Valuation and Lands Agency, from which Government agency the staff are seconded. [48039]

Angela E. Smith: The two staff are qualified statisticians seconded from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, an Agency of the Department of Finance and Personnel.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Building on New Deal

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have found work as a result of Building on New Deal since its launch; whether his Department retained its target to get 600,000 people into work through the scheme; and if he will make a statement. [45216]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* In November 2004 we published a paper setting out our proposals to pilot Building on New Deal (BoND) in 11 Jobcentre Plus Districts. Since that announcement, we have undertaken detailed planning to ensure that the flexibilities set out in the BoND strategy paper can be fully tested.

We expect BoND to make a positive impact on the numbers of people helped into work but the Department does not have a fixed employment target for the pilots.

Child Poverty

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of children were living in poverty in each year since 1997. [43814]

Margaret Hodge: The seventh annual 'Opportunity for all' report (Cm 6673) sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and reports progress against a range of indicators. Detailed information about the number and proportion of children living in low income households is published in "Households Below Average Income 1994/95–2003/04", available in the Library. The threshold of below 60 per cent. contemporary median income is the most commonly used in reporting trends in low income.

The information requested is in the tables.

Number of children falling below 60 per cent. of contemporary median income. (Relative low income)

		Million
FRS (GB)	*Before housing costs*	*After housing costs*
1996–97	3.2	4.2
1997–98	3.1	4.1
1998–99	3.1	4.1
1999–2000	3.0	4.1
2000–01	2.7	3.8
2001–02	2.6	3.7
2002–03	2.6	3.6
2003–04	2.6	3.5

Source:
Family Resource Survey

Percentage of children living in households with income less than 60 per cent. of contemporary median income. Great Britain

FRS (GB)	*Before housing costs*	*After housing costs*
1996–97	25	33
1997–98	25	32
1998–99	24	33
1999–2000	23	32
2000–01	21	30
2001–02	21	30
2002–03	21	28
2003–04	21	28

Source:
Family Resource Survey

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of children in poverty were estimated to be living in the most disadvantaged areas in each year since 1997; and in which areas the remaining children living in poverty were resident. [43816]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available.

Detailed information about the proportion of children living in low income households is published in "Households Below Average Income 1994–95 to 2003–04", available in the Library. Information is sourced from the family resources survey (FRS), which does not allow for robust estimates below Government office region level. Information is not currently available which enables separate identification of households on the family resources survey by whether they live in disadvantaged areas. Information on deprivation for disadvantaged areas is available in the Office for Deputy Prime Minister's publication "The English Indices of Deprivation (2004)".

The seventh annual 'Opportunity for all' report (Cm 6673) sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and reports progress against a range of indicators, and includes seven communities indicators, which measure outcomes of those in deprived areas compared to the rest of the population.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether it is his policy to increase benefit entitlements to levels that guarantee all children are above the poverty line. [44252]

Margaret Hodge: The Government's strategy for tackling child poverty is based on:

work for those who can, helping parents participate in the labour market;

financial support for families, with more support for those who need it most, when they need it most;

delivering excellent public services that improve poor children's life chances and help break cycles of deprivation; and

support for parents in their parenting role so that they can confidently guide their children through key life transitions.

Our approach to tackling child poverty is therefore based on a wide range of different policies and is not solely about increasing benefit levels.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he makes comparisons of child poverty levels in the UK with levels in other developed countries; and if he will make a statement. [44733]

Margaret Hodge: International comparisons are important because we aspire to be among the very best performers in Europe on child poverty, on a par with countries such as Sweden and Denmark. A focus on income before housing costs, as adopted in our spending review 2004 target, supports this as this measure is used across other European Union countries.

'Measuring child poverty', published in December 2003, compares findings with our European Union counterparts. It showed that the UK had the highest child poverty rate in Europe in 1999 (29 per cent.), but

according to latest data for 2003, we are now closer to the EU average of (23 per cent.). European comparisons are made using data from the European Household Panel Study, and are not comparable with figures using the Family Resources Survey. Data from 2003 remains the most up to date as this was the last year that data was produced for the UK using this dataset. UK comparisons across Europe will be measured using the European Union Survey of Income and Living Conditions (EUSILC) from autumn 2006.

'Child Poverty in Rich Nations 2005', a UNICEF report on child poverty, highlights the progress we have started to make in halving child poverty by 2010 and eliminating it by 2020. By 2020, we want to be comparable to the very best countries in the world. Where the UK had a child poverty rate on the UNICEF measure of 15.4 per cent. in 2004, Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) had rates of less than 5 per cent.

All publications listed are available in the Library.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of children living in poverty in Castle Point in each of the last five years. [42911]

Margaret Hodge: Information on the number of children living in poverty is not available below regional level.

Council Tax (Pensioners)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether eligible pensioners will receive a £200 payment towards council tax in 2006–07. [47865]

Mr. Timms: The £200 age-related payment to help with council tax bills was for 2005–06 only. We have no current plans to make a payment in 2006–07. The Government keeps all tax and welfare policies under review and any changes are considered as part of the normal budget and spending review processes.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of pensioners in *(a)* England and *(b)* the UK who (i) are eligible and (ii) will claim the £200 one-off payment towards council tax in 2005–06. [47892]

Mr. Timms: We estimate around 6.2 million pensioners in England and 7.2 million in Great Britain will be eligible for the £200 age-related payment to help with council tax bills.

We expect almost all of the £200 age-related payments to be made automatically without the need for a claim because the Department can identify those entitled from existing administrative data.

Payments made in Northern Ireland are a matter for my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

Customer Management System Centres

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average number of days taken was *(a)* to call back and *(b)* from call back to interview date for each customer management system centre in the last period for which figures are available. [46882]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what the average number of days taken is *(a)* to call back and *(b)* from call back to interview date for each Customer Management System centre in the last period for which figures are available. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Our aim is to call customers back within 24 hours of the inbound call. The latest data we have available is for week ending 20 January 2006 where the average across all contact centres is 1 working day. The call back data for each CMS contact centre operating call-backs for the same period is listed in the table below:

Contact Centre	*Week ending 20 January 2006 time taken to call customer*
Blackburn	2 working days ahead
Bootle	Following working day
Bridgend	Following working day
Coventry	Following working day
Derby	Following working day
Dundee	Following working day
Garston	Following working day
Grimsby	Following working day
Halifax	Following working day
Hastings	Following working day
Lincoln	Following working day
Lowestoft	Same working day
Marton Mere	Following working day
Middlesbrough	Following working day
Newcastle	Following working day
Paisley	Following working day
Pembroke Dock	Following working day
Poole	Following working day
Sheffield	Following working day
Taunton	Following working day
Telford	Following working day
Torquay	Same working day

We do not routinely collect data on the number of days from first contact to completion of the work-focussed interview centrally. In my earlier reply to you, in response to PQ 34273, the data was collated over a sample period only from 16 September to 25 November 2005.

I hope this is helpful

Disabled People (Independent Living)

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress his Department has made in setting up the Taskforce for Independent Living referred to in "Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People"; when he expects it will issue its first report; and if he will make a statement. [49829]

Mrs. McGuire: The Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report "Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People" recommended that a Taskforce for Independent Living was established to develop imaginative new solutions and ways forward to actively promote independent living in a variety of ways.

An official from the Department of Health has already been appointed to the Office for Disability Issues to set up the taskforce and a scoping exercise is now under way. Proposals will be put to the ministerial group in spring 2006 and the taskforce will be established shortly afterwards. The timing of the first report will be confirmed once the taskforce has been set up.

Household Income

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the minimum income which a UK household needs to live on; and if he will make a statement. [41394]

Margaret Hodge: Our concerns about research on minimum income standards have been well documented. What people need to live on varies greatly depending on their needs and a range of factors. Different research methods tend to make different assumptions and generate a range of estimates.

There are a range of research methods such as budget standards, deprivation studies, expenditure studies and consensual studies that can be used to look at questions of absolute and relative adequacy of benefits. We look at all these research methods when assessing benefit levels although it is often difficult to draw strong conclusions as the results are sometimes contradictory.

In practice, when setting benefit rates other objectives such as the need to maintain incentives to work and the need to control public expenditure are also considered.

Poverty is wider than income alone. We have a comprehensive strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion. Our annual report 'Opportunity for All' sets out how we are tackling the problems faced by individuals throughout their lives. Monitoring low incomes is one part of a wider strategy for tackling the causes of poverty and social exclusion, not just the symptoms.

Housing Benefit

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the change in average processing time for housing benefit claims was in *(a)* Pathfinder and *(b)* non-Pathfinder areas in each of the last two years. [40886]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the following table.

Average processing times in days for all housing benefit claims

	2003–04	*2004–05*	*Change*
Pathfinder areas	51	54	+ 3
Pathfinder areas excluding Leeds[1]	53	46	-7
Non-Pathfinder areas	50	44	-6

[1] Leeds had problems with its software system in 2005 which had a negative impact on the processing times for 2004–05. The average housing benefit processing for all Pathfinders excluding Leeds is 46 days in 2004–05 compared to 53 days in 2003–04.

Notes:

1. The reported figures are for housing benefit claims and do not include council tax benefit claims. The processing times cover claims from tenants renting from a social landlord as well as those renting from a private landlord, so the large majority of these claims in Pathfinder areas will not be for the local housing allowance.
2. The reported averages are weighted averages (by new claim workload).

Source:

DWP administrative data, HBMIS.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1549W, on housing benefit, whether the evidence collected on work incentives as part of the local housing allowance evaluation will include evidence on *(a)* the level of income tapers and *(b)* the level of earnings disregards. [47190]

Mr. Plaskitt: The local housing allowance evaluation is collecting evidence on the level of income tapers and this will be included as part of the final evaluation.

The local housing allowance does not alter the level of earnings disregards and this is not part of the evaluation.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the merits of making participation in a rehabilitation scheme compulsory for incapacity benefit claimants who are drug addicts. [32049]

Margaret Hodge: We want to make sure that everyone in society has the opportunity to enter into employment including those who misuse drugs. We have been working towards this goal for some time. The progress2work initiative, which supports those who are recovering from drugs misuse into work, has now been rolled out across Jobcentre Plus. It delivers specialist support to help people find and sustain employment. So far, over 4,000 claimants on incapacity benefits have participated in the initiative.

Our assessment is that making participation in a rehabilitation scheme compulsory for incapacity benefit claimants who misuse drugs would be inappropriate. For drug and alcohol misuse, the most effective medical intervention is likely to be counselling/cognitive behavioural therapy, but neither route is going to be effective unless the patient willingly engages. Compulsory therapy with an unwilling participant is most likely to be ineffective.

Medical treatment can be agreed as part of a claimant's action plan. This is because an individual can volunteer to undertake treatment (whether of their own volition or by persuasion from a personal adviser) as happens in Pathways. However, for a health care professional to carry out a medical intervention, there must be patient consent. That consent must be informed consent, given freely. In law, consent given under duress is not given fully and freely and the fear of losing benefit could amount to duress. This means that we cannot sanction a claimant for not undertaking medical treatment if they decided they did not want to do it at any point in the process.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions he has had with the Department for Health on the potential effects of the expert patient programme on incapacity benefit reform; and if he will make a statement. [40916]

Margaret Hodge: Ministers from the Department for Work and Pensions have regular discussions with Health Ministers.

Relationships between the expert patient programme and incapacity benefit reform were considered in the development of our recently published Green Paper; "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work" and the, also recently published, Department of Health White Paper.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what estimate he has made of the cost of cutting the rates of short-term incapacity benefit for people under state pension age to the rates of jobseeker's allowance; and if he will make a statement; [41391]

(2) what estimate he has made of the cost savings from phasing out the higher rate of short-term incapacity benefit for people under state pension age for new claimants; and if he will make a statement. [41565]

Margaret Hodge: Proposal for reform have been set out in the Welfare Reform Green Paper and are subject to consultation.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps the Government are taking to provide people on incapacity benefit with *(a)* training, *(b)* rehabilitation and *(c)* counselling in order to get them back into work; and if he will make a statement. [46296]

Margaret Hodge: The Government has been piloting Pathways to Work for new Incapacity Benefit Claimants successfully for over two years now. In the Welfare Reform Green paper 'A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work', the Government committed to rolling out Pathways to Work nationally by 2008.

Pathways to Work gives a single point of access to the New Deal for Disabled People, Work Based Learning for Adults and other training courses. Pathways to Work also offers access to rehabilitation and counselling services in the form of Condition Management Programmes run by health professionals. These programmes typically include pain management and cognitive behavioural therapy.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on his Department's plans to reduce the number of people claiming incapacity benefit. [47667]

Margaret Hodge: We recently published our Green Paper, "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work". It lays out why we are proposing to help those people on incapacity benefit back to work and how we mean to achieve that goal. It is available in the Library.

Income Support

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the annual cost of income support for single parents who are not required to work due to the age of their children; and if he will make a statement. [44776]

Mr. Plaskitt: A person's status as a lone parent entitles them to claim income support until their youngest child reaches 16. Lone parents in receipt of income support are not required to seek work but do have to attend work focused interviews. The expenditure on income support for lone parents reduced from £4,937 million[1] in 1997–98 to £4,602 million[1] in 2004–05.

Since 1997 the number of lone parents getting income support has reduced by 22 per cent. The success of new deal for lone parents has been a major contributing factor to the increase in lone parent employment in every region, the reduction in the number of children in workless households and the reduction in child poverty.

[1] Figures are expressed in real terms (2005–06 prices), rounded to the nearest million and consistent with PBR 2005.

Jobcentres

Mr. McFall: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many applicants there have been for a crisis loan in the last six months in the JobcentrePlus offices in West Dunbartonshire; and how many calls from people applying for crisis loans have gone unanswered. [46641]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking how many applicants there have been for a crisis loan and how many calls from people applying for crisis loans have gone unanswered in the last six months in the Jobcentre Plus offices in West Dunbartonshire. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Crisis Loans in West Dunbartonshire were processed by both Clydebank social security office and Helensburgh Jobcentre Plus office. From 22 November, Crisis Loans continue to be processed by Helensburgh but the processing formerly undertaken in Clydebank moved to Inverness social security office. Inverness is not part of West Dunbartonshire.

Helensburgh handled 730 Crisis Loan applications in the six months from July to December 2005. From July 2005, until the processing of Crisis Loans ceased there on 21 November 2005, Clydebank handled 5071 applications.

Information on unanswered calls to the Crisis Loan service is not available. This is due to the nature of the telephony system in use at Helensburgh, and that formerly used at Clydebank.

Learning Disability

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what system is in place to monitor the numbers of people with a learning disability who are on benefit and using Jobcentre Plus employment programmes; and if he will make a statement. [47251]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking what system is in place to monitor the numbers of people with a learning disability who are on benefit and using Jobcentre Plus employment programmes. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as chief executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus monitors, collates, and reports on the numbers of customers with disabilities who use our services, including those claiming benefits and accessing employment programmes.

In doing this, we do not specifically monitor information on learning disabilities. However, when our advisers are identifying and addressing a customer's needs they record the individual's own definition of their disability on our labour market system. This cannot be extracted as monitoring information, but is used by advisers in subsequent discussions with the customer.

I hope this is helpful.

Lone Parents

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what assessment he has made of the impact on the rate of movement of lone parents into jobs of the outsourcing of new deal for lone parent provision; [44929]

(2) what the rate of movement was of lone parents into jobs *(a)* in London areas where provision for lone parents is outsourced and *(b)* other areas in the last 12 months for which figures are available; and what the rate was in those London areas prior to outsourcing. [44930]

Margaret Hodge: Multiple provider employment zones have been providing employment support to lone parents since April 2004. Single provider zones have been providing lone parent support since October 2003. In London employment zone areas, employment support is provided to lone parents through the zones rather than through NDLP. Outside London, lone parents in employment zone areas can choose whether to receive help through employment zones or NDLP.

Information on lone parent employment rates for employment zone areas is not available, either before or after the outsourcing of lone parent provision. This information is not available below Government Office regional level.

More than 423,000 lone parents have already been helped into work through NDLP and more than 4,200 jobs have been secured by lone parents through employment zones. Information on lone parent jobs secured through employment zones in the last 12 months, broken down by zone, is in the table.

Employment zones—lone parents into jobs 1 December 2004 to 30 November 2005

Location	*Jobs*
Multiple Providers	
Birmingham	371
Brent and Haringey	637
Glasgow	352
Liverpool and Sefton	380
Southwark	544
Tower Hamlets and Newham	282
Single Providers	
Brighton	18
Doncaster	195
Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland	100
North West Wales	25
Nottingham	75
Plymouth	6
Heads of the Valleys, Caerphilly and Torfaen	71

Note:
Data comparing employment zone job outcomes with NDLP job outcomes prior to outsourcing is not available.

Source:
Department for Work and Pensions Procurement Division.

An evaluation of employment zones is currently ongoing and analysis of data will examine the performance of employment zones in relation to selected Jobcentre Plus comparison sites. This analysis will examine performance by client groups including lone parents and we expect to complete this by the autumn and publish results by the end of the year.

Mr. Rooney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to publish evaluations of the impact on numbers of lone parents entering employment of *(a)* the work search premium, *(b)* discovery weeks, *(c)* in work credit, *(d)* extended schools child care pilots, *(e)* the in work emergency fund and *(f)* employment zones. [48297]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* Evaluation of the impact on the numbers of lone parents entering employment through a range of initiatives including the work search premium, the in-work credit and the extended schools child care pilots is ongoing and we expect to publish results in the autumn.

The in-work emergency fund (IWEF) is being evaluated as part of the evaluation of new deal plus for lone parents and we expect to publish this report in December. Early qualitative evidence on the IWEF will be available in the forthcoming report: 'Work Focused Interviews and Lone Parent Initiatives: Further analysis of policies and pilots' which will be published on the 16 February and will be placed in the Library. There are no plans to publish any assessment of discovery weeks.

Evaluation of employment zones is currently ongoing and analysis of data will examine the performance of employment zones in relation to selected Jobcentre Plus comparison sites. This analysis will examine performance by client group including lone parents. We expect to complete this by the autumn and publish results by the end of the year.

Three recent publications include qualitative analysis of lone parents' experience of employment zones and relevant information can be found in the following reports: Evaluation of the Single Provider Employment Zone Extension, DWP Research Report No.312, 2006, Chapter 6; Evaluation of Multiple Provider Employment Zones: Early Implementation Issues, DWP Research Report No.310, 2006, Chapter 7; Evaluation of Single Provider Employment Zone Extensions to Young People, Lone Parents and Early Entrants: Interim Report, DWP Research Report no. 228, 2005, Chapter 7, all of which are available in Library.

Mr. Rooney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the forecast cost is of introducing work-focused interviews every three months for lone parents whose youngest child is 14 and who have been on benefit for more than a year; [48298]

(2) how many personal advisers will be needed for work focused interviews *(a)* every three months for lone parents on benefit more than a year whose youngest child is 14 years and *(b)* every six months to all lone parents on benefit for more than a year. [48301]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* Quarterly work focused interviews were introduced in October 2005 for lone parents claiming income support (IS) with a youngest child aged at least 14. For lone parents who remain on IS until their youngest child reaches 16, this will involve a series of up to eight work focused interviews over a two year period, which is six more than under previous arrangements. The interviews aim to help as many lone parents as possible move into work, or closer to the labour market, before their child reaches 16 by providing information, advice and guidance on work opportunities and the range of help on offer.

We estimate a total expenditure of approximately £4.3 million on this initiative during 2005-06, £0.7 million of which represents the cost of an anticipated increased participation in new deal for lone parents resulting from the work focused interviews. It is too early to confirm allocations for 2006-07.

Potentially all Jobcentre Plus lone parent advisers could be involved in delivering these quarterly work focused interviews, but funding for the initiative is based on a planning assumption of the equivalent of an additional 65 full time staff for the period October 2005 to March 2006 or 130 for a full year.

Currently, lone parents who have been on income support for more than a year receive an annual work focused interview which provides information, advice and guidance on work opportunities and the range of help and support on offer. Results from these have shown that such interviews help lone parents think about work and many go on to prepare for it by joining new deal for lone parents.

In our Welfare Reform Green Paper: 'A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work', we set out our proposals to increase the frequency of interviews for lone parents on income support for more than a year to six monthly. This will build on the above success by providing additional opportunities for lone parents to meet with a lone parent adviser.

We are also proposing changes to our quarterly work focused interview regime which will now be widened to all lone parents on income support with a youngest child aged at least 11.

These proposals are currently out for public consultation and the delivery details are still being developed.

Lyons Inquiry

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department has sent a written submission to the Lyons Inquiry on local government finance. [47893]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department for Work and Pensions has not sent a written submission to the Lyons Inquiry on local government finance.

Pathways to Work

Mr. McFall: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the full Pathways to Work scheme will commence in April; and whether West Dunbartonshire will be included in this. [46642]

Margaret Hodge: In April 2006 seven more Pathways to Work pilots will start. The locations for these have been chosen to reflect the highest proportion of new claims. The April 2006 pilots will be:

Barnsley, Rotherham and Doncaster; City of Sunderland; County of Durham; Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire; Liverpool and the Wirral; Greater Manchester Central; Swansea Bay and West Wales.

In the Welfare Reform Green paper 'A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work', the Government committed to rolling out Pathways to Work across the whole of the United Kingdom by 2008.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the funding per person on the Pathways to Work programme for each person entitled to access the programme for each year from 2000-01 to 2008-09; and if he will make a statement. [46874]

Margaret Hodge: The latest estimate for the average funding per person on the Pathways to Work programme, for each person entitled to access it, is around £400, excluding the return to work credit.

The Pathways to Work programme pilots began in October 2003 and costs per person vary from claimant to claimant, depending on the different components available within the Pathways package taken up. We do not expect the cost of these components to change markedly in future years, in real terms.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average cost per participant was in Pathway to Work pilots since their introduction. [47009]

Margaret Hodge: The latest estimate for the average cost of the funding per person on the Pathways to Work programme is around £400, excluding the return to work credit.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average cost to his Department has been of a participant in the Pathway to Work pilots since the scheme was introduced. [49366]

Margaret Hodge: The latest estimate for the average cost of the funding per person on the Pathways to Work programme is around £400, excluding the return to work credit.

Pensions

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what options other than bank or building society accounts pensioners will be able to choose for receipt of pensions after 2010. [49618]

Mr. Plaskitt: We expect that there will always be a small number of people who we are unable to pay into an account. These customers are paid by DWP cheque which can be cashed at post office branches. In addition, we will continue to monitor wider developments in the banking industry as more efficient and secure ways of paying customers become available. Within this, there will be opportunities for Post Office Ltd. and others to provide payment services.

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the final version of the Contracting Out Regulations (The Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations) will be published. [48098]

Mr. Timms: Most of the amendments in the draft Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations are connected to, and dependent on, changes in the Finance Act 2004 and will be taken forward in an HM Revenue and Customs Order. The remaining amendments will be included in a miscellaneous set of DWP regulations. It is planned that both statutory instruments will be made by mid-March and will come into force on 6 April 2006.

Pensions Protection Fund

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will make a statement on the operation of the Pensions Protection Fund to date; [48609]

(2) how many applications to the Pensions Protection Fund have been received to date. [48610]

Mr. Timms: The Pension Protection Fund became operational on the 6 April 2005. It will pay compensation to members of eligible non money purchase pension schemes where an employer becomes insolvent and the scheme is unable to afford to pay benefits at the level of PPF compensation.

The Board will produce an annual report and set of accounts for its activities in respect of each financial year, which the Secretary of State will present to Parliament.

To date, there are 40 schemes in an assessment period for the Fund, accounting for over 21,500 scheme members.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he last met Ministers from the *(a)* Treasury and *(b)* Department of Trade and Industry to discuss (i) financial inclusion and (ii) the future of the Post Office Card Account. [48733]

Mr. Plaskitt: I, my ministerial colleagues and officials have regular discussions with HM Treasury and the Department of Trade and Industry about a range of issues, including the Government's wider financial inclusion agenda and the Post Office Card Account.

Workplace Accidents and Health Report

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2060W, on workplace accidents and health report, when he will place in the Library the data for 2003–04. [49698]

Mrs. McGuire: The Commons Library has confirmed that the information requested by the hon. Member was deposited when I gave my written reply to his original question, 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2060W.

HEALTH

Ambulance Service

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has given to the ambulance service on the passing on of information to the police relating to call-outs involving drugs. [43853]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 19 January 2006]*: The Government's 2001 response to the advisory council on the misuse of drugs report into drug related deaths said that:

> "An emergency call to a person who has overdosed should be viewed by the ambulance and police services as a medical emergency in the first instance. Ambulance controls should not as a matter of course inform the police when called to a drugs overdose but might do so if the original call indicated some risk to the safety of the ambulance crew, difficulty in access or other unusual circumstances. Additionally, when the original call indicates that the patient might be dead or the paramedic finds that to be the case on attendance, it is reasonable to expect that the police would be informed immediately.
>
> Local policy along these lines should be agreed through the Drug Action Team".

In addition, the Joint Royal Colleges Ambulance Liaison Committee (part funded by the Department) national clinical practice guidelines set out that overdoses from, or use of, illegal drugs would not warrant ambulance crews to provide a lesser level of patient confidentiality than any other health condition. Only when drug use is compounded by situations such as sudden or suspicious death would it be appropriate to override the duty of confidentiality.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of emergency ambulance coverage in *(a)* Forest of Dean constituency and *(b)* Gloucestershire. [48809]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 6 February 2006]*: Each ambulance service should plan to provide appropriate resources to meet local demand. This may include resources in addition to traditional ambulance provision, for example in using rapid response vehicles and motorbikes, as well as utilising staff such as community paramedics or emergency care practitioners. The fleet mix will vary across the country depending on operational and geographical requirements. Patients who need a traditional ambulance response will continue to receive one.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the adequacy of resources available to the Gloucestershire Ambulance Service NHS Trust. [48810]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 6 February 2006]*: Revenue allocations are made direct to primary care trusts (PCTs) and not to national health service trusts. The PCTs in Avon, Gloucester and Wiltshire received an average increase of 30.5 per cent. over the last three years, which is sufficient to ensure all parts of the local health services have sufficient resources. Decisions on how the resources are used is for local discretion.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the financial situation of the Gloucestershire Ambulance Service NHS Trust. [48811]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* Gloucestershire Ambulance Service National Health Service Trust is forecasting a breakeven position for 2005–06 at the mid-year point (month six).

The forecast out-turn position for 2005–06 month six, for all NHS organisations (strategic health authorities, primary care trusts and NHS trusts), is available in the Library and is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/fs/en

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many ambulances in *(a)* Gloucestershire and *(b)* the Cotswolds (i) there were in 2000, (ii) there were on the latest date for which figures are available and (iii) are projected in the current three year plan. [47519]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Each ambulance service should plan to provide appropriate resources to meet local demand. This may include resources in addition to traditional ambulance provision, for example in using rapid response vehicles and motorbikes, as well as utilising staff such as community paramedics or emergency care practitioners. Patients who need a traditional ambulance response will continue to receive one. The fleet mix will vary across the country depending on operational and geographical requirements.

Aylesbury Vale PCT

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the policy implications for her Department of the growth in population in Aylesbury Vale. [39672]

Caroline Flint: In relation to the policy on allocating revenue funds to primary care trusts (PCTs), ensuring that a robust population base is used to allocate funds is a primary consideration.

The revenue allocations for 2006–07 and 2007–08, announced in February 2005, are based on Office for National Statistics (ONS) population projections. These data are the best available population data, which properly take account of growing populations.

In addition, in conjunction with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), a "Growth Area Adjustment" was included in the 2006–08 revenue allocations for designated ODPM growth areas. This adjustment supports those PCTs that will experience considerable population growth as a direct consequence of additional housing development in the growth areas. The Vale of Aylesbury PCT received a growth area adjustment within its 2006–08 revenue allocation. This adjustment is based on the additional increase in population, over and above ONS figures, that is due to the Government initiative.

Childhood Vaccinations

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list vaccinations routinely given to infants. [48260]

Caroline Flint: This information is available on the Immunisation for Life's website at: www.Immunisation.nhs.uk/article.php?id=97.

Clinical Services

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information she collects on the extent to which provision of clinical services is outsourced or undertaken by private sector or community sector partners; and in which *(a)* primary care trusts and *(b)* NHS trusts (i) clinical services and (ii) management is provided other than by directly employed staff. [45452]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 25 January 2006]:* The annual financial returns of national health service trusts, primary care trusts and health authorities show the total expenditure on services provided by all non-NHS bodies, including local authorities, other statutory bodies, and the independent sector.

Contract and activity monitoring information is collected on the centrally procured independent sector elective and diagnostic treatment programmes.

Continence Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment she has made of progress by NHS and social care organisations in developing integrated paediatric continence services; [34827]

(2) what discussions her Department has had with the Department for Education and Skills concerning the implementation of the National Service Framework for Children in respect of paediatric continence services. [34829]

Mr. Byrne: The assessment of availability and access to effective, and quality led health care, and the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, form a part of the Healthcare Commission's duties. The national service framework (NSF) for children provides a standard for determining progress with establishing integrated community-based paediatric continence services, by reference to a continence "Essence of Care" best practice tool. The Department has regular contact with the Department for Education and Skills on the means by which children who have health care needs may be supported in schools and early years settings, as part of achieving the goals of the NSF. The Department has also funded the voluntary organisation Promocon to draft guidance for the use of schools, relating to children with continence problems.

Crack Cocaine

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many crack cocaine users are in tier four residential drug services. [47718]

Caroline Flint: In 2004–05, 511 individuals were reported to the national drug treatment monitoring service in tier four treatment with the main problem drug of crack cocaine. Of these, 115 were in inpatient treatment and 396 were in residential rehabilitation. In the same year, 969 people were reported in tier four treatment with crack as their secondary drug of use—368 in inpatient treatment and 601 in residential rehabilitation.

Darent Valley Hospital

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons venereal disease treatment at Darent Valley Hospital has been reduced; and if she will make a statement. [43261]

Caroline Flint: Primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible for providing sexual health services which meet the needs of their local populations, and decisions about the level of services will be agreed in the context of other health priorities.

I understand from inquiries made with Kent and Medway strategic health authority that some short-term changes have been introduced at the Darent Valley Hospital clinic, but that services are being managed in a way that minimises any impact on the public.

In planning the local delivery of services, PCTs must work towards the targets to improve access to genitourinary medicine (GUM) and reducing sexually transmitted infections set out in the public health White Paper. The Department is allocating £145 million nationally to PCTs to improve access to GUM services. Sexual health has now been identified as one of the top six priorities for the national health service in 2006–07.

Drug Treatment Programmes

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many Government employees are involved in delivering treatment for abuse of illegal drugs. [47724]

Caroline Flint: The Government do not employ staff in drug treatment directly.

The National Treatment Agency reported that the number of people working in the drug treatment sector in England has increased from 6,794 in March 2002 to 10,106 in September 2005. These are employed by the national health service and a range of voluntary sector agencies.

Drug Users

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding has been available in each of the last five years for the treatment of problem drug users. [44117]

Caroline Flint: The Department and the Home Office have combined the funding provided centrally for drug treatment. Known as the 'pooled treatment budget', this money is allocated to the 149 drug action teams (DATs) across the country. This budget has increased from £142 million in 2001–02 to £300 million in 2005–06.

The pooled treatment budget allocation since 2001 is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Pooled treatment budget allocation, 2001–02 to 2005–06

	Amount (£ million)
2001–02	142
2002–03	191
2003–04	236
2004–05	253
2005–06	300

The 149 DATs also receive funding from the local organisations that form part of the DAT. This includes primary care trusts (PCTs), local authorities (LAs), strategic health authorities (SHAs) and probation services. The National Treatment Agency monitors how this money is spent.

In addition to this investment a substantial amount of mainstream funding is made available. Estimates of these amounts for the past five years are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Estimated funding, 2001–02 to 2005–06

	Amount (£ million)
2001–02	145
2002–03	131
2003–04	200
2004–05	[1]204
2005–06	[1]208

[1] Local funding increases based on two per cent. inflation increase.

In addition to the money spent directly on delivering treatment, central and local government funding is also spent on improving access to treatment and supporting drug misusers after they come out of treatment, for example social services aftercare and supporting people grant.

GM Safety Research

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what Government-funded studies were carried out to ascertain the safety of genetically modified products intended for animal or human consumption since 1999; what the cost to public funds of such studies were; and what steps she plans to take as a result of these studies; [47560]

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the Government-funded feeding studies designed to ascertain the safety of GM products intended for animal or human consumption which have been undertaken since 1999; what the cost to public funds has been of such studies; and what action to safeguard public health she plans to take as a result of such studies. [48681]

Caroline Flint: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has commissioned work under three research programmes relevant to the safety of genetically modified (GM) foods. The current programme began in 2005 and aims to ensure that the most up to date scientific knowledge is used in the mandatory safety assessment of GM and other types of novel foods. Prior to April 2000, food safety research was the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF). The cost of the research funded by MAFF and the FSA into issues related to GM food safety during 1999 to 2005 was £9.72 million.

Four of these projects involved experiments where ingredients from GM plants were fed to human volunteers or farm animals in order to examine the fate of the deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) present in the plant material. The cost of these projects from 1999 onwards was £0.62 million.

Details of the individual research projects are presented in the annual reports of the FSA's research and surveys programmes, which are available in the Library, and also from the FSA's website. The results have provided reassurance that the most up to date science is applied to the safety assessment of GM foods, and they lay the foundations for the possible application of new technologies such as proteomics in the future. No action is planned on the basis of this research.

GP Practices (Uxbridge)

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioner practices there are in the Uxbridge constituency; and what the average number is of patients registered with a practice in Uxbridge. [46596]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not hold this information in the format requested. However, figures for the average number of registered patients per general practitioner practice for Hillingdon primary care trust as at September 2004 is shown in the table.

Average number of registered patients per general practitioner practice for Hillingdon primary care trust, as at 30 September 2004

	Numbers (headcount)
SAT Hillingdon PCT	
Registered patients	259,010
GP practices	53
Average number of patients per practice	4,887

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

Late Payments

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1671W, on late payments, if she will make an assessment of the effect of late payments on small and medium sized firms; what guidance she has given to NHS professionals regarding this; and if she will make a statement. [46369]

Mr. Byrne: NHS professionals are required to comply with the Confederation of British Industry's Better Payment Practice Code (BPPC) target of paying 95 per cent. of undisputed invoices within contract terms or 30 days where no terms have been agreed.

In 2004–05, NHS professionals exceeded this target, paying 97 per cent. of its bills on time. We have made no assessment of the effect of late payments on small and medium sized firms.

Meat (Labelling)

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether meat that is reared abroad but processed in the UK may be labelled British. [47600]

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether meat that is reared abroad but processed in the UK may be labelled British. [47608]

Caroline Flint: The Trade Descriptions Act 1968 defines country of origin as the country in which a food last underwent a treatment or process resulting in a substantial change. Therefore, products made from meat that has been processed in the United Kingdom can be labelled as British. However, the Food Standards Agency has issued best practise guidance which recommends that where a product is declared to be British, but the meat originates outside of Britain, this should be made clear on the label.

Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what recent estimate she has made of the number of people diagnosed with myalgic encephalomyelitis in England; and how this estimate is made; [46618]

(2) what definition her Department uses of myalgic encephalomyelitis; [46619]

(3) what funding has been allocated by the Government for research into myalgic encephalomyelitis in the last 10 years. [46620]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not collect the information requested on the number of people diagnosed with myalgic encephalomyelitis in England. The report of the independent Chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME) Working Group, published in January 2002, estimated, on the basis of results from a number of small-scale studies, a population prevalence of around 0.2 per cent. to 0.4 per cent. in adults and around 0.07 per cent. in children.

CFS/ME is the accepted umbrella term for patients experiencing a combination of variable and overlapping symptoms. While there is no universal definition of CFS/ME, the widely used ones all require significant fatigue and a set of attendant symptoms for at least six months.

On funding for research into myalgic encephalomyelitis, I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 15 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 501–02W.

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many meetings officials from her Department have had with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to discuss Herceptin. [45359]

Jane Kennedy: Departmental officials have had no specific meetings with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to discuss the drug Herceptin.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many meetings her Department has had with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to discuss the appraisal of drugs to treat Alzheimer's disease in the last year. [45360]

Jane Kennedy: Departmental officials have had no specific meetings with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to discuss drugs for Alzheimer's disease. The progress of this appraisal has been discussed on a number of occasions within the context of NICE'S wider work programme and as part of regular communications between the Department and NICE.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many meetings *(a)* she and *(b)* her Ministers have had with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence in the last 12 months to discuss approval of Herceptin. [45361]

Jane Kennedy: The Secretary of State and departmental Ministers have had no specific meetings with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to discuss the drug, Herceptin.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many meetings Ministers in her Department have had with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence in the last 12 months to discuss the prescribing of drugs to treat Alzheimer's disease. [45362]

Jane Kennedy: Ministers have had no specific meetings with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to discuss drugs for Alzheimer's disease in the last 12 months.

NHS Confederation

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding has been provided to the NHS Confederation from *(a)* her Department's budget and *(b)* the NHS budget in each financial year since 1997–98. [31011]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested for years 2001–02 is shown in the table. Information before 2001–02 could be supplied only at disproportionate cost. The increased amount paid in 2003–04 and 2004–05 reflect the transfer of activities from the Department of Health.

Central payments to the national health service Confederation by the Department of Health

Account name	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	£ *2004–05*
The NHS Confederation	299,685	60,420	759,741	1,864,666
NHS Confederation Project Company	0	544,139	1,065,665	1,663,516
NHS Confederation Trading Company	333	0	0	0
The NHS Confederation Trading	0	0	30,795	0
NHS Confederation (Employers)	—	—	—	2,763,803
Total	300,018	604,559	1,856,200	6,291,985

NHS Finance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 732W, on NHS finance, what expert advice was provided to NHS trusts forecasting a deficit prior to her written statement of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS, on NHS finance, that turnaround teams were being established. [44931]

Mr. Byrne: Strategic health authorities (SHAs) are responsible for delivering overall financial balance for their local health communities, and for ensuring that each and every body achieves financial balance. It is for SHAs to determine how best to support their local organisations to achieve this objective. This includes the provision of expert advice. Details on how SHAs have managed their local organisations is not held centrally.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 732W, on NHS finance, with which companies her Department has contracted to provide turnaround support. [45481]

Mr. Byrne: The turnaround teams were announced by the Secretary of State in a written ministerial statement on 1 December 2005. The teams will comprise of experts with a mix of commercial and national health service turnaround skills.

The first stage of this is a baseline assessment, the aim of which is to ensure there is an agreed understanding of the local financial problem and that actions are in hand to address this.

The contract for the baseline assessment was awarded to consultants KPMG. The consultants Ernst and Young were subcontracted by KPMG to undertake a small number of assessments to avoid potential conflicts of interest.

After the baseline assessments are complete a tailored package of turnaround support will be agreed by the local NHS.

Obesity

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, columns 2742–43W, on obesity, what progress has been made in setting up the national partnership of obesity; and if she will make a statement. [32307]

Caroline Flint: Over the coming months, the Department will explore with relevant non-governmental organisations how it could support the establishment of a national partnership for obesity. As set out in the Choosing Health White Paper, the objective will be to promote practical action on the prevention and management of obesity and provide a source of information and evidence of effectiveness.

Operations

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the potential impact of primary care trust debt on the carrying out of routine hospital operations. [44835]

Mr. Byrne: All national health service organisations have minimum standards of quality they must deliver, including meeting targets for maximum waiting times. These are dramatically better than the standards of the NHS in the past and there can be no trade-off between these quality standards and removing deficits.

Prescriptions

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what percentage of NHS prescription items issued by general practitioners were repeat prescriptions in 2004–05; [45885]

(2) what estimate she has made of the percentage of NHS patients who received more than 14 prescription items over the last 12 months who had bought a 12 month prescription prepayment certificate. [45886]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not readily available from data available to the Department. Information on prescriptions from the Prescription Pricing Authority does not link individual patients to prescriptions dispensed. Therefore it is not known how many prescription items were repeat prescriptions or how many prescription items patients received.

Public Health

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what public health campaigns her Department *(a)* is running, *(b)* has announced and plans to start in 2006 and *(c)* has promised but not yet announced a start date for. [44923]

Caroline Flint: The Department is currently running tobacco education, drug prevention (FRANK, jointly with Home Office and the Department for Education and Skills) and 5 a Day public health campaigns. The Department has also announced plans for a sexual health campaign to start in 2006, and to launch a long-term obesity social marketing programme in the autumn of 2006. Its focus will be on providing the general public with the necessary information and support to lead healthier lifestyles in relation to diet and physical activity, and has promised but not yet announced a start date for a campaign on alcohol harm reduction.

Sexual Health

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people under 16 years have attended a sexual health clinic in *(a)* West Lancashire and *(b)* Lancashire in the last year for which figures are available. [45096]

Mr. Byrne: The number of new episodes of selected diagnoses (chlamydia, syphilis, gonorrhoea, herpes and warts) in the under 16 age group seen in genitourinary medicine clinics in Cumbria and Lancashire strategic health authority for 2004 is 85.

The data contains the number of new diagnoses and not the number of people attending. The latter is not collected centrally.

Smoking Ban

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of public houses in the Hammersmith and Fulham constituency likely to be exempt from a smoking ban under the provisions of the Health Bill; and what assessment she has made of the likely impact of the Health Bill on health inequalities within the Hammersmith and Fulham constituency. [45290]

Jane Kennedy: The Health Bill has not been assessed on the basis of its likely impact on the constituency of Hammersmith and Fulham nor on any other individual constituency. No estimate has been made of the number of public houses in Hammersmith and Fulham in this context.

A partial regulatory impact assessment for the Health Bill has been published and is available in the Library.

TB Vaccinations

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reason it is her policy not to make TB vaccinations available to children or adults who might be in contact with cattle diagnosed with bovine TB. [33785]

Caroline Flint: There are approximately 1 per cent. of human tuberculosis (TB) cases attributed to M. bovis each year. Most of these cases are reactivated disease in older adults who were infected perhaps decades ago or are due to more recent infections contracted abroad.

The strict policy of testing cattle for TB infection combined with meat inspection and pasteurisation of milk and milk products has dramatically reduced the risk from bovine TB. While transmission of tuberculosis from cattle to humans is possible, it is extremely rare. There has been no reported case of transmission of bovine TB from cattle to a child in England and Wales since the Health Protection Agency national reporting system MycobNet began in 1993.

In the event of children coming into contact with cattle with tuberculosis the general principles for contact tracing are the same as for contacts of a human case of tuberculosis and should be limited to close contacts likely to have had significant exposure to infection. Bacillus Calmette-Guerin vaccination may be offered to previously unvaccinated tuberculin negative children who have been exposed to cattle with tuberculosis.

Walk-in Centres

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have been treated at NHS walk-in centres in each year since their inception; and if she will make a statement. [46314]

Mr. Byrne: There are now 72 national health service walk-in centres open and a further 17 in development. Since the first NHS walk-in centre opened in 2000, the number of visits has increased each year, which is shown in the table

NHS walk-in centres, 2000–01 to 2004–05

	Total number of visits
2000–01	574,000
2001–02	1,143,000
2002–03	1,372,000
2003–04	1,582,000
2004–05	2,068,000

Source:
Department of Health.

NHS walk-in centres focused on serving commuters are beginning to open with newly opened centres near Liverpool Street station in London and Piccadilly station in Manchester. The Government's White Paper, "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services" published on 30 January 2006 highlights that NHS walk-in centres already provide easy access to a range of primary care services and commits to further expansion of these services, according to local need.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made of the financial impacts of extending the working time directive to junior doctors. [47335]

Mr. Byrne: The European working time directive (WTD) is health and safety law. The Government negotiated an extension to the WTD for doctors in training to enable phased implementation from August 2004. Actual costs of the financial impact of extending the working time directive to doctors in training are not held centrally and could not in any case be separated from the overall cost of the national health service growth and modernisation.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 8 February 2006

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Cleaning Staff

Mr. Doran: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will make a statement on the progress being made in settling the dispute between the House's cleaning contractors and their employees. [49196]

Nick Harvey: I am pleased to report that a settlement has now been reached in the dispute between the House's principal cleaning contractors, MITIE, and their employees. I understand that this involves an increase from 1 March in the basic hourly rate of pay to £6.10. Employees will be entitled to 20 days paid holiday, plus the eight statutory holidays, and five days sick pay after a standard qualifying period. There will be a further rise in the basic rate in October 2006. The two parties have agreed to work together within the terms of the current contract to seek to identify further efficiency savings acceptable to the parliamentary authorities, with the aim of funding a further rise in the basic hourly rate to £6.70 an hour in 2007.

Variations in the detailed specification of services have been agreed in order to allow the necessary efficiency gains to be made to fund the increases in wage rates. The basic terms of the contract remain unchanged.

Computer Systems (Hackers)

Harry Cohen: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission what the nature was of the attack by hackers reported to have taken place before Christmas on the House's computer systems; what investigation has taken place into where the attack came from; what the result was of that investigation; what the extent was of the attack; and what measures have been taken to prevent further such attacks. [49593]

Nick Harvey: As a matter of policy the Commission does not comment on specific matters relating to ICT security.

PRIME MINISTER

Beef

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Prime Minister how much Brazilian beef was procured for use at 10 Downing Street in the last year for which figures are available. [47120]

The Prime Minister: This information is not held centrally. However, there is a requirement for caterers used by my Office to seek to increase opportunities for local producers to compete to supply food to the public sector.

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister what total sum has been received by his Office for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48492]

The Prime Minister: Nil.

Wilson Doctrine

Dr. Cable: To ask the Prime Minister (1) whether the Wilson doctrine applies to *(a)* Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly and *(b)* (i) UK and (ii) non-UK members of the European Parliament; [47539]

(2) whether the Wilson doctrine applies to Members of *(a)* the Welsh Assembly and *(b)* the Scottish Parliament; [47545]

(3) what discussions he has had on the right to privacy under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights in relation to a possible suspension of the Wilson doctrine; [47548]

(4) what discussions have taken place regarding the suspension of the Wilson doctrine on interception of parliamentary communications; [47550]

(5) whether the Wilson doctrine has been updated to apply to internet activity; [47556]

(6) whether the Wilson doctrine applies to *(a)* communications traffic data and *(b)* the interception of postal services. [47557]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to my written ministerial statement, 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 173WS and my answers at Prime Minister's Questions on 18 and 25 January.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Administrative Costs

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the administration costs of *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each of its agencies in (i) cash terms and (ii) real terms using 2004–05 prices since 1996–97, broken down by business area; what the forecast is for each of the next two years; and if he will make a statement. [41217]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the Department of Social Security and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment including the Employment Service. Therefore it is not possible to provide information prior to 2001–02.

Information on departmental administration costs in resource terms, including future plans, is published on an annual basis in the Department's Departmental Report, which can be found in the Libraries of the House. The 2005 Departmental Report was published in June 2005 (Cm 6539).

Asbestos

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will *(a)* remove the provisions relating to textured coatings from the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 and *(b)* conduct a separate consultation on this proposal. [47012]

Mrs. McGuire: Following consultation on proposed amendments to the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 undertaken by the Health and Safety Commission, it will consider whether any changes are necessary to the proposals relating to asbestos containing textured decorative coatings. The Commission will also decide whether any further consultation is necessary before advising Ministers on any changes to the regulations.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will ensure that no further changes will be made to *(a)* the licensing of other asbestos materials and *(b)* removal techniques without parliamentary scrutiny. [47014]

Mrs. McGuire: All regulations recommended to Ministers from the Health and Safety Commission are subject to negative resolution in Parliament—the same will apply for the proposed amendments to the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations—there will be no changes before this takes place.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the extent to which the Health and Safety Executive's proposals for asbestos removal are more applicable to the demolition industry than other parts of the construction industry. [47128]

Mrs. McGuire: The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations apply to the removal of all asbestos, including, where necessary, prior to demolition. Where removal of an asbestos containing material is necessary, the same precautions and control measures are required as are applicable to all industries.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will apply the Health and Safety Executive's proposals relating to the removal of textured coatings containing asbestos only to demolition work. [47132]

Mrs. McGuire: The Health and Safety Commission will advise on amendments to the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations, including any proposals relating to the removal of asbestos containing decorative coatings, following an analysis of the responses received to the consultation.

Building Site Employees

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the implications for health and safety on building sites of the recruitment of employees from Eastern Europe. [44195]

Mrs. McGuire: Migrant workers, including those from Eastern Europe, have a vital role to play in providing skills and in filling labour shortages in the UK construction industry. Many are experienced trades people and some enter the workforce through the highly skilled migrant programme.

The Health and Safety Executive has commissioned research, completed this month, to assess the significance of nationality as a health and safety risk factor among construction workers in London and the South East. The research found no evidence of additional risk.

The duty to manage health and safety risk factors on individual construction sites, where communication barriers or differences in health and safety culture may be issues, rests with the employer. The construction industry and the Health and Safety Executive have already taken action to develop guidance to help employers to discharge their responsibilities effectively.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps are being taken to monitor the safety of building sites where a high proportion of workers from EU accession states are employed. [44196]

Mrs. McGuire: The Health and Safety Executive monitors the health and safety risks to all workers and does not discriminate in its actions on any grounds, including nationality.

Monitoring of the construction industry more generally is carried out partly through research and the most recent report, completed this month, found no link between increased health and safety risk and nationality.

Other monitoring is carried out through a new Health and Safety Executive Omnibus survey that began in 2005. It provides data on construction industry characteristics (including information about the nationality of the workforce) as well as its accident and ill-health profile. This data will assist with future monitoring and assessment of risk.

Site inspections also provide intelligence that allows the Health and Safety Executive to monitor the safety of building sites and to support employers in fulfilling their duties where sites are employing a large proportion of migrant workers. The Health and Safety Executive has recently undertaken a project to increase awareness of good health and safety practices amongst London's Polish community through a presentation and the provision of Polish language written guidance.

In addition, HSE has provided translations of basic construction health and safety guidance in 20 languages.

Buncefield Oil Depot

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether there have been changes to the guidance from the Health and Safety Executive to local authority planning departments since the Buncefield oil depot fire; and if he will make a statement. [47588]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) advises local planning authorities about risks from major hazard sites and their potential effects on developments nearby. HSE and the Environment Agency have commenced a thorough investigation into the explosions and fire at Buncefield oil depot on 11 December 2005 and will make a special report in due course. The terms of reference of the investigation include establishing the root causes of

the incident and making recommendations for future action to ensure the effective management and regulation of major accident risks at such sites.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Devine: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many external consultants were used by the Child Support Agency in 2005; and at what cost. [44019]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Friend with the information requested.

Letter from Mr Stephen Geraghty, dated 8 February 2006:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many external consultants were used by the Child Support Agency in 2005; and at what cost.

Overall during the calendar year 1st January 2005 to 31st December 2005 34 consultants working for 6 separate companies have worked for the Child Support Agency and Child Support Reform project. The total cost of external consultants to the Child Support Agency and Child Support Reform project recorded on the Agency accounting system for the calendar year was £1,677,258. These consultants provided services and expertise which did not already exist within the Agency.

I hope you find this useful.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many outstanding Child Support Agency applications from people in *(a)* Tamworth and *(b)* Staffordshire were received more than (i) six months and (ii) 12 months ago; and what percentage of the total number of such applications each figure represents. [48649]

Mr. Plaskitt: This information is not available at the geographical level requested.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Child Support Agency cases in *(a)* Hertfordshire and *(b)* St. Albans were in arrears in each year between 1997 and 2005. [49333]

Mr. Plaskitt: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Wellingborough (Mr. Bone) on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1985W.

Civil Servants

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of each civil service grade in his Department is located in each *(a)* region and *(b)* nation of the UK; what the average salary is for each grade; and if he will make a statement. [35912]

Mrs. McGuire: My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Cabinet Office will write to the hon. Member with details for the civil service of the percentage of staff in post by region and grade responsibility and the median salary of staff in post by region and grade responsibility as at 1 April 2004. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Departmental Research Reports

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department has spent on *(a)* internally and *(b)* externally commissioned research reports in each year since 1997. [45710]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department's expenditure on externally commissioned research is given in the following table. The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001, therefore figures have been provided from the financial year 2001–02 onwards. Costs of internal research are not available.

Financial year	*Expenditure (£ million)*
2001–02	11.8
2002–03	10.2
2003–04	12.5
2004–05	14.2

Departmental Staff

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff are employed by his Department in each *(a)* region and *(b)* nation of the UK; and if he will make a statement. [35911]

Mrs. McGuire: The information requested is published in Civil Service Statistics. Table D of this publication covers permanent staff numbers (Full-Time Equivalent) in each Department and agency.

Civil Service Statistics are available in the Library and at the following address on the Cabinet Office website: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_of_the_civil_service/statistics/civil_service_statistics/index.asp

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the overall expenditure on incapacity benefits was, including severe disablement allowance and income support on the grounds of incapacity *(a)* on the grounds of mental and behavioural disorders and *(b)* in total, in each year since 1997. [46325]

Mrs. McGuire: Information for income support expenditure is not available broken down by diagnoses. For the expenditure on incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance, I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave on 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 251W.

Internal Audit Recommendations

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 2018W, on internal audit recommendations, when he plans to place these in the Library. [35361]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department's review of its internal audit recommendations, Internal Audit Recommendations 2002–05 (06/011), was placed in the Library of the House on 23 December 2005. The only exceptions to this will be those recommendations where there is specific commercial or policy reason not to make the information available and those recommendations already placed in the Library on 22 March 2005 for the Child Support Agency.

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the Jobcentre Plus offices which *(a)* closed and *(b)* have had reductions in opening times of over one day per week since 1 January 2005; and if he will make a statement. [41219]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking if he will list the Jobcentre Plus offices which *(a)* closed and *(b)* have had reductions in opening times of over one day per week since 1st January 2005. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive.

It may help if I first explain that the majority of our Jobcentre Plus offices are open from 9am to 5pm, Monday-Friday. There will however be occasions when we adjust our opening hours to meet the demand for our services. For instance, during January many of our services were open for longer than their usual hours, including weekends, to ensure that we maintained customer service and benefit processing during some of our busiest times.

In some circumstances, we do also take the decision to reduce the number of hours that some of our Jobcentre Plus offices remain open. This may be appropriate where we deliver some services from other premises in the area and need to fit with their opening hours. Elsewhere we will reduce opening hours if demand does not warrant full opening hours. We of course keep office opening hours under regular review to ensure we give a good service to our clients.

Our modernisation programme is opening up new ways for clients to access and use our services. For instance, customers are now able to receive advice on jobs and benefits over the telephone and on the internet. These improvements do enable us to look more flexibly at the service we deliver through our Jobcentre Plus offices.

Creating Jobcentre Plus out of two separate services has enabled us to rationalise our outlets and so far, 130 offices are no longer required. 36 offices have reduced their hours in response to customer demand. The information on sites specifically affected has been placed in the Library.

I must apologise as we were previously unable to provide this information, specifically in response to your earlier Parliamentary Question (PQ 18416).

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library copies of the *(a)* customer satisfaction surveys and *(b)* results of mystery shopper exercises conducted since 2001 for (i) Jobcentre Plus, (ii) the Pension Service, (iii) the Child Support Agency and (iv) the Disability and Carers Service. [35360]

Mrs. McGuire: Jobcentre Plus was created in April 2002 bringing together the former Employment Service and those parts of the former Benefits Agency delivering services to working age people.

There have been three quantitative national Jobcentre Plus customer satisfaction surveys completed since 2002. The reports for each survey, Jobcentre Plus National Customer Satisfaction Survey 2003, 2004, and 2005, are available in the Library, together with a national qualitative customer satisfaction survey that was undertaken during 2003, Jobcentre Plus Customer Satisfaction 2003: Findings from Qualitative Research.

Copies of the Jobcentre Plus Mystery Shopping National Reports for 2002–03, 2003–04 and 2004–05 have been placed in the Library.

The Pension Service was created in April 2002 to deliver services to those over sixty years of age.

A customer satisfaction survey for the Pension Service was conducted in 2003. The report for this survey is available in the Library. A further survey was undertaken in 2005. The results are due to be published in 2006; copies of the report will be placed in the Library.

Mystery Shopping, which provides an independent assessment of service delivery, was introduced in the Pension Service in April 2004. The results are used for internal improvement actions and are weighted according to pensioners' customer priorities. Copies of the Pension Service mystery shopping results for 2003–04 and the first three quarters of 2005–06 have been placed in the Library.

The Child Support Agency has not conducted any national customer satisfaction surveys or mystery shopper exercises since 2001.

The Disability and Carers Service conducted a customer survey in 2003–04. A copy of the disability and carers service—customer service survey 2003–04—final report has been placed in the Library.

The Disability and Carers Service does not use mystery shopping, but has its own internal measurement checks known as Measurement of Customer Service (MCS). Copies of the annual reports of MCS results for 2004–05, 2003–04 and 2002–03 have been placed in the Library.

TRANSPORT

A21 Upgrade

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what role *(a)* the South East England Development Agency, *(b)* the South East England regional assembly, *(c)* the Highways Agency, *(d)* the Environment Agency and *(e)* local councils will have in plans for an upgrade to the A21 in East Sussex. [49459]

Dr. Ladyman: The South East Regional Transport Board, which includes representatives from the South East England Development Agency, the Highways Agency, South East England regional assembly officers and nominated local authority representatives, has recently provided advice to Government on the timing and funding of schemes to upgrade the A21 in East Sussex as part of its overall advice on priorities for major transport schemes. The Environment Agency is one of four statutory environmental bodies which advise Government on the environmental impacts of road improvements. Upgrade schemes which are approved for funding would be promoted and delivered by the Highways Agency.

British Transport Companies (Overseas Competition)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to help British transport companies to compete with foreign counterparts. [49059]

Dr. Ladyman: Some sectors of the road haulage industry face challenges arising from increasing foreign competition and we are working closely with industry in a joint task group to develop understanding of this and other issues of concern.

We are also keen to help companies become more efficient, not least because benefits such as lower fuel consumption and reduced empty running also help with wider Government objectives to reduce pollution and congestion. This is why, for several years, we have been running a best practice programme that helps operators to apply good operating practices.

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on how many occasions his Department consulted citizens' juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens' jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens' jury. [46227]

Ms Buck: The Department for Transport has not used citizens' juries in so far as records show. The department is committed to developing policies which meet the needs of all. As such, the department consults widely with transport users, often targeting directly users with specific transport needs or hard to reach groups.

Congestion (EU Support)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which regions he expects will receive support from the EU's Sixth Environmental Action Programme to deal with congestion; and what the nature of the support will be in each case. [49023]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department will contribute to the objectives and priorities in the EU's Sixth Environmental Action Programme through its Public Service Agreement target for urban roads. This states that, by 2010–11, the 10 largest urban areas will meet the congestion targets set in their Local Transport Plans. Local authorities in all regions are working to finalise their strategies to tackle congestion, and will include them in their Local Transport Plans due to be published in March 2006. Targets consistent with these strategies will be set by July.

Departmental Entertaining

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department has spent on entertaining in each month since June. [25634]

Ms Buck: The following table provides a breakdown of the total for each month where this is available.

	DfT (Centre)	*DSA (Driving Standards Agency)*
June	29.22	3,174.86
July	841.29	0
August	106.59	263.88
September	566.76	72.86
October	165.70	0
November	265.70	1,000.00

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40324]

Ms Buck: The cost of providing water coolers and bottled water at meetings cannot be separated without disproportionate cost. A total of sanitisation costs of some of £146,595 was spent on these two costs around 1,000 DfT central and agency sites. This includes the maintenance, servicing and the water coolers at DfT regional sites. The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency do not record the purchase of bottled water separately from other refreshments and cannot confirm the amount spent without disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43486]

Ms Buck: Since the establishment of the Department for Transport in May 2002, the number of employees against whom disciplinary action commenced; and those which resulted in a sanction being applied is as follows:

Disciplinary action commenced	
2002:	15
2003:	58
2004:	83
2005:	86
Disciplinary action resulting in a sanction	
2002:	14
2003:	57
2004:	80
2005:	67

The Department has procedures in place to deal with misconduct, unsatisfactory performance or attendance. The normal penalty for gross misconduct is dismissal. The procedures are published in our internal Staff Handbook that is readily available to staff.

Digital Tachographs

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the timescale for the introduction of EU regulations relating to digital tachographs; and within what time period *(a)* private companies and *(b)* individuals will be required to comply with the new regulations. [49839]

Dr. Ladyman: New EU regulations on drivers' hours, which include a revised mandatory fitting date for digital tachographs, were recently agreed by the Council and the European Parliament.

The new regulations will require the operators and drivers of certain heavy goods and public service vehicles to use digital tachographs in any such vehicles put into service for the first time from a date 20 days after formal publication of the new regulations.

The Council and Parliament have indicated that they will make every effort to ensure that the new regulations are published in the *Official Journal* of the European Union in April this year.

Consequently, digital tachographs should become mandatory for all new in-scope vehicles from early May 2006.

Changes to the drivers' hours rules themselves will enter into force one year after publication.

Freedom of Information

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what total sum has been received by his Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48488]

Ms Buck: Department for Transport along with other central Departments is currently participating in a monitoring exercise to record the costs of responding to all FOI requests received during the week commencing 30 January 2006.

This survey will be completed on 20 March and is intended to reveal actual costs of handling FOI cases, and particularly the activities where most cost is incurred.

Heathrow Airport

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on what date the public consultation on mixed-mode at Heathrow airport will *(a)* start and *(b)* finish. [48943]

Ms Buck: We expect to consult later this year. Consultation will be in line with the Cabinet Office code of practice on public consultations which requires a minimum period of 12 weeks for responses.

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46766]

Ms Buck: The Department celebrated Hanukkah and marked Yom Kippur in 2005 through advertisement of the occasions in a multi-cultural calendar accessible to all staff.

There were articles about the occasions in the in-house magazines of two the Department's Executive Agencies: the Driving Standards Agency and the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency.

The Department aims to increase staff awareness of faith and cultural issues through a range of activities that include the publication of information and guidelines.

Staff may take at any time one and a half days of their annual entitlement to two and a half days privilege leave. The one and a half days were customarily known as Christmas and Maundy Thursday. The flexibility is designed to enable staff to take the time suitable to their faith or convictions.

Staff must obtain their line manager's prior approval for taking their privilege leave on any particular dates but any requests will only be refused for exceptional operational reasons and will at all times be considered in the context of the right of staff to Equal Opportunity and their rights under relevant legislation.

London Mainline Terminals

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what capital sums have been spent on each mainline terminal railway station in London in each year since 1997, broken down by source of capital; and what capital sums are planned to be spent on each such station in each year between 2005-06 and 2007-08, broken down by source of capital. [47351]

Derek Twigg: This is an operational matter for Network Rail (NR). I have asked NR to write directly to the hon. Member.

M1 (Accidents)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many accidents involving the closure of the M1 motorway in *(a)* either and *(b)* both directions between junctions 1 and 32 have occurred in (i) 2001, (ii) 2004 and (iii) 2005. [48406]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* The figures supplied in the following table relate solely to full carriageway closures in each direction, or full closure of the M1 motorway in both directions. There have been a number of incidents on the M1 motorway, for the periods in question, that have not involved full closure of carriageways in either direction or full closure of the M1 motorway in both directions. These figures have not been provided.

Figures for 2001 have been given where the information is readily available. Further figures for 2001 can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Number of accidents involving the closure of the M1 motorway between junctions 1 and 32

	North	*South*	*Full closure*
2001	6	1	—
2004	29	22	4
2005	28	22	5

M180

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reasons over six miles of the M180 motorway has the outside lane closed in both directions; why the maintenance work being carried out was not restricted to a shorter stretch to avoid congestion; and if he will make a statement. [49027]

Dr. Ladyman: A nine mile stretch of the M180 between junctions 3 and 4 has lane closures, a contraflow and a 50 mph speed limit in place in both directions to carry out essential safety improvements.

These improvements include low noise resurfacing, installation of a new concrete central reserve barrier and to carry out drainage and maintenance work. The Highways Agency is undertaking the works as one scheme to reduce its duration on site, thereby minimising disruption and risk to the road user, as well as making it safer for roadworkers. It also provides better value for money, as it is less expensive than a number of smaller schemes.

Traffic flows have been monitored since the scheme commenced on 16 January and delays of no more than 10 minutes have been experienced at the busiest times.

National Trust (Road Scheme Objections)

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list road schemes objected to by the National Trust in cases where the Trust has invoked special parliamentary procedures; and what the outcome was in each case. [47006]

Dr. Ladyman: Our records over the last 20 years show that the Secretary of State has not invoked the special parliamentary procedure to get a compulsory purchase order made that related to land held inalienably by the National Trust on any road scheme.

Peterborough City Council (Road Budget)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much funding from his Department Peterborough city council unitary authority has received for its road budget in each year since 1997. [49285]

Ms Buck: The funding support provided directly to Peterborough city council unitary authority through the local transport capital settlement for each year is shown in the following table. It has been for Peterborough city council unitary authority to decide how that allocation was spent in line with their local transport plans and their priorities.

The Department does not have the data for the years 1997–98 as Peterborough was not a highway authority and allocations for the area were made to the county councils then responsible.

£ million

Peterborough city council unitary authority	*2005–06*	*2004–05*	*2003–04*	*2002–03*	*2001–02*	*2000–01*	*1999–2000*	*1998–99*
Integrated Transport Block	1.900	2.187	2.196	2.000	2.000	0.900	0.640	0.330
Capital Highways Maintenance	3.749	4.227	1.834	1.843	1.765	1.082	0.961	0.619
Major Schemes	0	0	0	0.037	0	0	0	0
Total	5.649	6.414	4.030	3.880	3.765	1.982	1.601	0.949

Emergency funding of £2.2 million was also made available to Peterborough city council in 2003–04 for the repair of roads damaged by drought.

In addition central funding support for services, including routine highways services, is provided by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister through revenue support grant. This is not allocated by the Government between individual council services.

Press Coverage

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 he has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* his Department; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47087]

Ms Buck: We have not made any complaints about the press coverage of Ministers, officials or the Department to the Press Complaints Commission since 1 April 2003.

Railways

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many train operating companies applied for revenue support following the bombings in London in July 2005; what the value of those claims was; and how much money has been awarded to each as a result. [48256]

Derek Twigg: Two companies have applied for revenue support following the London bombings. Negotiations are continuing with the companies concerned but no amounts have yet been agreed or paid.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many times during the last two years passengers on the Swindon to Cheltenham line have *(a)* been diverted to coaches and *(b)* have been required to wait for the next train following a missed connection the fault for which lies with the train operator. [49494]

Derek Twigg: These are matters for the train operators concerned. Figures are not kept by the Department.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the procedures are for Network Rail to give notice of maintenance works, with particular reference to the Great Western line; and how much notice is required to be given to the train operating companies. [49495]

Derek Twigg: Under condition 9 of its network licence, Network Rail is required to plan their engineering work, provide information about this work to train operators, and to manage the resulting revisions to the national timetable at least 12 weeks in advance of operation (T-12). The procedures apply to planned engineering works across the whole of Network Rail's network, including the Great Western line. Where it is necessary to carry out emergency engineering works, the notice given may be much shorter.

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much capital expenditure in the railways has been made by *(a)* the public sector and *(b)* the private sector since 2000; and on what projects the capital expenditure has been spent. [40877]

Derek Twigg: Investment in the rail industry (National Rail) since 2000–01 is set out in table 6.4 of National Rail Trends copies of which, are in the Libraries of the House. Total investment since 2000–01 is set out in the following table:

£ million

	Total investment	Of which rolling stock
2000–01	2,404	554
2001–02	3,148	922
2002–03	3,756	566
2003–04	4,722	774
2004–05	[1]3,538	[1]1,923

[1] Provisional

Of that investment the Government made direct grants to Railtrack plc/Network Rail and London and Continental Railways relating to investment on infrastructure undertaken by those companies as follows:

£ million

	Railtrack plc/Network Rail	London and Continental Railways
2000–01	0	0
2001–02	499	185
2002–03	792	374
2003–04	1,448	222

The remaining investment was undertaken by the private sector. Investment in rolling stock is noted in the table above. A detailed breakdown of the remaining private investment is not available as it is collected by the Office for National Statistics on a confidential basis. That said the unprecedented levels of public and private investment is delivering significant improvements in the railway including:

the Channel Tunnel Rail Link,

upgrading of the West Coast Main Line,

the TPWS programme to tackle accidents at signals,

modernising the power supply south of the Thames, and

renewing around 900 km of rail this year.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many railway stations *(a)* have obtained secure station status, *(b)* had secure status withdrawn and *(c)* not sought secure station reaccreditation in the latest period for which figures are available. [49194]

Ms Buck: Since the launch of the secure stations scheme in 1998 a total of 323 rail stations, including 49 London Underground stations, have been accredited under the scheme. Of these a total of 83 rail stations, including 48 London Underground stations, have not, so far, sought re-accreditation. No stations have had their secure status withdrawn since the scheme's launch.

A list of accredited stations has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures his Department has taken to reduce the risk of road vehicles obstructing railway tracks. [47447]

Derek Twigg: The Department participates in the National Level Crossing Safety Group, which supports research by the Rail Safety and Standards Board and Network Rail into ways of reducing incidents at level crossings.

The Health and Safety Executive's HM Rail Inspectorate ensure on a case-by-case basis that individual level crossings are compliant with health and safety legislation, that essential safety standards are being met and risks are controlled. Specific control measures to reduce the risk of road vehicles obstructing railway tracks include; the provision of road markings, traffic lights and signage, level crossing notices and specific guidance within the highway code.

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what is the size of the Network Rail discretionary fund for *(a)* 2006–07 and *(b)* 2007–08. [45536]

Derek Twigg: The Network Rail discretionary fund (NRDF) is an arrangement whereby Network Rail will spend a total of £200 million up to the end of the current regulatory control period in March 2009 on smaller enhancements and improvements to the rail network. The amount spent is nominally £50 million in each financial year.

Regulatory Reform Orders

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many regulatory reform orders his Department has laid before Parliament in each of the last five calendar years. [46801]

Ms Buck: Since it was established in May 2002 the Department has laid one Regulatory Reform Order before Parliament. The Regulatory Reform (Public Services Vehicles) Order 2005 was laid for first stage scrutiny in November 2005.

Road Building Projects (South-east)

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received regarding the South East England Regional Assembly Regional Transport Board's advice on priorities for road building projects in the South East. [49464]

Dr. Ladyman: On 31 January the Government received the South East region's advice on funding priorities. Prior to receiving the advice, we received various representations relevant to the region's prioritisation exercise.

Road Pricing

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research he has conducted into the merits of the introduction of a road pricing system through *(a)* national, *(b)* regional and *(c)* local schemes; and if he will make a statement. [49564]

Dr. Ladyman: Research undertaken for the Feasibility Study of Road Pricing in the UK, published by the Department for Transport in July 2004, showed that a national road pricing scheme could potentially reduce congestion by some 40 per cent. with benefits of up to £12 billion a year in time savings and increased reliability. But moving to a national system of road pricing would be a huge and complex task. That is why

the study recommended that local or regional schemes should be used to pilot approaches to road pricing. A copy of the study report has been placed in the Library.

The Government are working with local authorities to develop a major pilot in the next four to five years. Because the development of these schemes will be a complex undertaking the Government has made £18 million of pump priming funding available between 2005–06 and 2007–08 to help support the work of local authorities in developing local demand management schemes. The first allocation to seven areas was announced on 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 3–4WS.

Road Projects

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list road improvement projects which are behind schedule; and what the reasons are in each case. [49024]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency has 17 major projects either currently on site, or which have received approval to proceed to construction. 15 of these are on schedule, in line with the timetable planned at approval to proceed to construction stage, and two are behind schedule.

The schemes behind schedule are the A14 Rookery Crossroads Grade Separated Junction and the M1 J6A-10 Widening. In the case of A14 Rookery Crossroads, the original completion date of mid December has slipped due to the complexity of the traffic management arrangements during the scheme construction. With the M1 J6A-10 Widening a review of the costs and agreement of a target cost with the appointed contractor has taken longer than anticipated, delaying the full start of works. Advance works have, however, commenced on schedule.

For local highway schemes, delivery timescales and the reasons for any slippage are a matter for the promoting local authority.

St. Pancras Thameslink

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the meeting of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State with the hon. Members for North Bedfordshire, North-East and St Albans (Anne Main) on 15 September 2005, whether he is in a position to state when the St Pancras Thameslink box will be fully fitted out. [47630]

Derek Twigg: Department for Transport is continuing to work with stakeholders to determine if there is a robust route to deliver the fit out in advance of the Thameslink 2000 Project at a price that offers acceptable value for money. I would expect to make a more detailed statement in due course

Transport Demand Research

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research he has *(a)* conducted and *(b)* evaluated on the relationship between economic growth and (i) rail passenger demand, (ii) demand for air travel and (iii) road investment programmes; and if he will make a statement. [49567]

Ms Buck: The Department has not conducted or evaluated specific research into the relationship between economic growth and rail passenger demand as estimates are made by the rail industry. These estimates are, however, used in the Department's National Transport Model, information on which can be found on the DfT website at: http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_econappr/documents/page/dft_econappr_610556.pdf

In May 2000, the Department published "Air Traffic Forecasts for the United Kingdom 2000". This internal piece of work provided forecasts over the period to 2020 and used econometric methods to assess the contribution of factors, including economic growth, to determine air traffic growth. This can be found at: http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_aviation/documents/page/dft_aviation_503314_01.hcsp#P38_1015

In 1996 the Standing Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Appraisal (SACTRA) was asked by the then Secretary of State for Transport to consider the effects on the performance of the economy which might be caused by transport projects and policies, including new infrastructure, changing prices, demand management and measures to reduce traffic. This report can be found at: http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_econappr/documents/page/dft_econappr_610277.hcsp

Transport Expenditure

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department has spent on *(a)* road works and *(b)* (i) road resurfacing and (ii) resurfacing noisy concrete road surfaces in each region since May 2002; and what projections his Department has for spending on each category of expenditure in each region over the next three years. [43026]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency is responsible for highway maintenance on the strategic road network in England.

The Highways Agency's expenditure on road maintenance since 2002–03 is set out in the following table. They do not routinely record this information by region. The expenditure on renewal of roads is also shown in the table. Road resurfacing work is contained within the budget for renewal of roads which also funds other expenditure such as street lighting, drainage and safety fencing.

£ million

Funding category	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*Outturn 2004–05*	*Budget 2005–06*
Maintenance	796	726	732	827
of which:				
Renewal of roads	280	254	285	341
Resurfacing of concrete roads	50	78	34	[1]29

[1] year to date

Note:
Forecasts for future years are not available

A separate regional analysis of historic expenditure on resurfacing concrete roads with quieter surfacing has been carried out, and is set out in the following table. The amounts vary between region and from year-to-year, depending on the specific projects which have been identified for resurfacing due to a safety or maintenance need.

Region	Expenditure (£ million)
2002–03	
North	2
East	20
South East	26
South West	2
2003–04	
North	4
East	46
South East	8
East Midlands	4
West Midlands	7
South West	9
2004–05	
East	17
South East	4
East Midlands	8
South West	5
2005–06[1]	
North	7
East Midlands	4
South East	17
South West	1

[1] year to date

Highway maintenance on local roads in England is the responsibility of each local highways authority. My Department provides funding to local authorities in England and outside London for capital highway maintenance through the local transport settlement. The funding made since 2002 is shown as follows.

£ million

Capital maintenance	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07
North East	36.120	35.878	47.095	44.170	44.165
Yorkshire and Humberside	68.038	67.848	85.425	76.588	84.625
West Midlands	65.552	66.545	75.357	82.105	82.908
East Midlands	61.427	62.463	68.918	65.178	68.380
Eastern	73.293	69.601	83.947	91.119	87.856
South West	82.343	83.194	96.103	107 685	116.804
South East	79.986	91.599	100.533	105.008	102.315
North West	92.085	88.872	93.059	88.144	84.819
Total	558.844	566.000	650.437	659.997	671.872

Indicative allocations for capital maintenance by local authority and region for the period 2006–07 to 2010–11 were published in December 2004. These can be found on the Department's website www.dft.gov.uk in the document entitled "Provisional Planning Guidelines for Local Transport Capital: 2006–07 to 2010–11".

Funding for local authority capital highway maintenance is not ring fenced. It is for the local authorities to decide how such funding is spent in line with their priorities, across the whole range of services that they provide.

In addition, revenue provision is made to local authorities in England but outside London, by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for highway maintenance through the local authorities' Formula for Standard Spending (FSS). ODPM publish information on local authority outturn expenditure annually, including data on highway maintenance. Information for 2002–03 and 2003–04 can be found on the ODPM website www.local.odpm.gov.uk. Information on later years has not yet been published.

Highway maintenance funding in London is the responsibility of the London Mayor.

Transport Innovation Fund

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the Transport Innovation Fund. [48229]

Ms Buck: I refer the hon. Member to the written statement given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 66–67WS, and the paper "Transport Innovation Fund: Guidance—January 2006" published on that date.

Transport Staff (Alcohol/Drug Tests)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* aircraft crew, *(b)* air traffic controllers and *(c)* aircraft maintenance engineers have been tested for (i) drugs and (ii) alcohol since 2001; and what proportion have been found to be above the legal limit. [48268]

Ms Buck: Under part 5 of the Railway and Transport Safety Act 2003, it is an offence for defined personnel to perform an aviation or ancillary function when their ability to do so is impaired through drink or drugs. The Act came into force in March 2004. It also set a prescribed blood/alcohol limit for safety critical personnel in aviation. Responsibility for testing personnel under the Act for the effects of drugs and alcohol rests with the local police force. These statistics are not collated nationally.

However, statistics provided to us by the Home Office show that in 2004 two defendants were proceeded against and found guilty of this offence.

Violent Offences (Public Transport)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many victims of violent offences on public transport have been recorded by the British Transport police in each police force area in England and Wales since 1998–99. [48266]

Derek Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1466–68W, to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman).

The table of figures given in that answer represents violent offences against passengers on trains. The policing of offences committed on other modes of public transport is within the remit of local police forces.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Active Service Prosecutions

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Solicitor-General what criteria are applied when deciding to remove from military to civil jurisdiction decisions to prosecute service personnel for actions carried out on active service. [48375]

The Solicitor-General: Where an offence alleged to have been committed by a serviceman overseas is triable in either the court martial or the civilian courts here, it is ultimately for the Attorney General to decide, as part of his constitutional and superintendence roles, whether the case should be dealt with in the military or the civilian system. Only exceptionally will such a case be dealt with in the civilian system. This may be because it is no longer possible to use the court martial jurisdiction or because the particular circumstances of a case indicate that the civilian courts are best placed to deal with it.

Prosecutions (Hertfordshire)

Anne Main: To ask the Solicitor-General how many and what percentage of prosecutions in Hertfordshire were not completed in 2004–05. [49331]

The Solicitor-General: In 2004–05, CPS Hertfordshire received 25,397 cases in the magistrates' courts, inclusive of pre-charge decisions, while finalisations for the year amounted to 24,126, representing 95 percent. of receipts.

In the Crown court, receipts totalled 1,760, inclusive of appeals and committals for sentence, while finalisations amounted to 1,535, or 87.2 percent.

The remaining cases (1,271 in the magistrates courts and 225in the Crown court) were carried forward for completion in the following year.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Guidance Provision

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the change in the burden of administration on adult guidance providers since the Learning and Skills Council was established. [28765]

Phil Hope: Information, advice and guidance services on learning and work for adults are delivered by the Learning and Skills Council primarily through an integrated information and advice service comprising the national learndirect telephone and online advice service, and 47 local nextstep information and advice providers. In addition, adults participating in any LSC funded learning can access information and advice services through their learning provider. The administration of the service is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, and is managed and overseen by Mark Haysom the LSC's chief executive. Mark Haysom has written to the hon. Member in response to this question and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 24 January 2006:

I write in response to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding assessment of the change in the burden of administration on adult guidance providers since the Learning and Skills Council was established?

Since the introduction of the "nextstep" service in 2004, the LSC has reduced the administrative burden on providers of adult Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services by:

Publishing an annual delivery specification setting out the programme requirements and complimenting this with a single planning template

Agreeing with the IAG delivery sector, a national customer record that captures core data for the national nextstep service and which is capable of being customised for local European Social Fund funded guidance provision

Introducing a standardised monthly management upload process for customer data associated with the core nextstep contract

Before these changes were implemented, consultation was undertaken with a representative of the then Bureaucracy Review Group to ensure their appropriateness. Feedback from our regional IAG working group indicates that the changes have been well received and have had a significant impact on the quality and availability of management information on services provided.

Child Care Places

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many child care places were available in each of the last 10 years in *(a)* England, *(b)* London and *(c)* each London borough. [48702]

Beverley Hughes: The information requested has been placed in the House Libraries.

Children's Centres

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the capital cost of establishing a full offer children's centre. [48377]

Beverley Hughes: There is no standard capital cost for developing a children's centre. Children's centres will grow out of a range of existing provision including Sure Start local programmes, Neighbourhood nurseries, primary schools, health and community provision and capital cost will differ according to particular circumstance.

Departmental Salaries

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the 10 highest-paid employees in her Department, broken down by *(a)* job

title and *(b)* salary including bonuses; and whether the individual concerned is (i) a civil servant and (ii) a contractor in each case. [27571]

Maria Eagle: The following table lists the 10 highest-paid employees in my Department, as at 1 January 2006. The salary figures do not include bonuses which will be determined at the end of March 2006. The occupants of these posts were civil servants. For clarity, any contractors in my Department are not employees.

Job title	*Salary (£)*
Permanent Secretary	159,500
Director General	143,500
Director General	136,106
Divisional Manager	127,627
Director	123,436
Director General	121,681
Director	120,000
Director	120,000
Director General	117,859
Director	114,117

Drop-out Rates

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average drop out rate at universities was in the last period for which figures are available; what the total cost of courses taken but unfinished was in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [39929]

Bill Rammell: Information on projected non-completion rates for higher education students is published annually by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in "Performance Indicators in Higher Education". The latest figures are given in the table.

UK domiciled full-time first degree starters at English Higher Education Institutions who were projected to neither obtain an award nor transfer to another institution

Year of entry	*Percentage*
1998–99	15.8
1999–2000	15.9
2000–01	15.0
2001–02	13.8
2002–03	13.9

Source:
'Performance Indicators in Higher Education'

The figures requested for the total cost of courses taken but unfinished are not available centrally.

Neighbourhood Nurseries

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1918W, on neighbourhood nurseries, how many nursery places were taken up in *(a)* March 2003, *(b)* March 2004 and *(c)* March 2005, broken down by region. [49083]

Beverley Hughes *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* The information requested on the take-up of nursery places in neighbourhood nurseries is not collected centrally. Pursuant to my answer on 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1918W, the number of neighbourhood nursery places that were available in *(a)* March 2003, *(b)* March 2004 and *(c)* March 2005, broken down by region, is in the following table.

Region	*Places created by March 2003*[1]	*Places created April 2003-March 2004*	*Places created April 2004-March 2005*	*Total*
East Midlands	224	1,426	1,208	2,858
Eastern England	114	1,495	1,006	2,615
London	851	3,359	3,717	7,927
North East	405	4,878	122	5,405
North West	1,096	5,202	3,043	9,341
South East	229	2,298	1,360	3,887
South West	232	2,425	1,208	3,865
West Midlands	554	4,095	1,725	6,374
Yorkshire and Humberside	815	4,843	1,084	6,742

[1] Figures include places created between 2001 and March 2003.

Janet Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance she has issued to local education authorities on the replacement of nursery schools with nursery classes. [49206]

Beverley Hughes: None. However, we continue to make clear to local authorities that maintained nursery schools have a vital role to play in taking forward our agenda for families and children and should not be closed unless there are exceptional grounds for doing so.

Local school organisation committees, who make decisions on school organisations, must have regard to "the presumption against closure" provisions included in the statutory guidance on school organisation. This states that decisions to close a maintained nursery school must take account of: the quantity, quality, value for money and convenience to parents and the proposed replacement provision; the impact of the potential loss of the nursery school's experience and knowledge and alternatives to closure.

Overseas Students

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of British-Indians have applied to study in further education institutes in each year since 1997. [45118]

Bill Rammell: Data on applications to study in further education institutes are not held centrally.

School Admissions

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the secondary schools which admit pupils on the basis of partial selection by ability criterion, broken down by local authority; and what the percentage is of pupils at each school admitted in this way. [49453]

Jacqui Smith: This information is not collected centrally as admission arrangements are set locally, after an annual consultation process. However, I have listed below those schools we are aware of which operate partial selection by ability or aptitude which it would not now be lawful to introduce. This is not a definitive list.

LEA	*School*	*Pre-existing partial selection*
Barnet	Mill Hill School	25%—technology, music and dance
Bexley	Erith School	Proportion of intake on academic ability
Buckinghamshire	Waddesdon C of E School	15%—exceptional ability in music
Croydon	Edenham High School	15% ability
	Riddlesdown High School	15% ability
	Archbishop Lanfranc	15% ability
	Shirley High School	15% ability
	Old Swinford Hospital School	15% ability
Dudley	St. Clement Danes School	10% academic ability
Hertfordshire	Queens School	35% academic ability
	Rickmansworth School	35% academic ability
	Dame Alice Owen's	65 places academic ability
	Watford Grammar (Boys)	35% academic ability
	Watford Grammar (Girls)	35% academic ability
	Parmitter's School	35% academic ability
Kent	Homewood School	20% ability and aptitude
	Archbishops	15% ability
	Chaucer	15% ability
	Westlands	10%—maths
Kingston	Holy Cross	13%—ability
Lambeth	London Nautical	Candidates complete a multiple choice questionnaire, and are asked about swimming ability
Lancashire	Ripley St. Thomas CE High	15% ability
Lincolnshire	Spilsbury King Edward VI (bilateral)	25% ability
Liverpool	Archbishop Blanch CE High School (Girls)	15% ability
	St. Hilda's CE High School (Girls)	15% ability
	St. Margarets CE High School (boys)	15% ability
Peterborough	The Kings School	12% ability
Southend	St. Thomas More High School for Boys	30 places ability
	St. Bernard's High School	63 places ability
Surrey	Rosebery School	23 places ability
Wandsworth	Burntwood	33% ability
	Ernest Bevin	33% ability
	Chestnut Grove	33% aptitude
	Graveney	30% ability
Warwickshire	Ashlawn School	12% ability

Schools (Newcastle-upon-Tyne)

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the percentage of each cohort who failed to achieve level four at key stage two in each school in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [49346]

Jacqui Smith: The figures for the performance of pupils in schools in Newcastle-upon-Tyne are published as part of the Key Stage 2 Achievement and Attainment Tables each year. These are available on the Department's website at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/performancetables/. The information is also available in the House Library.

Primary standards in English and mathematics are continuing to improve. Since 1997, the proportion of 11-year-olds achieving the target Level 4 and above as measured by the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests has increased by 16 percentage points to 79 per cent. in English and by 13 percentage points to 75 per cent. in mathematics. In Newcastle-upon-Tyne the proportion achieving the target Level 4 and above has increased by more than the national rate of improvement (up by 21 percentage points since 1997 to 72 per cent. in English and by 18 percentage points to 69 per cent. in mathematics).

The Government have set a national public service agreement target for 2008 to reduce by 40 per cent. the number of schools in which fewer than 65 per cent. of pupils achieve Level 4 or above in English and Level 4 in mathematics. Good progress has been made towards achieving this target. Compared with 2003 (baseline year), there has been an overall reduction of 34 per cent. (978 schools) in the number of schools achieving below 65 per cent. in English and 22 per cent. (770 schools) in the number of schools achieving below this level in mathematics.

In Newcastle-upon-Tyne there are 23 schools where fewer than 65 per cent. of pupils achieved Level 4 and above in English in 2005, compared with 29 schools in 2003. In mathematics, 26 schools achieved results below 65 per cent. in 2005 compared with 29 schools in 2003.

Sex Offenders

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what records she keeps of the number of social workers employed by local authorities who have convictions or cautions for sex offences; and what advice she has issued on the management of their contact with children. [45822]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 26 January 2006]:* The Department does not hold such information.

The Government issued statutory guidance, effective October 2005, on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004, which makes clear that local authorities should have policies and procedures in place to prevent unsuitable people from working with children.

Speech Therapy (Westmorland and Lonsdale)

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been spent on speech therapy services for children in Westmorland and Lonsdale in each of the last three years. [47055]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* I have been asked to reply.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible for commissioning services, including speech therapy services for children, to meet the health needs of their local population. In the current financial year, PCTs in Cumbria and Lancashire received resource revenue allocations totalling £2 billion, with the two PCTs covering Westmorland and Lonsdale receiving a total of £413.3 million. By 2007–08, the total resource allocation to PCTs in Cumbria and Lancashire will have increased to £2.8 billion, with the two PCTs covering Westmorland and Lonsdale receiving £528.8 million.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Africa

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding his Department has allocated to tackling eclampsia in Africa in 2005–06. [49079]

Hilary Benn: DFID recognises that eclampsia is an important cause of maternal and neonatal death and disability. DFID provides most of its health-related assistance through non-earmarked Poverty Reduction Budgetary Support (PRBS) or ear-marked health sector support. Funds are not generally allocated against specific medical conditions, so it is not possible to specify the amount for tackling eclampsia in the current financial year.

To prevent and treat eclampsia, women need an integrated health service with facilities and staff for antenatal and obstetric care, emergency referral to specialists and surgeons when they are required, reliable equipment and access to the right drugs. DFID funding supports country governments' plans to develop and strengthen their health systems. The aim is to improve access to all health services, including those for antenatal and obstetric care.

DFID is committed to a year-on-year increase in spending on maternal health. DFID's bilateral expenditure (excluding spend through general poverty reduction budget support) on programmes marked as contributing towards improving maternal health has increased by 34 per cent. over the last three years (and by 41 per cent. if reproductive health services which contribute to reducing maternal mortality are included).

To complement our country level support, DFID also channels funds though the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). In 2005–06, DFID has provided £20 million core funding and £10 million specifically for reproductive health.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to strengthen property rights in Africa. [49081]

Hilary Benn: Fair and sound property rights are essential for growth, investment and poverty reduction in Africa. DFID works both to improve the business environment to boost private sector investment and create jobs and to secure the investments and livelihoods of poor people.

DFID is helping Governments and other non-Government groups with land rights and administration in countries such as Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, Lesotho, Rwanda, Swaziland, Botswana, Angola and Mozambique. This support is to improve poor people's access to land and property and enable them to secure their rights to land and property assets.

DFID is also helping support an African Union Land Policy Conference to be held in Addis Ababa at the end of March, held with the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Africa Development Bank.

DFID funds various programmes across Africa that aim to strengthen court systems and thereby enhance property rights. A major new African initiative, the Investment Climate Facility for Africa (ICF), has property rights as one of its priority areas and will substantially increase the support that DFID currently provides to property rights in Africa. DFID committed $30 million to this initiative in November 2005.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what presentations were undertaken by the Commission for Africa in the run-up to the G8 summit; in which country each presentation took place; and what the date was of each presentation. [49224]

Hilary Benn: Following the launch of the Commission for Africa report on 11 March 2005, the Commission undertook a four month series of presentations leading up to the G8 summit at Gleneagles. This included regional events in Africa as well as G8 countries. More than 45 presentations were made in over 20 countries. Audiences included the African Union (AU) NEPAD, governments, private sector and civil society. Listed as follows is a list of key presentations made by the Commission during this period.

March

Commission for Africa Launch events, London, UK and Addis Ababa, Ethipopia 11 March

Africa 2015, BBC conference, London, UK 18 March

April

Shell Business Action for Africa, London, UK 5 April

Africa Partners Forum, Abuja, Nigeria, 9–10 April

Commission for Africa outreach seminar, Washington, 15 April

World Bank/IMF spring meeting, presentations in the margins, 16–17 April

NEPAD Heads of Government, Egypt, 17–19 April

Senegal development week, Senegal, 18–19 April

Nelson Mandela Thinkers Forum, Nairobi, Kenya, 21–22 April

Canadian Council for Africa Conference, "Unleashing Finance and infrastructure in Africa", Toronto, Canada, 23–25 April

May

African Union, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 2 May

"New strategic inputs on European investments in development aid", Hearing at the European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium, 3 May

African Media Development Facility Meeting, Dakar, Senegal, 4 May

G8/NEPAD summit on the Implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Plan (CAADP), Accra, Ghana, 5–6 May

"Our Common Interest: supporting Africa's resurgence", London School of Economics, London, UK, 9 May

Spanish Foreign Ministry, Tenerife, 11 May

Commission for Africa Outreach Seminar, Lagos, 12–13 May

Economic Commission for Africa, Thirty-eighth session of the Commission/Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Abuja, Nigeria, 14–15 May

Scottish Executive, Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, 16 May

US Senate, Foreign Relations Committee Hearing, Washington, USA, 17 May

"The Commission for Africa: Implementing the Findings", Wilton Park Conference, UK, 16–20 May

African Development Bank Annual Meeting, Abuja, 18–19 May

World Health Assembly, World Health Organisation, Geneva, 19 May

African Youth Foundation, Bonn, Germany, 19–24 May

"Engaging Nigerians in the Commission for Africa", Nigerians in Diaspora Organisations Europe (NIDOE) Seminar, London, UK, 20 May

"Security, Development and Human Rights: Shaping the Emerging International Doctrine", Ditchley Park Conference, UK, 20–21 May

"Increased Aid Flows and the Control of Corruption", Transparency International seminar, London, UK, 23 May

Nelson Mandela Thinkers Forum, Maputo, Mozambique, 23–24 May

National Assembly of Wales, Cardiff, UK, 24 May 2005

British Embassy, Rome, Italy, 26 May

Institute of African Studies, Moscow, Russia, 26 May

'Africa: our common interest', workshop by Aspen Institute Italia Campidoglio, Rome, Italy, 27 May

African Development Bank, Tunis, 27 May

"A masterplan for Africa—a big solution?", Kirchentag (Protestant Church Convention, Hanover, Germany, 28 May

Commission for Africa Outreach Seminar, Algiers, 28–29 May

Commission for Africa Outreach Seminar, Nairobi, Nigeria, 30–31 May

Commission for Africa Outreach Seminar, Johannesburg, South Africa, 30–31 May

"Challenges of Africa", UNESCO, Annual Strategic Conference, Paris, France, 31 May–1 June,

June

World Economic Forum Africa Economic Summit, Cape Town, South Africa, 1–3 June

Nigeria Economic Summit, Abuja, Nigeria, 1 June

G8 International Parliamentarians' Conference on Development in Africa, Edinburgh, UK, 6–7 June

African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF) East African Civil Society workshop, Nairobi, Kenya, 6–7 June

Commission for Africa Outreach Seminar for Central Africa, Yaounde, Cameroon, from 7–8 June

Tanzanian Parliament, Tanzania, 9 June

"Making Poverty History: Achieving effective delivery of the development agenda", Price Waterhouse International Development Conference, London, UK, 9 June

"Embattled or Empowered Africa: Our Common Interest", Institut Royal des Relations Internationales/ Koninklijk Instituut voor Internationale betrekkingen (irri-kiib), Brussels, 14 June

Commission for Africa Southern Africa Regional Consultation, City of Tshwane, South Africa, 14–15 June

"Meeting Global Development Challenges: Ireland's White Paper on Development Aid", Conference at Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland, 15 June

Development Co-operation Ireland (DCI), Dublin, Ireland, 16 June

Northern Ireland Assembly, Belfast, UK, 17 June

Nelson Mandela Thinkers Forum, Dakar, Senegal, 21–22 June

Corporate Council for Africa US Africa Business Summit, Baltimore, USA, 21–24 June

UN High Level Dialogue on Financing for Development, New York, USA, 27–28 June

National Conference on the Commission for Africa, Sierra Leone, 28 June

Africa-Europe Group for Interdisciplinary Studies (AEGIS), European Conference of African Studies, London, UK 30 June

July

African Union Summit, Libya, 4–5 July

Business Action For Africa, London, UK, 5–6 July

G8 Summit, Gleneagles, UK, 6–8 July

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what financial remuneration was paid by his Department to each Commissioner of the Commission for Africa; and what the *(a)* amount and *(b)* purpose was of each payment. [49225]

Hilary Benn: The Commissioners of the Commission for Africa (CfA) received no financial remuneration from DFID for their services. DFID paid expenses for travel and accommodation and the cost of administrative support when appropriate.

Consultants

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the contracts let by his Department to external consultants that were subsequently sub-let in each of the past five years; and what the value was of each *(a)* original and *(b)* sub-let contract. [49220]

Hilary Benn: The Department for international Development (DFID) welcomes consortia and sub-contracting arrangements. However, no business has been sub-contracted in its entirety subsequent to the issue of contract.

Global Fund (Myanmar)

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding has been pledged by the UK to the global fund to fight HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria; how much of that funding has been delivered; and if he will make a statement. [48946]

Mr. Thomas: The UK has pledged £359 million to the Global Fund for the period 2002 to 2008. Our contribution in 2005 was £51 million, which brings our total contribution delivered to date, to £159 million. Over the next two years, we have pledged to provide £100 million to the Global Fund for 2006 and £100 million for 2007 to support the fund's estimated resource needs of US$ 7 billion for this period. The two-year total of £200 million represents 8.4 per cent. of the total pledged to date (i.e. £3.7 billion) and 5.1 percent. of the US$ 7 billion total resource needs. This is above our gross national income (GNI) fair share and is consistent with our past support. The UK is currently the fourth largest donor for the period 2006 and 2007 (after France, the US and Japan) and the second largest in the EU.

There will be a mid-term review of the Global Fund's replenishment process in June. This will be an opportunity for the international community to review further the Global Fund's performance and urge new and existing donors to put in more money. The UK will continue its efforts to encourage additional support for the Global Fund, including from the private sector.

Millennium Development Goals

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department has taken to implement the recommendation in paragraph 3 of the UN General Assembly resolution A/60/L.2 on the World Programme of Action for Youth, relating to Youth and the Millennium Development Goals. [49219]

Hilary Benn: DFID funds programmes that support young people as an integral part of many of its international development programmes. DFID encourages its development partners to adopt an inclusive approach and to involve all groups in society, including young people, in developing and monitoring their Poverty Reduction Strategies.

DFID has provided support for young people's participation in a number of countries. Examples include working with schoolchildren, as well as their carers and teachers, to develop School Improvement Plans in Malawi, and encouraging consultation with children and young people in the development of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo's plan for reducing poverty.

In Sierra Leone, DFID has contributed to youth projects to provide conciliation resources and equip young people with skills to develop their livelihoods; community re-integration projects, with a focus on child soldiers; and a programme for promoting peace, security and stability, through a radio programme for children, produced by children, and through training young people to use dialogue as a means of resolving or transforming conflict. The UK Government also provides 30 per cent. of the funding for the Commonwealth Youth Programme. Its contribution this year is £650,000.

The Government are committed to the eighth Millennium Development Goal, a Global Partnership for Development, which includes supporting decent and productive work for youth. The Government's support for youth employment is mainly channelled through the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the World Bank.

DFID is also completing a briefing note on post primary education, which will recognise the increasing importance of addressing the educational needs of young men and women.

I have arranged for copies of a recent DFID policy paper entitled 'Reducing Poverty by tackling Social Exclusion' to be placed in the Libraries of the House. DFID will take forward work to encourage participation by young people in decisions that affect their lives as an integral part of its work on social exclusion.

Rwanda

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much bilateral aid the UK spent in Rwanda in each of the past eight years for which records are available; and what the planned figures are for each of the next five years. [49217]

Hilary Benn: The following Table 1 provides the bilateral aid the UK has provided to Rwanda since 1997–98, while Table 2 provides the UK imputed multilateral share to EC. Table 3 provides the planned bilateral aid figures for the next three years.

Table 1: UK's bilateral aid to Rwanda 1999–98 to 2004–05

Fiscal year	*Total bilateral gross public expenditure (£000)*
1997–98	6,166
1998–99	13,568
1999–2000	14,279
2000–01	32,431
2001–02	26,818
2002–03	31,937
2003–04	26,910
2004–05	45,028

Table 2: UK imputer share to Rwanda through EC

	£ million
1994	5
1995	1.8
1996	5.9
1997	4.4
1998	2.4
1999	3.2

Table 2: UK imputer share to Rwanda through EC

	£ million
2000	7.3
2001	5.3
2002	3.3
2003	3.7

Table 3: Planned bilateral expenditure for Rwanda

Fiscal year	Total bilateral gross public expenditure-planned (£000)
2005–06	46,000
2006–07	46,000
2007–08	46,000

Sudan

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had on a renewed and strengthened UN mandate on Darfur. [49086]

Hilary Benn: I have had a number of such discussions. DFID welcomes the African Union's (AU) decision at the 12 January Peace and Security Council (PSC) expressing support in principle to handing over its monitoring mission in Darfur (AMIS) to the UN. The UN Security Council has instructed the UN Secretary General to report back to the Council on the options for such a UN operation. We are discussing with the UN and the AU, the possible size, mandate and composition.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding he has supplied to the African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur; and whether he plans to allocate further funds. [49087]

Hilary Benn: The UK has committed £19 million funding this financial year to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS). This brings our total contribution to AMIS, since its inception, to almost £32 million. We are using this money to provide equipment (we have purchased a total of over 900 vehicles), as well as military and civilian policing advice, expertise and training. Some of our contribution has also funded airlift of troops into Darfur, and further troop rotation this year. The UK will continue to support AMIS during its deployment, and the AU-led mediation of the Abuja peace talks on Darfur.

WALES

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixture and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of his Department in (i) Wales and (ii) each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40099]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs on 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1834W.

Dispensing Appliance Contractors

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what assessment he has made of the likely effect on services and support for patients in Carmarthen, East and Dinefwr of the review of the system by which dispensing appliance contractors are paid; and whether specialist products for patients will continue *(a)* to be available and *(b)* to be paid for by his Department. [43169]

Mr. Hain: This is a matter for the Welsh Assembly Government. I understand that no decision on the way forward in Wales has been made yet. The consultation period on the proposals in England ended on 23 January and the Welsh Assembly Government are currently watching developments and will decide in due course on the most appropriate action for Wales.

Local Government

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales pursuant to his answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 532W, on local government, how much funding the Valuation Agency received from the National Assembly for Wales Government. [48040]

Mr. Hain: The Valuation Office Agency received a total of £28.63 million in funding from the Welsh Assembly Government in the three years 2002–03 to 2004–05. This included £5.27 million to cover the cost of revaluation in Wales.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales pursuant to his answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 532W, on Local Government Act, whether local authorities, with particular reference to council tax collection departments, incurred costs because of the implementation of section 77 of the Act. [48154]

Mr. Hain: The Welsh Assembly Government's proposals for revaluation and rebanding were set out in its policy statement "Freedom and Responsibility in Local Government" and were implemented in agreement with local authorities and the Welsh Local Government Association. The WLGA did not identify any additional financial pressures as a consequence of revaluation—costs were met from within existing resources.

Manufacturing

Mr. Paul Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has had with the *(a)* First Minister and *(b)* Welsh Assembly Government on support for the manufacturing industry in Wales. [44494]

Mr. Hain: I regularly meet the First Minister and discuss a range of issues including support for manufacturing in Wales. My hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Wales has similar meetings with Welsh Assembly Government Ministers.

Both the UK Government and the Welsh Assembly Government recognise that manufacturing remains vital to the Welsh economy, accounting for 19 per cent. of GVA—proportionally higher than the UK as a whole.

The UK Government are working in partnership with industry, trade unions regional development agencies and other stakeholders to deliver the Manufacturing Strategy launched in May 2002 and reviewed in 2004, to secure a long-term future for manufacturing.

The Assembly and its agencies provide a range of support to Welsh manufacturers. These include financial assistance, business advice, promoting innovation, for example the Technium programme, and initiatives to improve skills and promote entrepreneurship.

The Assembly works directly with the sector through the manufacturing task and finish group. The Assembly's Economic Development Minister announced at the Wales TUC manufacturing conference last October that there will be a Welsh manufacturing forum represented by a cross section from the sector, and is consulting on the detail. This initiative has been well received by the manufacturing sector in Wales.

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many parliamentary questions tabled in the last 12 months for answer by him on a named day *(a)* were transferred and *(b)* received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named. [49883]

Mr. Hain: Departments aim to ensure that Members receive a substantive response to their named day question on the named day and to endeavour to answer ordinary written questions within a working week of being tabled. Unfortunately, this is not always possible but this Department makes every effort to achieve these time scales.

(a) None

(b) (i) 90.48 per cent.

(ii) 9.52 per cent.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by him in the last 12 months have been answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* between 14 and 28 days, *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if he will make a statement. [49893]

Mr. Hain: Departments aim to ensure that Members receive a substantive response to their named day question on the named day and to endeavour to answer ordinary written questions within a working week of being tabled. Unfortunately, this is not always possible but this Department makes every effort to achieve these time scales.

(a) 90.51 per cent.

(b) 9.49 per cent.

(c) None

(d) None

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Accountancy Profession

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will introduce legislation to break up the big four accountancy firms. [49726]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government have no plans to introduce such legislation.

Aerospace Trade Missions

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which British companies *(a)* took part in the October 2005 aerospace trade mission to Japan and *(b)* will be taking part in the February 2006 aerospace trade mission to Singapore. [48434]

Ian Pearson: *(a)* The following companies took part in the October 2005 aerospace mission to Japan:

Airclaims Ltd.

Apollotek Ltd.

Bae Systems (International) Ltd.

BCF Designs Ltd.

Burcas Ltd.

Delcam Japan

Kuehne and Nagel Ltd.

Maher Ltd.

Nallatech Ltd.

Rolls Royce International Ltd.

W. L. Gore and Associates

(b) The following companies are scheduled to take part in the February 2006 mission to Singapore:

Aerotech World Trade Ltd.

Air Service Training (Engineering) Ltd.

Atlantic Bridge Aviation Ltd.

Fly BN Ltd.

Herman Smith and Associates

Novar Projects Ltd.

RHE Ltd.

South East Airports Ltd.

Southern Gas Turbines Ltd.

The mission to Singapore is timed to coincide with the Asian aerospace trade fair at which other UK companies are exhibiting.

Anti-corruption Guidelines

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects to publish the Export Credits Guarantee Department's revised anti-corruption guidelines. [48435]

Ian Pearson: ECGD expects to publish the Government's final response to the consultation on its anti-bribery and corruption procedures in the next few weeks.

Automotive Academy

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether he plans to extend Automotive Academy re-employment training to areas other than the West Midlands; and if he will make a statement. [49026]

Alun Michael: The Automotive Academy is an independent organisation established by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders to deliver on a partnership between the Government and the industry. Its remit, supported by a £12 million grant from DTI, is to raise the skills base in the automotive industry among small and large companies alike, throughout the supply

chain. It does this in part by developing industry-led world-class training courses and materials. The pre-employment training programme is a new course striving to augment the skill set of those actively seeking re-employment. This course is being piloted in the West Midlands. The Automotive Academy has a national focus and once fully tested and developed all courses are made available across the UK via the academy's regional infrastructure for delivery via quality assured third party training providers.

Bifrangi UK Ltd

Mr. MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the dates of the meetings officials of his Department have held with representatives of Bifrangi UK Ltd in Sheffield in the last 12 months. [49077]

Alun Michael: Since January 2005 officials have met representatives of Bifrangi UK Ltd on the following dates:

11 January 2005—Yorkshire and Humberside Development Agency in Italy

17 March 2005—Yorkshire and Humberside development Agency in Sheffield

3 May 2005—UK Trade and Investment in London

27 June 2005—Yorkshire and Humberside Development Agency in Sheffield

Business Insolvencies

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list each *(a)* corporate administration, *(b)* receivership and *(c)* liquidation that started over 20 years ago but has not yet been completed. [49718]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Details of these records from over 20 years ago are not available in this form and obtaining the data would incur disproportionate cost.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the trend in the number of business insolvencies. [49730]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Business insolvencies include company liquidations and the self-employed subset of individual bankruptcy orders. It is not currently possible from centrally collated information to identify or quantify the element of business-related individual voluntary arrangements (IVA's). Figures quoted in the following table relate to England and Wales.

Company liquidations and self-employed bankruptcies in England and Wales 1992–2005: Number and percentage change

	Company liquidations	Percentage change year on year
1992	24,425	—
1993	20,708	-15.2
1994	16,728	-19.2
1995	14,536	-13.1
1996	13,461	-7.4
1997	12,610	-6.3
1998	13,203	4.7
1999	14,280	8.2
2000	14,317	0.3
2001	14,972	4.6
2002	16,305	8.9
2003	14,184	-13.0
2004	12,192	-14.0
2005	12,893	5.7

	Self-employed bankruptcies	Percentage change year on year
1992	19,525	
1993	18,561	-4.9
1994	15,114	-18.6
1995	13,282	-12.1
1996	12,667	-4.6
1997	11,269	-11.0
1998	10,420	-7.5
1999	10,723	2.9
2000	9,952	-7.2
2001	9,839	-1.1
2002	8,854	-10.0
2003	9,139	3.2
2004	9,564	4.7
2005	n/a	n/a
January-September 2004	7,192	
January-September 2005	8,131	13.1

The trend in both company liquidations and self-employed bankruptcies has been decreasing, with some fluctuation, since the last recession in the early 1990's. The 2005 figure of 12,893 company liquidations is just over half of the level reached in 1992 (24,425); self-employed bankruptcies in 2004 (the latest full year available) at 9,564 are less than half the level in 1992 (19,525). The latest available data for self-employed bankruptcies are for January-September 2005, where the 8,131 bankruptcy orders compare with 14,531 during the same period of 1992.

Since 1997, company liquidations have shown modest increases year-on-year until 2002 after which the figures fell in 2003 and again in 2004. The 2005 figure, while up slightly on 2004, is about the same as for 1997. Self-employed bankruptcies decreased year-on-year from 1997 to 2002, after which 2003 and 2004 saw small increases; the 2004 figure (at 9,564) remains, however, lower than in 1997 (11,269).

When compared with numbers of companies on the Companies House active register, the rate of company insolvencies has been falling from Q3 1992 to Q4 2005; the latest figure of 0.7 has remained the same for the last six quarters and compares to that of 2.6 for Q3 1992. The equivalent rate during the second half of 1997 was 1.2.

Company Law

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will introduce legislation requiring companies to file a copy of their audit contract with the Registrar of Companies. [49719]

Alun Michael: Clause 480 of the Company Law Reform Bill, introduced in the House of Lords on 1 November, will create a power for my right hon. Friend

the Secretary of State to make regulations requiring companies to disclose the terms on which their auditors are appointed.

Credit Cards

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will introduce legislation to ban credit card companies from issuing credit cards to anyone below the age of 18 years. [49731]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government do not see the need to introduce such legislation. Under section 50 of the Consumer Credit Act 1974 it is already an offence to send a document to a minor inviting them to borrow money and therefore no-one under the age of 18 should be offered a credit card. If, however, a minor were to enter into a credit agreement, that agreement would not be binding under the general law.

Departmental Conferences

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1245 on departmental conferences, what is his Department's definition of the marketing mix; and how much his Department spent on marketing in each year since 1997. [45827]

Alan Johnson: The communication specialists at DTI adopt an industry accepted definition of the marketing mix which can include direct mail, paid-for advertising, use of non-news media and promotional items. When marketing strategies are developed, a strong emphasis is placed on the desired outcomes and this influences what parts of the marketing mix are used.

The then Secretary of State for Trade and Industry provided the following responses:

> 14 January 2004 "My Department's expenditure on advertising through the Central Office of Information in 1997-98 amounted to £2,504,885 excluding VAT and subsequent COI rebates. Records of expenditure on other information campaigns are not held centrally."
>
> 21 January 2004 "For expenditure on advertising by my Department through COI from 1995-96 to 2000-01 I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Twickenham on 20 November 2001, *Official Report*, column 162W. Expenditure for 2001-02, 2002-03 and 2003-04 (to date) was £6,610,240, £13,741,906 and £2,044,497 respectively. These figures include advertising by the Small Business Service and exclude VAT."

Information on publicity expenditure from centrally held budgets is contained in the Government's Expenditure Plans and, more recently, the DTI's annual Departmental Report, which are available in the Libraries of the House. Figures relating to other information campaigns, and information on publicity and advertising by NDPBs, are not held centrally and could be produced only at disproportionate cost.

Dyfed Postal Area

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received since 1999 about changing the name of the Dyfed postal area to take account of new local authority areas since 1999. [49228]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Royal Mail plc. The chief executive has been asked to reply to the hon. Member.

Energy Consumption (Wales)

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average annual energy consumption per household in Wales was in 2004-05; and if he will make a statement. [49746]

Malcolm Wicks: Total energy consumption figures at regional and local authority level for 2003 were published as experimental statistics in the December 2005 edition of Energy Trends, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House. These show that household energy consumption in Wales (excluding transport use) totalled 29,554.7GWh (2,541.3 thousand tonnes of oil equivalent) during 2003. This equates to an annual household consumption of around 24,300kWh.

Energy Pricing

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he *(a)* last discussed and *(b)* next plans to discuss energy prices for industry with Ofgem. [29389]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 17 November 2005]:* Ministers and senior officials in DTI meet regularly with their counterparts in Ofgem to discuss a broad range of energy market issues, including energy prices. The next meeting between Ministers and Ofgem is scheduled for the very near future. DTI established the Gas Prices Working Group, which includes Ofgem and industry representatives, to consider ways of mitigating the impact of high energy prices on industrial users.

Equitable Life

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations his Department has made to the EU in response to its proposed investigation into Equitable Life. [49725]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply.

The European Parliament set up a Committee of Inquiry into Equitable Life on 12 January. The Treasury has received no approach from the Committee in relation to this inquiry. The Government will carefully consider any approach it receives and what representations it might make.

EU Accounts Modernisation Directive

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the estimated cost to businesses is of the Business Review under the EU Accounts Modernisation Directive. [49828]

Alun Michael *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* The Regulatory Impact Assessment which accompanies the Companies Act 1985 (Operating and Financial Review and Directors' Report etc.) Regulations 2005 (S.I. 2005/1011), estimates the cost of preparation and audit assurance for the Business Review at a total of £103.74 million for 37,290 companies.

Fireworks

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the efficacy of the restrictions on the supply of fireworks since the coming into force of the Fireworks Regulations 2004. [49516]

Mr. Sutcliffe: None. However, an assessment of enforcement activities under relevant fireworks legislation will be undertaken in due course.

Gas Supplies

Mr. MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking with the European Commission to secure fair access to supplies of gas at competitive prices. [49785]

Malcolm Wicks: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer wrote to the European Commission on 5 December to ask them to consider whether the price volatility on the UK gas market last November may have been the result of abusive behaviour or distortions in the wider EU gas market. The Commission is already carrying out an inquiry into the EU gas and electricity sector and I understand they intend to present their preliminary findings on 16 February. We would expect and encourage them to take urgent action to address any examples of such abusive behaviour or distortions.

Indian Companies

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the five Indian companies in the UK with a presence in the financial services sector which have the highest turnover; and what the turnover is of each. [45129]

Ian Pearson: According to publicly available information from Companies House, the top five Indian companies in the financial services sector in the UK, based on turnover in 2004–05, are given in the following table. Several Indian banks have only branches in the UK but these, according to Companies House, are not required to provide separate accounts.

Company	*Latest year*	*Turnover (£000)*
1. ICICI Bank UK Ltd	31 March 2005	7,124
2. JB Boda and Co (UK) Ltd	31 December 2004	552
3. KM Dastur and Co Ltd	31 March 2005	243
4. First Global (UK) Ltd	31 March 2005	49
5. Ridge Futures Ltd	31 March 2004	16

Note:
Turnover figure not available, the above figure refers to operating income, (including fees and other income).

Military Equipment (Exports)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what export credit arrangements have been put in place to provide cover for military equipment exported to Saudi Arabia under the Memorandum of Understanding document signed in December 2005; and if he will make a statement. [48688]

Ian Pearson: There are no export credit arrangements in place to provide cover for this business.

New Delhi Declaration

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the 2002 New Delhi Declaration, what assessment his Department has made of the operation of the *(a)* Joint Economic and Trade Committee and *(b)* Indo-British Economic and Financial Dialogue. [48396]

Ian Pearson: The purpose of (JETCO) is to engage bilaterally with business on UK-India trade and investment issues and take action where possible to increase business opportunities. The second meeting was held in London on 31 January. The meeting, chaired by John Sunderland of the CBI and in the presence of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and Indian Minister of Commerce, Kamal Nath, was well attended by business delegations from India and the UK. Progress reports were given on 11 areas of work taking place under JETCO, including intellectual property rights and sector based activity being conducted by business to business working groups e.g. legal services, hi-tech, infrastructure, health, agribusiness and creative industries. JETCO has already seen the liberalisation of air services and the signing of a bilateral film co-production agreement. During the second JETCO meeting, Ministers Nath and Johnson asked their officials to continue conduct a six monthly review of the JETCO process. Findings will be submitted at the mid-year review (summer 2006). Both Ministers agreed that JETCO is playing a vital role in promoting an increasing bilateral trade and investment.

Terms of reference for the Indian British Economic and Financial Dialogue were agreed in London on 4 February 2005 by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Indian Finance Minister, Mr. P. Chidambaram. Since then, senior officials from both countries have held useful exploratory discussions about topics to take forward in partnership under the dialogue. A first session of the Dialogue is expected to take place later this year.

Nuclear Fuels

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment his Department has made of the energy requirements of producing nuclear fuels. [48020]

Malcolm Wicks: In the context of the Energy Review, the Government are looking at the lifecycle carbon emissions of nuclear generation. This will require an understanding of the energy requirements for the preparation of fuel, operation, and decommissioning and waste management.

Nuclear Power

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with representatives of Amicus on the new nuclear build. [43747]

Malcolm Wicks: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and I both have regular discussions with representatives of Amicus on a wide range of issues. However, none of our recent meetings have been specifically related to new nuclear build.

During the Energy Review consultation, I want to engage a wide range of stakeholders, including trade unions, in an assessment of all options to help us deliver our medium and long term objectives.

Operating and Financial Review

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what estimate his Department has made of the financial costs incurred by business prior to November 2005 in respect of implementing the operating and financial review; [45500]

(2) if he will list the interested parties who were consulted by his Department prior to November 2005 in respect of the proposal to remove the requirement to prepare operating and financial review statements. [45502]

Alun Michael: The options to increase narrative reporting requirements were considered in the final regulatory impact assessment that accompanied the Companies Act 1985 (Operating and Financial Review and Directors' Report etc) Regulations of March 2005 which was the subject of extensive consultation in summer 2004. It follows that no further consultation was carried out by the Department of Trade and Industry before the regulations repealing the operating and financial review were introduced.

Because of the high degree of overlap between the content requirements of the OFR and the business review, the bulk of the preparatory work undertaken by quoted companies for OFR purposes should be applicable to the preparation of the business review, so formal assessment has been carried out of costs already incurred by business.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what methods he used to calculate the estimated financial consequences for business of the Operating and Financial Review prior to his decision not to proceed with it; and what discussions he had with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs before taking this decision; [48452]

(2) what assessment he made of the economic effects of requiring large companies to report on environmental issues under the Operating and Financial Review prior to his decision not to proceed with the scheme, with particular reference to resource efficiency. [48453]

Alun Michael: The options to increase narrative reporting requirements and the associated costs of these were fully considered in the final regulatory impact assessment (RIA) that accompanied the Companies Act 1985 (Operating and Financial Review and Directors' Report etc.) Regulations of March 2005 which was the subject of extensive consultation in summer 2004. No further RIA was considered necessary because the information provided in the original RIA was used by the Government to adjust its decision. In deciding to repeal the OFR, the Government chose one of the original options rather than another, and did not consider that a new RIA was necessary. Relevant Departments were consulted before the decision to repeal the OFR requirement was taken.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which organisations contribute to the cost of running the Post Office Card Account scheme; and how much was contributed by each organisation in each year since its establishment. [47947]

Barry Gardiner: A number of organisations have committed to making a contribution towards the costs of the Post Office card account between 2003–08. The contributing organisations, in alphabetical order, are: Abbey National Group, Alliance and Leicester, Bank of Ireland, Barclays, Co-operative Bank, First Trust, Halifax-Bank of Scotland, HSBC, Lloyds-TSB, National Australia Group, Nationwide Building Society, Northern Rock, Royal Bank of Scotland Group.

Details of individual payments are commercially confidential but in total these organisations have pledged around £182 million over the term of the agreement.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the Government's financial contribution has been to the Post Office Card Account system. [48676]

Barry Gardiner: The Government's financial contribution to the Post Office card account system is made under contracts between Post Office Ltd. and the Department for Work and Pensions, the Northern Ireland Social Security Agency and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

Postal Services

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of first class letters posted in Leicester met Royal Mail's online delivery target in the last year for which figures are available. [49645]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Royal Mail. The chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Power Loss (Compensation)

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much compensation for loss of power was paid to customers by each power company in each of the last five years. [49048]

Malcolm Wicks: Ofgem, the independent gas and electricity markets regulator, is responsible for the levels of compensation paid following a loss of power. Ofgem's chief executive officer has promised to write to the hon. Member with the details.

Renewable Energy

James Duddridge: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether his Department holds information on *(a)* the number and *(b)* the locations of micro-wind turbines in England. [47585]

Malcolm Wicks: *(a)* Under the Clear Skies Programme, which covers England, Wales and Northern Ireland, grants are available for micro turbines. Currently 231 households and 90 community groups have been offered grant funding.

(b) Details of all Clear Skies grant funded community projects can be downloaded from the website, http://www.clear-skies.org/communities/ApplicationGuidelines.aspx

Special Advisers

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the special advisers in post in his Department, broken down by pay band; and what the total budgeted cost to his Department of special advisers is for 2005–06. [29421]

Alan Johnson: Since 2003, the Government have published on an annual basis the names and overall cost of special advisers and the number in each payband. For the most recent information I refer the hon. Member to the statement made by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, c. 158–62WS.

Information on the numbers of special advisers prior to 2003 was provided at regular intervals and this information will be available in the Libraries of the House.

Information relating to costs for 2005–06 will be published after the end of the current financial year.

VAT Registration

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses *(a)* registered and *(b)* deregistered for VAT in each year in Ribble Valley since 1997. [49796]

Alun Michael: The number of businesses which *(a)* registered and *(b)* deregistered for VAT in each year in Ribble Valley since 1997 is displayed in the following table:

	VAT registrations	*VAT deregistrations*
1997	195	160
1998	185	160
1999	200	160
2000	175	150
2001	195	165
2002	250	170
2003	270	215
2004	205	175

World Trade Organisation

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he will publish the compendium due on the Hong Kong World Trade Organisation meeting. [48817]

Ian Pearson *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State made a statement to the House on the 20 December 2005 to provide an update on progress made at the 6th World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong. In line with normal practice, there will be no formal, written report on the Conference.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether it is the Government's policy that the Russian Federation's accession to the World Trade Organisation should be conditional on its ratification of the Energy Charter Treaty. [49695]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* To date, Russia has reached bilateral agreements on its accession to the WTO with the vast majority of WTO members. Only a few remain to be concluded. The bilateral agreement with the EU was reached in May 2004. Ratification of the Energy Charter Treaty was not a requirement under that bilateral agreement.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Road Traffic Accidents

7. **Mr. Donaldson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of serious road traffic accidents in Northern Ireland in 2005; and if he will make additional funding available to promote road safety. [48310]

Mr. Woodward: Provisional figures for 2005 indicate that there were 128 fatal collisions, resulting in 136 deaths, the lowest number since 1952 and 1041 serious injuries.

The Government announced last December that £5.5 million has been set aside for road safety for each of the next two financial years.

Paramilitary Organisations

8. **Mr. Wallace:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what factors he will take into account when assessing the future intentions of paramilitary organisations on ceasefire. [48311]

Mr. Hain: I take into account whether an organisation is committed to the use now and in the future of only democratic and peaceful means to achieve its objectives; has ceased to be involved in preparation for violence; and is co-operating fully with the Decommissioning Commission.

13. **Mr. Peter Robinson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in reducing the involvement of paramilitary organisations in criminality in Northern Ireland. [48316]

Mr. Woodward: The partner agencies of the Organised Crime Task Force are relentlessly pursuing organised criminals in Northern Ireland, regardless of whether they are linked to paramilitary groups or not. Good progress is being made—last year 28 top level organised crime gangs in Northern Ireland were disrupted or dismantled as a result of law enforcement activity.

Child Sex Abuse

9. **David Simpson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will instruct the Police Service of Northern Ireland to create a separate database of child sex abuse allegations and cases in Northern Ireland. [48312]

Mr. Woodward: The Police Service of Northern Ireland currently employs a number of databases that record relevant information about sex offenders. They are managed to nationally agreed standards. The Police Service of Northern Ireland is also currently considering the development of a new victim centred database that

would enhance the organisation's ability to track suspected incidents/reports of all sexual offence investigations, including those involving child sex abuse.

Smoking Ban

10. **Mr. David Anderson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the response from the people in Northern Ireland has been to the proposed smoking ban in public places. [48313]

Mr. Woodward: My announcement on 17 October was widely welcomed by a broad spectrum of public opinion, including health professionals, trades' unions and the main political parties. A recent survey commissioned by Action Cancer and Action on Smoking and Health found that 78 percent. of Northern Ireland respondents support laws to make all workplaces, including pubs and restaurants, smoke-free.

Fuel Smuggling

11. **Sammy Wilson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps the Government are taking to combat illegal fuel smuggling into Northern Ireland. [48314]

Mr. Woodward: Bearing down on oils fraud is a key priority for the Organised Crime Task Force. Legitimate fuel deliveries into NI have increased by 28 percent. since 2000.

Security

14. **Mr. Mackay:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the security situation in Northern Ireland. [48317]

Mr. Woodward: We continue to see dramatic improvements in the security situation compared to the height of the troubles, with paramilitary style attacks on a downward trend.

Breast Screening

15. **Mrs. Iris Robinson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to restore public confidence in reporting on breast screening in Northern Ireland following the Wilson review. [48318]

Mr. Woodward: The recommendations of the Wilson report will be implemented in full as will those of the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority when it reports in March. Delivery of breast diagnosis will in future be achieved through multi/disciplinary team working. The Department is urgently addressing the need to recruit further consultant radiologists and is already considering how best to deploy current resources to provide a quality service to women with breast disease.

Coastal Erosion

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the measures he has taken to reduce the impact of coastal erosion around Northern Ireland. [18247]

Angela E. Smith: Northern Ireland does not have any legislation specifically related to coastal erosion. Essential works within the sphere of interest of various Departments continue to be dealt with under various pieces of existing legislation according to the Bateman formula.

The Bateman formula is an historic interdepartmental agreement detailing the procedure for executing essential coastal protection works. Within this formula cost beneficial works, to protect essential infrastructure, may be undertaken by the Department or authority responsible for the asset at risk. For example, Translink is responsible for sea defences on certain sections of the rail network and has recently completed £600,000 of work repairing sections of rail between Downshire Halt and Whitehead.

DARD's Rivers Agency undertakes essential cost effective works that do not fall within the functional area of other Departments or agencies.

Drugs Seizures

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many seizures have been made in each parliamentary constituency in Northern Ireland of *(a)* ecstasy tablets, *(b)* cocaine, *(c)* cannabis and *(d)* heroin during each of the last 12 months for which figures are available. [48282]

Mr. Woodward: Neither the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) nor Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) hold records of the number of seizures of illicit drugs made in each parliamentary constituency in Northern Ireland.

Information relating to the number of seizures of ecstasy, cocaine, cannabis and heroin which have been made in the last twelve months by PSNI, and broken down by district command unit, and by HMRC broken down by airports and postal depots has been placed in the Library.

Dungiven Castle

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what *(a)* environmental and *(b)* historical protection there is against inappropriate developments adjacent to Dungiven castle, County Londonderry. [49152]

Angela E. Smith: Dungiven castle is a Grade B1 listed building. It is listed under Article 42 of the Planning (NI) Order 1991. Both the castle and its setting are protected from inappropriate works under this Order and Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS 6) "Planning Archaeology and the Built Heritage". The Draft Northern Area Plan, published May 2005 is also a material consideration in determining planning applications and affords protection to the castle and its surrounding area by two designations. The first is as a Local Landscape Policy Area. This seeks to prevent proposals liable to adversely affect features that contribute to the environmental quality, integrity or character of the area. The second is as an Area of Archaeological Potential. This highlights, for prospective developers, areas where it is likely that archaeological remains will be encountered in the course of development. Where remains are found, PPS 6 provides policies for their safeguarding and management. The Castle Environmental Park is a major area of existing open space which is protected by another

Planning Policy (Statement 8 Open Space and Recreation). A small part of this park is within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

There is a scheduled archaeological site and monument located to the south east of the castle which is also afforded protection under PPS 6.

Floral Displays

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much money was spent by each district council in the Province on floral displays in the last 12 months. [49356]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is not held centrally and councils inform the Government that they do not record this separately.

GCSEs

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what proportion of students in *(a)* grammar schools and *(b)* non-grammar schools in Northern Ireland achieved passes at grades A* to C at GCSE level in at least five subjects including English and mathematics in each of the last five years. [49493]

Angela E. Smith: The requested information is as follows:

Academic year	*Grammar schools*	*Non-grammar schools*	*Northern Ireland average*
2003-04	91	26	49
2002-03	92	26	50
2001-02	92	26	50
2000-01	92	25	49
1999-2000	92	24	49

Notes:
1. The figures refer to the percentage of year 12 pupils who achieved five or more GCSEs at A* to C including English and mathematics.
2. The latest information available relates to the 2003-04 academic year.

General Practitioners

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the trend in the number of general practitioners in Northern Ireland continuing to practise beyond the age of 65 years. [49396]

Mr. Woodward: At 6 February 2006 there are 28 general practitioners over the age of 65 who are working in primary care, out of a total of 1,490. Full historic detail of the age profile of general practitioner's is not held.

Health Commissioning Bodies

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the likely costs of developing and sustaining seven new health commissioning bodies in the Province. [49323]

Mr. Woodward: Under the new arrangements to be put in place as a result of the Review of Public Administration, four health and social services boards and 18 trusts are to be replaced by a single strategic health and social services authority and five trusts.

Seven social commissioning groups will be established as local offices of the authority.

The operational costs of these new commissioning arrangements are still being considered but it is expected that the new structures will deliver significant savings in overall management and administration costs.

Hospitality Costs

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer by his colleague of 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 791W, on hospitality costs, how hospitality was paid for by *(a)* the Secretary of State and Direct Rule Ministers, *(b)* Ministers in the Northern Ireland Assembly, *(c)* the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, *(d)* the Chief Constable and *(e)* district commanders in each of the last 10 years; what limit was placed upon the amount of alcohol allowable under the hospitality budget; and what accounting procedures were in place to monitor the amount spent on hospitality in each case. [46470]

Mr. Woodward: Hospitality costs for *(a)* the Secretary of State and Direct Rule Ministers are paid from the NIO's budget, *(b)* Ministers in the Northern Ireland Assembly are paid for directly by the relevant NI Department of each Minister, *(c)* the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly are paid for from the budget of the NI Assembly, *(d)* the Chief Constable are paid for from the PSNI budget and *(e)* district commanders are also paid for from the PSNI budget.

For the Northern Ireland Office and the NI Assembly, there is no fixed figure for the amount of alcohol which can be paid from a hospitality budget. The director, or head of division, is responsible for ensuring that the Department's policy on controlling and accounting for hospitality is adhered to at all times.

For the PSNI and the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP), specific guidance is available on the provision of hospitality, including limits for expenditure on alcohol. In general, such expenditure should be modest and, in the case of a sit down meal for example, should not exceed one third of the total cost of food. DFP are currently reviewing their departmental guidance.

All hospitality budgets are allocated annually and strictly monitored throughout the accounting period. Records are subject to audit.

Martin Kelly

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what role the Police Service Northern Ireland's underwater search unit has played in relation to the investigation into the case of Martin Kelly. [49284]

Mr. Woodward: The deployment of police resources in an investigation, including the underwater search unit is an operational matter for the Chief Constable.

Ministerial Car Fleet

David Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 303W, on ministerial car

fleet, how police drivers are paid for; and which agency or Department provided drivers for each devolved minister in the Northern Ireland Executive. [46462]

Mr. Woodward: Police drivers and their associated costs are initially paid from the Police Service of Northern Ireland's (PSNI) own budget, and these costs then are recouped from the NIO on a quarterly basis.

Under devolution the Department of Finance and Personnel (car pool) provided and paid for drivers for all devolved Ministers for the Northern Ireland Executive apart from those who were covered by the PSNI close protection unit (CPU) and those Ministers from Sinn Fein who provided drivers from their party.

Northern Ireland Development Agency

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the location is of each Northern Ireland Development Agency office; what the annual running cost was of each in the last period for which figures are available; and how much *(a)* inward investment each attracted and *(b)* trade each produced for Northern Ireland in that period. [48921]

Angela E. Smith: Invest NI in line with our foreign direct investment (FDI) competitors in GB and ROI do not provide costs for individual offices. The overall budget for running the office network and associated marketing activities in 2004–05 amounted to £5.56 million.

Invest Northern Ireland has investment and trade offices in Europe—London, Dublin, Brussels and Düsseldorf; Asia Pacific—Seoul, Tokyo, Taipei, and Shanghai since December 2005; United States—Boston, San Jose, Atlanta, Washington DC, Denver and New York since June 2005; and the Gulf States—Dubai.

During 2004–05 Invest NI secured 17 new FDI projects offering the potential of 1,905 jobs and representing a total investment of £58.2 million; with a further investment of £150 million offering the prospect of 1,562 new jobs by follow-on investment by FDI companies in previous years.

Six projects were secured from the United States, five from the Republic of Ireland, four from Great Britain, and two from continental Europe.

In 2004–05 companies using trade offices in Boston, Denver and Dubai reported new business worth £35.7 million.

Saville Inquiry

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the total sums of public money paid to each relevant firm of lawyers for work done for or in connection with the Saville Inquiry. [44190]

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much the Saville Inquiry has cost to date; how much has been paid to each *(a)* leading counsel and *(b)* firm of solicitors involved; and how much he estimates the total cost will be. [5781]

Mr. Hanson: The following table provides details of the payments made by the Northern Ireland Office to each of the legal firms involved in the Bloody Sunday Inquiry. These payments include VAT and other disbursements where appropriate and so do not necessarily represent the amounts received by individuals.

Counsel for the inquiry	*Payments made (£)*	*Period covered* *From*	*To*
Christopher Clarke	4,488,266	February 1998	December 2005
Jacob Grierson[1]	394,879	July 1998	December 2000
Alan Roxburgh	2,040,039	May 98	December 2005
Cathryn McGahey	1,604,917	June 2000	December 2005
Bilal Rawat	1,490,401	June 2000	December 2005
Solicitors employed for the taking of witness statements			
Eversheds	12,673,056	June 1998	December 2005
Senior counsel representing the families			
Lord Gifford	718,830	October 1998	December 2005
Arthur Harvey	1,226,257	July 1998	December 2005
Michael Lavery	593,354	November 2000	December 2005
Barry J. McDonald[2]	889,953	September 1998	December 2005
P. T. MacDonald[3]	65,800	April 1998	December 2005
Michael Mansfield	682,378	March 1999	December 2005
Eilish McDermott	659,909	March 2000	December 2005
Seamus Treacy[4]	951,140	March 1998	December 2005
Eoin McGonigal	82,446	October 2000	December 2005
Kevin Finegan	551,815	July 1998	December 2005
Senior counsel representing NICRA			
Sir Louis Blom Cooper	540,616	December 2000	December 2005
Junior counsel representing the families			
John Coyle	650,802	September 1999	December 2005
Fiona Doherty	466,658	October 2000	December 2005
Ciaran Harvey	632,830	December 2000	December 2005
Richard Harvey	634,792	October 2000	December 2005
Brian Kennedy	594,716	July 1999	December 2005
Philip Magee[5]	83,175	June 1998	December 2005

Counsel for the inquiry	Payments made (£)	Period covered From	To
Kieran Mallon	801,759	March 1999	December 2005
Brian McCartney	867,957	October 1998	December 2005
Karen Quinlivan	390,068	March 1999	December 2005
Patricia Smyth	328,718	October 1998	December 2005
Michael Topolski[4]	139,940	November 2000	December 2005
Mary McHugh	384,111	February 2002	December 2005
Junior counsel representing NICRA			
Paddy O'Hanlon	230,151	November 2000	December 2005
Solicitors representing the families			
Barr & Co.	694,618	February 1999	December 2005
Brendan Kearney & Co.	931,823	July 1999	December 2005
Desmond Doherty & Co.	1,232,539	November 1998	December 2005
MacDermott & McGurk	1,204,772	November 1998	December 2005
Madden & Finucane	9,271,514	January 1998	December 2005
McCann & McCann	671,501	October 1998	December 2005
McCartney & Casey	1,221,132	November 1998	December 2005
Solicitor representing NICRA			
Francis Keenan	594,327	May 2000	December 2005
Legal representatives for other witnesses			
Various solicitors and counsel	2,860,625	April 1998	December 2005

[1] Left the case in December 2000.
[2] Left the case (as a junior) in September 2000 and rejoined the case (as a senior) in July 2001.
[3] Left the case June 1999.
[4] Having started as a junior in March 1998, became a senior counsel in September 2000.
[5] Left the case in September 2000.
[6] Left the case in June 2001.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence has advised me that the following payments have been made to counsel and solicitors in respect of work for the Bloody Sunday Inquiry by his Department.

	Payments made (£)
Senior counsel representing HM armed forces	
Edwin Glasgow QC	4,054,187
Edmund Lawson QC	942,943
David Lloyd Jones QC	1,095,966
Gerard Elias QC	1,795,752
Peter Clarke QC	958,852
Sir Allan Green QC	1,522,441
Rosamund Horwood-Smart QC	677,874
Sir Sydney Kentridge QC	52,875
Anna Worrall QC	100,456
Senior counsel representing MOD	
Ian Burnett QC	231,386
Philip Havers QC	7,138
Junior counsel representing HM armed forces	
Alexander Milne	409,121
Bridget Petherbridge	141,857
Huw Davies	361,638
Ian Leist	965,146
Michael Hick	253,895
Gaby Bonham-Carter	277,392
Pamela Morrison	131,378
Kristian Mills	56,928
Nicholas Moss	991,892
Sam Grodzinski	1,877
Stephen Requena	88,160
Alan May	299,009
Andrew Hurst	590,803
David Bradly	1,291,966
Michael Bools	990,071
Nicholas Griffin	1,195,062
Thomas Quinton	426,072
Junior counsel representing the MOD	
William Hoskins	49,892
Sacha Ackland	2,775
Jonathan Hough	4,488
Solicitors representing HM armed forces	
Devonshires	2,727,581
Kingsley Napley	1,943,586
Payne Hicks Beach	3,772,352
Jacqueline Duff	175,163
Treasury Solicitor	3,049,919

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many days retainers of *(a)* £750 and *(b)* £1,500 were claimed by each of the legal representatives at the Saville inquiry since its commencement. [46794]

Mr. Hanson: Fees were paid to legal firms and counsel for work specifically devoted to the Bloody Sunday inquiry. No retainer fees have ever been paid to any legal representatives.

Details of the amounts paid to legal representatives have been provided in answer to previous parliamentary questions from the hon. Member, the most recent on 25 January 2005, *Official Report*, column. 311W and today in answer to parliamentary questions from the hon. Member for Aylesbury and the hon. Member for Aldershot.

Shorts/Bombardier

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland by what means the Government have been monitoring how grant aid allocated from public expenditure to Shorts/Bombardier in the last five years has been spent by the company. [49147]

Angela E. Smith: In my answer to a previous question by the hon. Gentleman on 28 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2332W, I listed the financial assistance which had been allocated to Bombardier by Invest NI and its predecessor organisations in financial years 2000–01 to 2004–05.

In accordance with Invest Northern Ireland's principles of intervention, performance criteria were determined as part of the appraisal and approval process and these are incorporated into financial assistance agreements between Invest Northern Ireland and the company. The criteria are monitored on a regular basis and payments are made following the fulfilment by the client of its obligations, or where appropriate having vouched eligible expenditure incurred, under the terms of the financial assistance agreements.

Vaccination

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the merits of making the influenza vaccine available to encephalomyelitis ME sufferers in the Province. [49384]

Mr. Woodward: Immunisation policy in the UK is determined on advice received from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) which advises all UK Health Departments. Overall immunisation policy is constantly reviewed by JCVI and influenza immunisation is currently not recommended for ME patients.

DEFENCE

Accommodation (Armed Forces Personnel)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many homes are provided by his Department to *(a)* former and *(b)* current members of the armed forces and their families; and if he will make a statement; [49143]

(2) what percentage of the total stock of housing provided by his Department is allocated to *(a)* former and *(b)* current members of the armed forces and their families; and if he will make a statement. [49144]

Mr. Touhig: This information is not held centrally in the form requested. I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Aircraft Carriers

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to identify target in-service dates for each of the future aircraft carriers. [48823]

Mr. Ingram: As for all projects, the in-service dates (ISDs) for the future aircraft carriers will only be set following the main investment decision and once they have been approved by Ministers. This decision has not yet been taken, and will only be taken when we know with confidence the risks, the costs and the associated contractual framework involved in building the carriers.

Defence Activity (West Midlands)

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what financial support he will provide for defence activity in the West Midlands in each of the next five years. [40486]

Mr. Touhig: Defence is a national capability and is funded functionally rather than geographically. Consequently the answer to this question could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Defence Vetting Agency

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average time was for an application to be processed by the Defence Vetting Agency for *(a)* a security check and *(b)* developed vetting on individuals in each country in the UK in the last year for which figures are available. [49745]

Mr. Ingram: The DVA's computerised vetting records are not held in a format that enables the vetting statistics to be broken down by country. This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The average times, for all initial and review cases undertaken in 2004–05 were:

Security check—39 calendar days

Developed vetting—70 calendar days

Joint Casualty Treatment Ship

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2127W to the hon. Member for Woodspring (Dr. Fox), on the Joint Casualty Treatment Ship, what the terms of reference are for the review; whether they include the possibility that RFA Argus will not be replaced; and when the review is expected to be completed. [48892]

Mr. Ingram: The review of the Joint Casualty Treatment Ship programme was established to look into the options for delivering maritime deployed medical capability; taking into account the existing capability provided by RFA Argus.

The review is expected to complete in April 2006.

Military Decorations

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the medals and decorations that were awarded by the United States administration to British military personnel of the rank of *(a)* Commodore, *(b)* Brigadier and *(c)* Air Commodore and above for operations in the Iraq war in 2003. [48212]

Mr. Straw: I have been asked to reply.

The United States administration made six awards in the Legion of Merit (Degree of Officer) to British military personnel of the rank of Commodore, Brigadier and Air Commodore and above for operations in the Iraq war in (January to March) 2003.

Operation Enduring Freedom

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements have been made for increased NATO international security assistance force command integration with the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom; and if he will make a statement. [42992]

John Reid: The international security assistance force (ISAF)'s peace support mission will remain distinct from the counter-terrorism aspects of the Operation Enduring Freedom coalition's mission. NATO has, however, revised its operational plan for the ISAF to outline clear arrangements for creating greater synergy between the ISAF and the coalition. Clear command arrangements will co-ordinate, and where necessary, deconflict efforts between the two missions as agreed under the auspices of the operational plan.

QinetiQ

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of the study commissioned from Accenture, referred to on page 24 of the QinetiQ prospectus. [47266]

John Reid: As the QinetiQ prospectus states, the Accenture study was privately commissioned by QinetiQ. Any queries relating to this are therefore a matter for the company; questions should be referred to the chief executive at the following address:

Graham Love
Chief Executive
QinetiQ Limited
Cody Technology Park
Building A1
Ively Road
Farnborough
Hampshire GU14 OLX

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much profit has been recorded since the formation of the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency, including that recorded by QinetiQ; and where these funds have been invested. [47271]

John Reid: In July 2001 the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) was split into its two successor organisations: QinetiQ and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl). Profit figures (including dividend distribution) for DERA up to the split, as shown in the Agency's annual reports are given as follows:

£ million

	Profit (loss) for the financial year	*Dividend to MOD*	*Retained profit (loss)*
1995-96	49.6	0	49.6
1996-97	61.7	[1]23.9	37.8
1997-98	40.6	20	20.6
1998-99	31.0	25	6
1999-2000	41.5	25	16.5
2000-01	[2](91.8)	5	(96.8)

[1] Includes £8.9 million deducted as an appropriation of a surplus arising on sale of operations.
[2] Loss for 2000-01 reflects the impact of a number of exceptional items including the costs of the split of the former DERA, losses for the termination of certain operations, and a write down in the value of certain other assets.

DERA profits after dividends were invested in the agency's operations. Profits recorded by QinetiQ are a matter for the company and recorded in its annual reports. Figures for the last three years, from 2001-02 to 2004-05, are, however, summarised in the QinetiQ Sale Prospectus, a copy of which was placed in the Library of the House on 26 January 2006.

Service Accommodation

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of his Department's service accommodation properties were *(a)* grade 1 standard, *(b)* grade 2 standard, *(c)* grade 3 standard and *(d)* grade 4 standard in (i) Cyprus and (ii) Gibraltar (A) on the last date for which figures are available and (B) in 1997. [48778]

Mr. Touhig: The number and standards for condition of service families accommodation (SFA) and single living accommodation (SLA) in Cyprus and Gibraltar as at April 2005 are given in the following table. We do not hold comparative data for 1997.

Grade	*SLA*	*SFA*
Cyprus		
1	60	246
2	1,093	343
3	1,659	709
4	434	914
Total	3,246	2,212
Gibraltar		
1	6	349
2	6	121
3	0	35
4	546	7
Total	558	512

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many homes are provided by his Department to *(a)* former and *(b)* current members of the armed forces and their families; and if he will make a statement; [49143]

(2) what percentage of the total stock of housing provided by his Department is allocated to *(a)* former and *(b)* current members of the armed forces and their families; and if he will make a statement. [49144]

Mr. Touhig: This information is not held centrally in the form requested. I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent discussions he has had with NATO counterparts on the possibility of supplying armed forces for peacekeeping in Sudan. [49454]

Mr. Ingram: There has been no discussion on the provision of NATO forces for peacekeeping in Sudan. NATO continues to support the African Union's Mission in Sudan through the provision of airlift, training and capacity building.

SCOTLAND

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland on how many occasions his Department consulted citizens' juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens' jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens' jury. [46229]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office has not consulted citizens' juries in the last five years.

Press Coverage

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 he has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* his Department; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47088]

David Cairns: No complaints have been made to the Press Complaints Commission.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Burdens Doctrine

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Department's New Burdens Doctrine applies to new obligations imposed on local authorities by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; and if he will make a statement. [49778]

Mr. Woolas: The New Burdens Doctrine applies to all Government Departments. It requires them to fund the net additional costs of any policy or initiative which increases the cost of providing local authority services.

Casino Operators

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many meetings he has had with casino operators since May 1997; and *(a)* where and *(b)* when each such meeting took place. [49688]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) was created following Machinery of Government changes on 29 May 2002 and no records are held from before this time.

On 28 November 2004, while my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister was in Sydney on official business, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister visited Sydney's Star City Casino, to get a feel for what an establishment of that size was like. My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister was shown around by a government relations officer at the casino.

Community Contact Centres

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria are used in assessing the eligibility for funding of community contact centres through the investing in communities programme in the eastern region; and if he will make a statement. [49274]

Alun Michael: I have been asked to reply.

Investing in communities is an innovative 10 year programme introduced by the East of England Development Agency which seeks to ensure that the region's most deprived communities can achieve their full potential. The aim is to identify the needs of local communities and, identify long term strategic solutions to address them. It will be for local partnerships to identify whether community contact centres have a role to play in developing long term strategic solutions to tackling the barriers which face disadvantaged communities in terms of accessing employment, skills, training and starting businesses.

Correspondence

Mr. Mullin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the Minister for Communities and local government will reply to the letter of 9 December 2005 from the right hon. Member for Sunderland, South regarding single status. [48148]

Mr. Woolas: I replied to my hon. Friend on 6 February.

Departmental Groups

Pete Wishart: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the administration costs associated with his Department's *(a)* Ministerial Group, *(b)* Legal Directorate and *(c)* Tackling Disadvantage Group in the last year for which figures are available. [48853]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The following table sets out the net administration costs of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Ministerial Group, Legal Directorate and the Tackling Disadvantage Group in 2004–05. These figures exclude the relevant group's or directorate's share of corporate overheads (such as IT and accommodation costs) which are managed centrally.

	£ million
	2004–05
Ministerial Group	4.74
Legal Directorate	5.97
Tackling Disadvantage Group	14.12

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many staff work in his Department's Sustainable Communities Group; how many are based in *(a)* London and *(b)* each region; and what the total salary costs were of the group in each area in the last year for which figures are available. [48888]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has 498.95 staff on full-time equivalent (FTE) basis working in the Sustainable Communities Group.

of these 477.65 (FTE) staff are based in London. The total salary costs for the 2005–06 financial year currently stands at £17.938 million.

The above figures are as at 2 February 2006.

The ODPM does not hold data regarding the regions; such a breakdown could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the administration costs of his Department's Regional Development Group in the last year for which figures are available. [48893]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The net administration costs of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Regional Development Group (excluding the Government offices) in 2004–05 were £5.1 million. These figures exclude the group's share of corporate overheads (such as IT and accommodation costs) which are managed centrally.

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the administration costs associated with his Department's Sustainable Communities Group in the last year for which figures are available. [48897]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The net administration costs of the Sustainable Communities Group in 2004–05 were £27.13 million. These figures exclude the group's share of corporate overheads (such as IT and accommodation costs) which are managed centrally.

Departmental Staff

David Simpson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many staff have been employed in his private office in each year since he became Deputy Prime Minister. [46888]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minster was formed on 29 May 2002.

The number of full-time equivalent staff employed in my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's private office were as follows:

	Number
On 1 April 2003	6
On 1 April 2004	8
On 1 April 2005	8

Development (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Department has held meetings on development in Castle Point with Hickfort Ltd of Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex. [49350]

Yvette Cooper: Neither the Thames Gateway Delivery Unit nor the Government Office for the East of England (GO-East), as the appropriate divisions within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, have held a formal meeting with Hickfort Ltd. Representatives from Hickfort Ltd visited the Government stand at the Thames Gateway Forum on 23 November 2005. They had an informal discussion with a representative from GO-East about a proposed development in Castle Point, but no follow-up actions were agreed.

Directly-elected Mayors

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost was of the referendum for a directly elected mayor in each area where such a process has been conducted. [49325]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold information on the costs of referendums for directly-elected mayors.

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many councils have conducted a referendum in which the local electorate *(a)* accepted and *(b)* rejected directly elected mayors. [49327]

Mr. Woolas: 33 local authorities have conducted referendums on whether to have a directly elected mayor. Of these 12 voted for, and 21 against a directly elected mayor.

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many departmental employees have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46779]

Jim Fitzpatrick: During the last five years there have been less than five ill-health retirements in any one year.

Following guidance on data protection, we cannot provide further detailed analysis on these figures.

Financial Irregularity

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures he has in place to prevent fraud and financial irregularity in his Department. [49329]

Jim Fitzpatrick: A number of measures are in place to manage the risk of fraud and financial irregularity including:

promoting an anti-fraud culture in the Offices of the Deputy Prime Minister;

providing guidance to staff on how to reduce the risk of fraud;

defining responsibilities for guarding against fraud;

reviewing the system of internal controls to ensure they are effective in detecting and deterring fraud;

ensuring that an adequate separation of duties exists;

providing appropriate avenues to enable staff and other stakeholders to report suspicions of fraud or irregularities.

These measures are set out in a fraud policy statement which is made available to all staff.

Housing (Rochdale)

Paul Rowen: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on future funding for the Rochdale and Oldham housing market renewal area. [48302]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has received the scheme update from the Oldham Rochdale pathfinder and are currently considering their proposals. Funding for 2006–07 and 2007–08 will be announced in due course.

Local Exchange Trading Systems

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what support his Department provides for local exchange trading systems. [41467]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not provide support for local exchange trading systems.

Lyons Inquiry

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the likely total cost of the Lyons inquiry. [47880]

Mr. Woolas: The Lyons inquiry spent £239,565 in 2004 05. Following the extension to its remit announced on 20 September 2005, it has an estimated spend of £850,000 for 2005 06 and £950,000 for 2006 07.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will place in the Library copies of the written submissions made by his Department to the Lyons inquiry into local government; [47881]

(2) whether *(a)* a Minister and *(b)* a civil servant from his Department has submitted a formal submission to the Lyons inquiry. [48156]

Mr. Woolas: The Lyons inquiry is independent of the Government. Sir Michael Lyons will decide what to publish when he makes available his final report.

Post Office/Shop Closures

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what information his Department collects on the closure of *(a)* post offices, *(b)* bank branches and *(c)* independent retail shops. [49420]

Mr. Woolas: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Hastings and Rye (Michael Jabez Foster) on 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1963W.

Press Coverage

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 he has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* his Office; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47092]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Two. One was resolved.

Rates

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average *(a)* council tax and *(b)* business rates bill, paid by a composite hereditament, was in England in the latest year for which figures are available. [49782]

Mr. Woolas: Details of the average *(a)* council tax and *(b)* business rates bill, paid by composite hereditaments, in England are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Regional Spatial Strategy

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will review the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England with reference to the merits of establishing a Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough growth corridor. [49119]

Yvette Cooper: The growth potential of the London-Stansted-Cambridge area was identified as part of the previous Regional Planning Guidance for the wider South East in 2001. The Sustainable Communities Plan, "Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future", published February 2003, established the London-Stansted-Cambridge growth area, and it was extended to cover Peterborough in January 2004.

The draft East of England Regional Spatial Strategy was published by the East of England Regional Assembly in December 2004. Following public consultation, the draft Plan is currently subject to Examination in Public by an independent panel. Once Government receives the panel's report it will consider the recommendations, including any relating to the London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough growth area.

TREASURY

Caparo Judgment

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will commission research into the impact of the Caparo judgment on audit quality. [49717]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have no plans to commission such research.

Climate Change Levy

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library the studies of the impact of the climate change levy produced by the Government Economic Service. [48917]

John Healey: The Government commissioned Cambridge Econometrics to carry out an independent evaluation of the climate change levy. Copies of the evaluation, "modelling the initial effects of the climate change levy" were published at Budget 2005, are available in the House of Commons Library and on www.hmrc.gov.uk. and its main findings are summarised in chapter 7 of the PBR 2005 report.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the Government's assessment is of the impact of the climate change levy on carbon emissions; and how much of this impact it estimates is attributable to *(a)* the price effect and *(b)* other effects consequent upon its introduction. [48918]

John Healey: The Government commissioned Cambridge Econometrics to carry out an independent evaluation of the Climate Change Levy (CCL). This evaluation, "Modelling

the initial effects of the climate change levy", concluded that the levy is effective and should save over 3.5 million tonnes of carbon per annum by 2010. In particular, Cambridge Econometrics concluded that the announcement effect of CCL in Budget 1999 will, in combination with the price effect, have reduced energy demand in the commerce and public sector by 14.6 per cent. by 2010. Cambridge Econometrics attribute most of the emissions savings to the announcement effect. However, because these two effects interact in CE's model, it is not possible to apportion precise carbon savings to either effect in isolation.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the impact of a 10 per cent. change in the climate change levy on carbon emissions after *(a)* six months and *(b)* three years. [48919]

John Healey: Based on historical price movement, it is estimated that an increase in CCL rates of 10 per cent. could reduce emissions by around 0.1 million tonnes of carbon per annum after three years. This excludes any announcement effect. No reliable estimates are available of the impact on carbon emissions after 6 months.

Consolidated Budget Guidance

Mr. Harper: To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to paragraph 333 of Consolidated Budget Guidance 2006–07, what arrangements his Department has agreed with the Ministry of Defence for the control of non-cash to near-cash switches; and what definition of near-cash he uses. [49766]

Mr. Des Browne: Near-cash in the MOD is defined in the same way as in other Departments except that it includes profit and loss on disposal and excludes the cash release from provisions. This definition was agreed at spending review. As part of the settlement, and to incentivise MOD to rationalise its asset base, MOD was provided with limited flexibility from 2006–07 to switch resources from non-cash to near-cash when non-cash savings are made which result from managed physical reductions in assets, or when non-cash savings result from management decisions to extend the life of an asset on value for money grounds.

Franked Investment Income

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the *(a)* net borrowing and *(b)* net taxes and national insurance contributions projections contained in the pre-Budget report make allowance for the forthcoming group litigation orders in the European Court of Justice on franked investment income tax rules. [49173]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Consistent with the Code for Fiscal Stability, the PBR projections take into account the fiscal effects of all firm decisions announced in the PBR or since Budget 2005. Also consistent with the Code, the PBR projections do not take account of circumstances where the impact could not be quantified at the time with reasonable accuracy. The PBR document made it clear that the Government would continue to robustly defend the corporation tax system against legal challenges under EU law.

Mesothelioma

Jon Cruddas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will list the 20 local authority areas with the highest male mesothelioma mortality levels in the last year for which figures are available; [46357]

(2) if he will list the 20 local authority areas with the highest female mesothelioma mortality levels in the last year for which figures are available; [46358]

(3) what the mortality rates from mesothelioma for *(a)* men and *(b)* women were in each London borough in the last year for which figures are available; [46359]

(4) what the number of deaths from mesothelioma for *(a)* men and *(b)* women in the UK was in the last year for which figures are available. [46361]

Mrs. McGuire: Mesothelioma mortality rates are not readily available for individual years. However, mortality rates for local and unitary authorities (UAs) relative to the rate for Great Britain as a whole are available for the period 1996–2000. Rates are not available for Northern Ireland.

For 1996–2000, the 20 local or unitary authorities with the highest levels of mortality for males, in order of statistical significance, are:

West Dunbartonshire UA
Barrow-In-Furness
South Tyneside
Plymouth UA
Sunderland
North Tyneside
Portsmouth UA
Barking and Dagenham
Medway UA
Southampton UA
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne
Gosport
Renfrewshire UA
Inverclyde UA
Eastleigh
Knowsley
Wirral
Hartlepool UA
Crewe and Nantwich
Glasgow City UA

Similarly, the 20 unitary or local authorities with the highest levels of mortality for females are:

Sunderland
Leeds
Swale
Kirklees
Barking and Dagenham
Cherwell
Castle Point
Glasgow City UA
Basildon
West Dunbartonshire UA
Eastleigh
Southampton UA
Erewash

Gedling
Medway UA
Southwark
Newham
Carlisle
North Tyneside
Hillingdon

Mesothelioma mortality rates for London boroughs relative to the rate for Great Britain as a whole for the period 1996–2000 for males and females are given in the following table. An area with a relative rate above 100 indicates a higher rate of mortality than for Great Britain as a whole; conversely an area with a rate below 100 has a lower rate than Great Britain as a whole.

	Males		*Females*	
	Number of deaths	*Mortality rate relative to GB*	*Number of deaths*	*Mortality rate relative to GB*
Newham	31	177	6	233
Tower Hamlets	10	66	4	195
Lewisham	27	131	3	91
Wandsworth	24	117	1	30
Southwark	19	97	7	235
Islington	9	62	1	46
Camden	14	84	1	40
Westminster, City of	17	95	1	38
Hammersmith and Fulham	7	54	4	197
Hackney	5	33	2	91
Haringey	10	60	0	0
Lambeth	15	76	3	102
Kensington and Chelsea	4	28	4	181
City of London	1	119	0	0
Barking and Dagenham	44	266	9	332
Havering	39	142	5	117
Hillingdon	35	143	7	184
Greenwich	28	142	4	123
Bexley	30	123	4	107
Redbridge	29	120	5	134
Bromley	39	113	5	90
Sutton	16	88	2	68
Harrow	16	75	3	89
Waltham Forest	21	109	6	197
Ealing	23	86	0	0
Enfield	27	100	7	165
Merton	13	75	3	109
Hounslow	14	74	3	106
Barnet	20	63	5	99
Croydon	24	76	4	83
Brent	18	79	4	122
Kingston Upon Thames	8	56	1	44
Richmond Upon Thames	10	57	4	140

Source:
HSE GB mesothelioma register

The number of mesothelioma deaths in Northern Ireland, hence the total for the UK, is not available by sex. There were 1,922 mesothelioma deaths in total in the UK in 2003 (the most recent year for which data are available). Of these, 1,874 deaths occurred in Great Britain, of which 1,591 were among males and 283 among females.

Property Valuation (Scotland)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what public sector organisation is responsible for the valuation of domestic properties in Scotland for *(a)* inheritance tax and *(b)* capital gains tax purposes. [47864]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Valuation Office Agency, an executive agency of HMRC.

Tax Harmonisation

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent discussions he has had with EU counterparts on plans for tax harmonisation. [49382]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government have made it clear that fair tax competition is the way forward for Europe, not proposals for tax harmonisation.

Vegetable Oils

Ms Abbott: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the criteria are for classifying vegetable oils as *(a)* fuel substitutes and *(b)* bio-diesel. [48903]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Birmingham, Yardley (John Hemming) on 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2265W.

Adam Price: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the Government's policy is on the taxation of vegetable oil when used in *(a)* modified and *(b)* unmodified form as a vehicle fuel. [49200]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for Birmingham, Yardley (John Hemming) on 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2265W.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what contribution his Department will make to training of the Afghan National and Border police; and if he will make a statement. [49314]

Mr. Straw: Germany is responsible for co-ordinating international assistance to the Afghan Government's police reform programme. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) will continue to contribute to these programmes through the Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP), jointly funded by the Department for International Development, FCO and the Ministry of Defence. Since 2002, the GCPP Afghanistan Strategy has contributed over £4 million to support police reform. The Strategy is examining several proposals for supporting police reform in financial year 2006–07, including the provision of trainers to the Regional Training Centre in Kandahar and mentors and advisers to police chiefs and Ministry of Interior senior officials in Kabul and Helmand. It is also considering how best to support the development of border security, including through the Afghan Border Police. Additionally, the UK is considering providing resources, support and mentoring for the Counter-Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA) Provincial HQ in Lashkar Gah and to recruit, train and make operational a CNPA mobile detection team.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the composition will be of the Joint Co-ordination and Monitoring Board recommended in the Afghanistan Compact of 31st January 2006; what the UK's contribution will be to the board; and if he will make a statement. [49364]

Mr. Straw: The Government of Afghanistan and the United Nations are consulting with the international community on the composition of the Joint Co-ordination and Monitoring Board. We are very pleased that the Board is being established to facilitate co-ordination and monitoring in Kabul. We envisage a flexible and representative approach to its composition.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support his Department is providing to the Afghan Government to ensure establishment of *(a)* civil administration, *(b)* police, *(c)* prisons and *(d)* judiciary in the Afghan province of Helmand; and if he will make a statement. [49411]

Mr. Straw: As stated by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence in his statement to the House on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1529, the UK presence in Helmand will be

> "working to ensure that we provide Afghanistan with a seamless package of democratic, political, developmental and military assistance in Helmand".

Envisaged Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) led activity includes building capacity in governance, security, economic and social development and counter-narcotics fields. This will include support to the Governor of Helmand, training, mentoring and advice to the police and judicial authorities, and institutional development advice and mentoring for the counter-narcotics police. The Department for International Development (DFID) and HM Revenue and Customs will be pursuing other activities. Detailed planning continues and will be informed by the deployments to Lashkar Gah of FCO and DFID staff scheduled for March 2006. It will also be necessary to support capacity-building and institutional reform programmes in the central Ministries in Kabul, to ensure that Afghan Government programmes give suitable priority to Helmand.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what measures are in place to ensure the co-ordination of *(a)* military assistance, *(b)* non-military Government aid and *(c)* Government-funded work by non-governmental organisations with work of the Government of Afghanistan. [49793]

Hilary Benn: I have been asked to reply.

The Government of Afghanistan recently approved an Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS) which sets out priorities for poverty reduction and economic growth, security and governance. To improve co-ordination of development efforts, the Government and the international community have committed themselves to taking forward the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness. The Afghanistan Compact, agreed by the Afghan Government and the international community at the London Conference on Afghanistan on 31 January, provides for the creation of a Joint Co-ordination and Monitoring Board to oversee all Afghan and international military and development assistance. This includes co-ordination of donor funds channelled through the Government, as well as work through non governmental organisations, in support of priorities set out in the Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy.

There is a need for separate but coordinated military and development efforts. Military forces are primarily responsible for creating an enabling environment for development, leaving the Afghan Government and development agencies responsible for implementing development activities.

China

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of China on internet viruses and attempts through internet fraud that emanate from China to obtain confidential data from public and commercial bodies in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [49705]

Ian Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not raised this issue with the Chinese authorities.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47682]

Mr. Straw: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Ex-Prisoners of War

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his Department has had since 2001 with the ex-Prisoners of War Association regarding compensation for British soldiers captured by Germany during the second world war who were subjected to forced labour. [48738]

Ian Pearson: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not had discussions since 2001 with the ex-Prisoners of War Association regarding compensation for British soldiers held in Germany during the second world war.

The Government are satisfied that British servicemen detained as prisoners of war by the Germans do not fall within the category of forced labourers. A small number of British servicemen detained in Nazi concentration camps received compensation under a special fund paid for by the Germans in the 1960s to victims of Nazi ideology.

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what total sum has been received by his Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48469]

Mr. Straw: Nothing.

Iran

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the Government White Paper, Prospects for the European Union in 2006, what assessment he has made of the steps necessary to be taken at this stage by the UN Security Council in order to reinforce the authority of International Atomic Energy Agency resolutions regarding Iran; and if he will make a statement. [48708]

Dr. Howells: The purpose of involving the United Nations Security Council in the question of Iran's nuclear programme is to reinforce the authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), while leaving the door open for related diplomatic efforts and negotiations. Our objective is to ensure that both the Security Council, with its primary responsibility for matters of international peace and security, and the IAEA can contribute to the resolution of the issue within their competencies.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights spending on the promotion of human rights and the rule of law in Iran. [48749]

Dr. Howells: The EU has allocated around €4.4 million to projects in Iran under the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights. Three projects, to which the EU has allocated a total of €2.9 million, are implemented by UN agencies. A further €1 million project was launched in January 2005.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the capability of Iran to deliver nuclear weapons in the event of their being developed. [48824]

Dr. Howells: Iran claims that its Shabab 3 ballistic missiles are capable of reaching Israel. Information relating to Iran has been made available to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) suggesting that Iran may be designing a missile re-entry vehicle which could have a military nuclear dimension. Iran has refused to address this information with the IAEA.

Mr. Ahmed Saardat

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the basis is for UK/US monitoring of the detention of Ahmed Saardat of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine; what assessment he has made of the reported declaration by Hamas that it would release Mr. Saardat; whether he plans to make changes in UK arrangements for the monitoring of this detention; and if he will make a statement. [47773]

Dr. Howells: Ahmed Saadat is one of the six Palestinian detainees held by the Palestinian Authority in Jericho as part of the 2002 Ramallah Agreement with Israel. The US/UK role is simply to monitor the terms of this agreement and to report any non-compliance. The Ramallah Agreement states that any changes in the status of the detainees should be agreed between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

New Delhi Declaration

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made since the 2002 New Delhi Declaration in strengthening ties between the UK and India. [48399]

Dr. Howells: Britain's bilateral relations with India are stronger than they have ever been. India is and will continue to be a key strategic partner for this country. Since the 2002 New Delhi Declaration was signed, there has been a wide range of initiatives and two-way visits focused on developing this partnership. My right hon. Friend the Prime Ministers' Initiative, signed on 20 September 2004 during Manmohan Singh's visit to the UK, set out a new strategic partnership between the UK and India. The text of this is available at: http://www.britishhighcommission.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1101400864001. Under this rubric, the two Governments have established the Joint Economic and Trade Committee to remove blockages to bilateral trade and services. This met most recently at Secretary of State level at the end of January 2006. The same initiative established also the Economic and Financial Dialogue, inaugurated in February 2005 by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his Indian opposite number.

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister held a bilateral summit with Manmohan Singh in Delhi in September 2005. My right hon. Friend announced

£10 million funding for UK-India Education and Research initiative. He also announced an enhanced Air Services Agreement under which direct services between the UK and India will quadruple. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister was accompanied by a delegation of senior British CEOs.

The UK is conducting a major public diplomacy initiative in India, launched by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister in Delhi, to change perceptions of the UK and promote better understanding of our modern, innovative, integrated society. Other bodies active in promoting the bilateral relationship include the Indo British Partnership Network and the UK-India Round Table.

A detailed overview on the current state of Indo/UK relations is available at: http://www.britishhighcommission.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1017170902405

Palestinian Election

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the implications of the outcome of the recent Palestinian legislative elections for the European Commission and European Investment Bank's package to support economic regeneration in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. [48593]

Dr. Howells: We fully support the statements of the Quartet (EU, US, UN and Russia) and EU Foreign Ministers at the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 30 January. The Council concluded that it

> 'expects the newly elected Palestinian Legislative Council to support the formation of a Government committed to a peaceful and negotiated solution of the conflict with Israel based on existing agreements and the Roadmap as well as to the rule of law, reform and sound fiscal management. On this basis the European Union stands ready to continue to support Palestinian economic development and democratic state building.'

Pingat Jasa Medal

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions *(a)* he, *(b)* Ministers and *(c)* officials in his Department have held with Malaysian Government officials since September 2005 on the award of the Pingat Jasa medal; and if he will make a statement. [48210]

Mr. Straw: Neither I nor my ministerial colleagues have had any discussions on this subject with Malaysian Government officials since September 2005. The British high commissioner in Kuala Lumpur had discussions with senior Malaysian officials about the Pingat Jasa medal in September and October 2005. Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials had meetings with officials in the Malaysian high commission on 25 October, 18 November, 20 December 2005, and 1 February. There have also been several exchanges of correspondence and telephone calls between officials and members of the Malaysian high commission since September 2005.

My hon. Friend the Minister for Trade, Inward Investment and Foreign Affairs, Ian Pearson, made a written ministerial statement on the Pingat Jasa medal in this House on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 11WS.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have had with the Royal British Legion on the wearing of the Pingat Jasa medal since September 2005. [48211]

Mr. Straw: Neither I nor my officials have had any discussions with the Royal British Legion on the wearing of the Pingat Jasa Malaysia medal.

Somalia

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the African Union on it launching a mission to Somalia. [49349]

Ian Pearson: Officials in Addis Ababa and Nairobi have had frequent discussions with their African Union (AU) contacts about a possible Peace Support Operation in Somalia, most recently on 31 January 2006.

The UN Security Council has welcomed the readiness of the AU to support the establishment of a functioning central Government in Somalia, including by possible deployment of a Peace Support Operation (PSO). The Council emphasised that a prerequisite for any PSO should be a detailed mission plan, endorsed by the Transitional Federal Institutions, on the basis of a national security and stabilisation plan, spelling out ceasefire arrangements, and the precise role of a PSO.

Sudan

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government has taken to make its financial support to the Government of Sudan conditional on a substantial and rapid decline in military spending; and if he will make a statement. [47629]

Mr. Straw: The Government continues to press Sudan to fully implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed on 9 January 2005, which commits both the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army to the downsizing of all their forces, following the completion of the comprehensive cease-fire agreements. We are supporting the World Bank in undertaking a public expenditure review which is examining military spending.

We have not linked our development and humanitarian assistance to the level of military spending by Sudan but have, for example, made clear that we will not proceed on areas such as debt relief until there has been a substantial improvement to the situation in Darfur.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in imposing targeted sanctions in Sudan; and if he will make a statement. [47635]

Mr. Straw: The Panel of Experts established under UN Security Council Resolution 1591 presented their report and recommendations to the Sanctions Committee on 23 December 2005. Discussions on the Panel's recommendations, including on the imposition of sanctions on individuals, continue in the Sanctions Committee in New York. We are pressing for swift action on the Panel's recommendations.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what direct support his Department has provided to the government of Sudan to improve policing in the Darfur region; and if he will make a statement. [47636]

Mr. Straw: The UK has contributed six police experts to the EU's civilian policing mission to the African Union mission in Darfur (AMIS), including the EU appointed Police Head of Mission. These experts are based in Darfur and at the AU HQ in Addis Ababa; their role is to help build civilian policing capacity, through support to the chain of command, pre-deployment training and training courses for trainers. These experts also assist AMIS civilian police in their role working alongside Government of Sudan police in Darfur.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with colleagues in *(a)* NATO and *(b)* the UN on supplementing the African Union Mission in Sudan. [49348]

Ian Pearson: We have regular discussions with both NATO and the UN on supporting the African Union Mission in Darfur (AMIS). NATO continues to do so through the provision of training, capacity building and airlift such as the troop rotation currently in progress. The United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) liaises closely with AMIS and has undertaken joint activities on the ground in Darfur, such as training in policing and operational planning. We welcome the African Union's (AU) decision at the 12 January Peace and Security Council expressing support in principle to handing over its monitoring mission in Darfur to the UN. We will continue to encourage both the UN and NATO to cooperate closely with the AU to promote stability and security in Darfur.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his EU counterparts on the effectiveness of the African Union force in Darfur; and if he will make a statement. [47627]

Mr. Straw: We regularly discuss the African Union (AU) Mission in Sudan (AMIS) with our EU counterparts. The UK and other international partners, including the EU, also recently participated in a joint assessment mission with the AU to examine the effectiveness of AMIS. We believe that AMIS does a good job in difficult circumstances, but have made clear that we stand ready to help the AU implement the recommendations of the assessment mission's report and further improve the effectiveness of the mission.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with counterparts in *(a)* NATO and *(b)* African Union member countries regarding the expiry of the African Union's mandate in Darfur in March. [47628]

Mr. Straw: We welcome the African Union's (AU) decision at the 12 January Peace and Security Council (PSC) expressing support in principle to handing over its monitoring mission in Darfur (AMIS) to the UN. The PSC recommended that this decision be approved by AU Foreign Ministers before the end of the current AMIS mandate in March 2006. We regularly discuss AMIS with NATO and AU member countries, and are pressing the AU to convene the Foreign Ministers meeting as soon as possible. AMIS's mandate will need to be further extended even if there is firm agreement that the United Nations should take over the force, as time will be required to prepare for handover.

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what practical assistance his Department has given to the African Union mission in Darfur; and if he will make a statement. [47637]

Mr. Straw: The UK has committed £19 million funding this financial year to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS). This brings our total contribution to AMIS, since its inception, to almost £32 million. We are using this money to provide equipment including the purchase of a further 460 vehicles in addition to our original 450, as well as military and civilian policing advice, expertise and training. Some of our contribution has also funded airlift of troops into Darfur, and further troop rotation this year. The UK will continue to support AMIS during its deployment, and the AU-led mediation of the Abuja peace talks on Darfur.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will give local communities a formal means of *(a)* requesting and *(b)* monitoring whether action is taken against antisocial behaviour. [48357]

Hazel Blears: The Government recognise that tackling antisocial behaviour is not the responsibility of police and local authorities alone but acting with other key agencies in partnership together. To tackle such behaviour effectively, local agencies need to listen to, act upon community concerns and priorities and report back on what has been done.

The Police and Justice Bill, contains provisions for the Community Call for Action which was first announced in the Police Reform White Paper. This is a way for local communities to demand a response from agencies to persistent local community safety or antisocial behaviour problems, via an approach to their ward councillor. The Bill extends the remit of local authority overview and scrutiny committees to consider community safety issues, and the councillor will be able to refer particularly difficult matters raised in this way to the committee. Crime and disorder reduction partnerships will have to respond to any report of the scrutiny committee, and to explain any decision not to take action.

Asylum/Immigration

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 30 January (PQ31458), how many of the 5,385 principal asylum applicants considered on another Family ILR application were granted indefinite leave to remain; and how many dependants of these principal applicants have also been granted indefinite leave to remain in each of the last three years. [48288]

Mr. McNulty: The requested information is not available. This could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case records.

Information on asylum applications and initial decisions are published quarterly and annually. Copies are available from the Library of the House and on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the latest Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, how many dependants there are in respect of *(a)* the 9,390 main applicants awaiting an initial examination and *(b)* the 11,895 main applicants awaiting a decision under the family indefinite leave to remain exercise of 24 October 2003. [48463]

Mr. McNulty: The requested Information is not available. One of the aims of the one-off exercise is to reconcile records held on older family applications. While good information is often held on main applicants, up-to-date data on their dependants is frequently missing.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the latest Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, how many of the 4,430 applicants found to be ineligible under the family indefinite leave to remain exercise of 24 October 2003 have subsequently *(a)* had an asylum application granted, *(b)* had an asylum claim refused, *(c)* otherwise been granted leave to remain in the UK and *(d)* been removed from the UK. [48465]

Mr. McNulty: The requested Information is not available. This could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case records.

Information on asylum applications and initial decisions are published quarterly and annually. Copies are available from the Library of the House and on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at: http://homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of the applicants under the Government's family indefinite leave to remain exercise of 24 October 2003 have been identified as being the subject of a possible third country removal; and how many of them have subsequently been removed to a third country. [48466]

Mr. McNulty: The requested Information is not available. This could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case records.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the latest Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, what the main reasons were for refusal of the 7,405 refused applicants under the Government's family indefinite leave to remain exercise of 24 October 2003; and how many of these applicants subsequently *(a)* had an asylum application granted, *(b)* had an asylum application refused, *(c)* were otherwise granted leave to remain and *(d)* were removed from the UK. [48467]

Mr. McNulty: Over the last six months, the reasons for refusal under the exercise are given in the following table.

This information is based on internal management information and as such is not published within the official statistics.

Regarding subsequent decisions on applicants who have been refused under the exercise, the requested Information is not available. This could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case records.

Information on asylum applications and initial decisions are published quarterly and annually. Copies are available from the Library of the House and on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at:

http://homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

	Percentage
No qualifying dependants (either born outside qualification dates or none on claim)	27
Already granted indefinite leave to remain (outside the scope of the exercise)	24
Unspent criminal conviction	15
Asylum application made after	14
Other	20

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the implications of the political instability in the Ivory Coast for his policy of repatriation of Ivorian asylum seekers; and if he will make a statement. [48742]

Mr. McNulty: Asylum decision-makers take into account the human rights situation in the country of origin of each asylum applicant when making a decision on an asylum claim. Every effort is made to establish each individual applicant's personal circumstances and full basis of claim before a final decision is made.

We continuously monitor the situation in all asylum intake countries including the Ivory Coast taking into account information from a wide range of recognised and respected governmental and non-governmental organisation sources as well as current news reports. We will continue to monitor the situation in Ivory Coast but there is currently no indication that conditions are such that we should change our policy of seeking to remove those who have been found, on an individual assessment, have no protection needs or other basis of stay in the United Kingdom.

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers whose applications were refused since 1992 were originally from *(a)* Afghanistan, *(b)* Kosovo, *(c)* Iraq, *(d)* European Community states, *(e)* European Accession states, *(f)* Latin America, *(g)* Asia and *(h)* Africa. [49091]

Mr. McNulty: The following table show refusals of asylum at initial decision for nationals of Afghanistan, Kosovo, Iraq, EU Accession states (excludes Malta), Americas (includes small numbers from USA and Canada), Far East and Africa from 1992 to September 2005 where available. It is impossible to determine whether these nationals were originally from these countries or areas.

Refusals of asylum for nationals of EU countries (prior to the inclusion of the EU Accession states in May 2004) could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Information on asylum initial decisions is published quarterly and annually. Copies are available from the Library of the House and on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at:

http://homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Refusals[1, 2] of asylum, exceptional leave, discretionary leave and humanitarian protection in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, 1992 to September 2005

					Number of refusals of principal applicants		
	1992	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*
Afghanistan	10	25	10	40	50	75	65
Kosovo	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	255	15	130
Iraq	40	30	45	50	60	110	90
EU Accession states[5]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,445	2,335	3,035
Africa	14,550	6,675	7,695	11,155	15,950	11,740	5,465
Americas[6]	45	115	555	435	710	1,385	1,905
Far East	2,615	2,405	4,825	5,750	9,475	9,225	7,335

	Number of refusals of principal applicants						
	1999[3]	*2000[4]*	*2001[4]*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004[7]*	*2005[7]*
Afghanistan	90	1,515	2,545	3,300	3,375	2,225	755
Kosovo	130	6,460	4,845	1,215	820	625	245
Iraq	100	2,220	6,315	2,995	4,580	4,615	1,475
EU Accession states[5]	1,375	6,360	3,515	2,960	560	235	25
Africa	2,875	11,780	21,020	17,745	18,825	14,730	6,735
Americas[6]	350	2,900	1,885	1,770	1,835	710	380
Far East	4,415	21,600	25,010	16,415	14,960	10,245	4,690

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5 with * = 1 or 2.

[2] Information is of initial determination decisions, excluding the outcome of appeals, or other subsequent decisions.

[3] Excludes cases where an application has been refused under the backlog criteria.

[4] May include some cases where an application has been refused under the backlog criteria.

[5] EU Accession states excludes Malta.

[6] Americas include small numbers from USA and Canada.

[7] Provisional figures.

Source:

Immigration and Nationality Directorate, Home Office, Asylum Statistics

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* asylum and *(b)* immigration applications were outstanding on 2 May 1997. [49070]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate does not publish data on historical Immigration backlogs but I can confirm that the number of asylum applications awaiting initial decision as at the end of April 1997 was 54,020.

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department by what percentage asylum applications have changed in each year since 1992. [49073]

Mr. McNulty: The following table shows asylum applications, excluding dependants, from 1992 to 2004 including the percentage change from the previous year.

Information on asylum applications is published quarterly and annually. Copies are available from the Library of the House and on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Percentage change in applications[1] received for asylum in the UK, excluding dependants, 1992–2004

	Number of principal applicants	
	Applications received	*Percentage change from previous year*
1992	24,605	
1993	22,370	-9
1994	32,830	47
1995	43,965	34
1996	29,640	-33
1997	32,500	10
1998	46,015	42
1999	71,160	55
2000	80,315	13
2001	71,025	-12
2002	84,130	18
2003	49,405	-41
2004[2]	33,960	-31

[1] Figures, other than percentages, are rounded to the nearest 5.
[2] Provisional

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum applications were refused in each year since 1992. [49094]

Mr. McNulty: Information on asylum applications and initial decisions are published quarterly and annually. Copies are available from the Library of the House and on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applicants have been granted indefinite leave to remain in the UK for each year since 1992, broken down by country of origin. [49098]

Mr. McNulty: The latest published information on persons granted indefinite leave to remain in the United Kingdom by nationality is shown in the annual command paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom,2004". Copies are available from the Library of the House and on the Home Office website:

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

British Citizenship Test

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* section of his Department are responsible for making the arrangements for the provision of British citizenship tests. [49678]

Mr. McNulty: As Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality this falls within my remit. The Immigration and Nationality Directorate's Social Policy Unit oversees arrangements for citizenship testing in conjunction with the Nationality Group.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average waiting time was for a British citizenship test in the most recent period for which figures are available. [49679]

Mr. McNulty: The average waiting time for a citizenship test is currently less than two weeks. Under the terms of their service level agreement with Immigration and Nationality Directorate, Ufi are required to offer 80 percent. of candidates an appointment to take the life in the UK test within four weeks of their initial request and 98 percent. within eight weeks.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the extent to which the capacity for British citizenship tests is sufficient to meet the demand. [49680]

Mr. McNulty: An initial assessment of the necessary testing capacity, based on the published statistics for persons seeking British citizenship, was made prior to the introduction of tests on 1 November 2005. An appropriate number and geographical spread of test centres was identified and their ability to meet demand is constantly monitored. So far, there have been no reports of test centres failing to meet their target of offering 80 percent. of candidates an initial test date within four weeks and 98 percent. within eight weeks of their request.

Charles Munyaneza

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) for what reasons Charles Munyaneza was granted refugee status and unlimited leave to remain in the UK; [48208]

(2) if he will reconsider the granting of unlimited leave for Charles Munyaneza to remain in the UK. [48207]

Mr. McNulty: It is not our policy to comment on individual cases and I cannot therefore provide information on the specific details of this case.

Child Protection

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many *(a)* children and *(b)* adults have been charged with the offence of making and possessing indecent images of a child under the age of 18 years under section 1(1) (1A) of the Protection of Children Act 1999 in each year since 2000; [48189]

(2) how many adults have been charged with the offence of making and possessing indecent images of a child under the age of 18 years under section 1(1) (1A)

of the Protection of Children Act 1999, in households where children have been charged for the same offence, in each year since 2000. [48190]

Paul Goggins: Data on the number of adults and juveniles proceeded against at magistrates courts for offences related to the making and possession of indecent images of a child under the age of 18 years in England and Wales for the years 2000 to 2004, are provided in the following table. It is not possible to identify whether defendants live in households where children have been charged with the same offence as the circumstances of the defendants are not centrally collected.

Data for 2005 will be available in the autumn of 2006.

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts for offences related to the possessing or making indecent images of children, by age group, England and Wales, 2000-04

Offence: *Take, permit to be taken or to make distribute or publish indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs of children*
Statute: *Protection of Children Act 1978 s.1 as amended by Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 s.84*

	Age group	
	Aged 10–17	*Aged 18 and over*
2000	3	281
2001	4	394
2002	11	571
2003	18	1,446
2004	19	1,078

Offence: *Possession of an indecent photograph of a child*

Statute: *Criminal Justice Act 1988, section 160 as amended by the Criminal Justice and Services Act 2000, section 41(3). (previously 181/06)*

	Age group	
	Aged 10–17	*Aged 18 and over*
2000	1	128
2001	2	124
2002	1	155
2003	9	317
2004	3	197

Note:
These data are provided on the principal offence basis.
Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Correspondence

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter of 5 September 2005, from the hon. Member for Aylesbury to the Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Nationality about the case of Mr. S. S. of Aylesbury (reference S1081532; MI4464/5). [49197]

Mr. McNulty: I wrote to the hon. Gentleman on 7 February.

Criminal Records Bureau

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what factors determine the amount of time taken by the Criminal Records Bureau to process *(a)* an enhanced and *(b)* a standard check. [48693]

Andy Burnham: The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) aims to complete all disclosure applications within the shortest time possible, but recognise that there may be some applications which take longer than others to complete. Factors that may influence the time taken to process applications include, but are not restricted to, incomplete or inaccurate application forms that require further information from the applicant or counter-signatory; the existence of criminal record information or other relevant non-conviction information and, for enhanced disclosures, the performance of disclosure units within police forces.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how long on average it took to complete an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check in the last period for which figures are available; [48694]

(2) what proportion of standard Criminal Record Bureau checks were processed within two weeks in 2005; [48695]

(3) what proportion of enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checks were processed within four weeks in 2005. [48696]

Andy Burnham: Data concerning the average time taken to complete a disclosure are not a performance target and are not routinely collated by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). However, the bureau has calculated that during 2005 it took on average 31.5 days to complete all enhanced disclosures; although this figure does include time out with the customer, where applications were returned for correction or clarification. In such circumstances the CRB cannot control when an application will be returned in a fit condition to be completed.

The CRB operates to a set of published service standards (PSS), which are to process 93 per cent. of standard disclosure applications within two weeks and 90 per cent. of enhanced disclosure applications within four weeks. The proportion of standard checks completed within PSS was 99.4 per cent. and the proportion of enhanced checks completed within PSS was 85.5 per cent.

For enhanced disclosures, CRB are expected to complete their part of the checking process in 90 per cent. of cases in 12 days before referring these applications to local police forces for them to complete their part of the checking process against local intelligence databases. The CRB has consistently exceeded its targets in processing disclosures up to the point at which they are referred to police forces. In December 2005, the latest period for which information is available, CRB processed 95.8 per cent. of valid enhanced applications to the police within six days of receipt. This has provided forces with considerably more time to complete their checks within the PSS.

In 2005, the bureau received 293,615 standard disclosures and 2,443,207 enhanced disclosures.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of *(a)* standard and *(b)* enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks were failed during 2005. [48698]

Andy Burnham: The information requested by my hon. Friend is not available from the Criminal Records Bureau. It is solely a matter for a recruiting organisation to determine whether information revealed on a standard or enhanced disclosure indicates that an individual is unsuitable for a position.

However, a CRB-commissioned MORI customer research programme showed that in 2004, over 20,000 unsuitable people were prevented from gaining access to children or vulnerable adults, as a direct result of CRB checks. Many more unsuitable people were deterred from applying to work with children and the vulnerable as a direct result of a requirement for a CRB check.

Detention Centres

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people held in detention centres have died from *(a)* AIDS, *(b)* tuberculosis and *(c)* hepatitis since 2000. [49866]

Mr. McNulty: Since 2000, no one in immigration detention has died from these illnesses.

DNA Profiles

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1111–12W, on DNA profiles, how many people over the age of 18 are on the DNA database who have never been charged or cautioned; and if he will make a statement. [45931]

Andy Burnham: On 1 December 2005, there were 124,347 persons on the national DNA database who had been arrested and had a DNA sample taken and who had subsequently not been charged or cautioned for any offence. Of these, 100,179 persons were over the age of 18 and 24,168 were under 18 years of age.

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1111–12W, on DNA profiles, if he will break down the 24,000 cases by constabulary. [45932]

Andy Burnham: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Number of persons aged under 18 on the national DNA database who have been arrested for a recordable offence and subsequently not charged or cautioned

Organisation	*Number*
Avon and Somerset	74
Bedfordshire	58
Cambridgeshire	498
Cheshire	339
City of London police	17
Cleveland	156
Cumbria	444
Derbyshire	597
Devon and Cornwall	28
Dorset	322
Durham	504
Dyfed-Powys	263
Essex	1,217
Gloucestershire	381
Greater Manchester police	2,099
Gwent	96
Hampshire	772
Hertfordshire	835
Humberside	17
Kent	1,338
Lancashire	1,041
Leicestershire	503
Lincolnshire	234
Merseyside	80
Metropolitan police	3,538
Norfolk	125
North Wales	372
North Yorkshire	323
Northamptonshire	364
Northumbria	458
Nottinghamshire	400
South Wales	459
South Yorkshire	1,112
Staffordshire	789
Suffolk	24
Surrey	338
Sussex	644
Thames Valley	102
Warwickshire	52
West Mercia	5
West Midlands	2,152
West Yorkshire	733
Wiltshire	265
TOTAL	24,168

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department why DNA profiles collected from those arrested but not charged of any offence are retained. [49663]

Andy Burnham: Taking a DNA sample (and fingerprints) from someone who has been arrested for a Recordable offence and detained in a police station is now part of the normal process within a police Custody Suite. It is no different to recording other forms of information such as photographs, witness statements etc.

Early research has shown that sampling persons who have been arrested but not proceeded against has yielded a match with a crime scene in over 3,000 offences. These links may never have been made had the police not been given powers to take and retain samples on arrest. Retention of the DNA profile on the National DNA Database may prove to be vitally important in the event of that person committing a crime in the future.

Identity Cards/Verification

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proposed powers in the Identity Cards Bill he plans to use to facilitate data sharing between the identity card database and other public sector databases. [44102]

Andy Burnham: The Identity Cards Bill includes provisions in clause 11 to enable information to be required from public sector or other organisations to validate National Identity Register entries. The Bill also allows for information to be provided from the National Identity Register to public sector or other organisations under clause 14, with the individual's consent, and to public authorities under clause 17 for identity checks as a condition of the provision of public services and under clauses 19 to 23, without the individual's consent, for specified purposes such as the prevention or detection of crime. Apart from the provision of information with consent under clause 14, and unless named on the face of the Bill, the particular public authority will need the approval of Parliament via secondary legislation.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 19 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1610W, on identity cards, what level of risk has been identified through his Department's consultations on methods of fooling biometric readers; what has been learnt from his communication with other schemes that are using biometrics with identity cards; and what types of biometrics are used by those other schemes. [50323]

Andy Burnham: There is a broad consensus arising from reviews of reputable scientific literature, consultations with anti-fraud and biometric experts as well as communication with other biometrics schemes. It indicates that supervision of the enrolment process and the implementation of anti-spoofing technologies can counter the "spoofing" of a biometric which in any case is very difficult to achieve. Furthermore, these consultations also indicate that the use of multiple biometrics, as envisaged in the Identity Card Scheme, will provide further protection.

As noted in the answer of 19 July 2005, the Identity Card Scheme will have a supervised enrolment process and the systems proposed by the various manufacturers during procurement, to meet the scheme requirements, will be rigorously tested to ensure risks from fake biometrics are adequately mitigated. Work with experts and other schemes to counter such threats will continue through this process. Such issues will also be independently scrutinised in order for the Scheme to achieve official security accreditation.

The Scheme is consulting with biometric identity card and border control schemes that use, or propose to use, facial, fingerprint or iris biometrics as part of their operations.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with EU counterparts on the development of biometric passports and identity cards; and what representations have been made by *(a)* business and *(b)* IT companies on security issues in relation to mechanisms for identity verification. [49342]

Andy Burnham: The security of EU travel documents and passports is an important issue and there have been a number of discussions with EU counterparts on the matter. The UK has participated regularly in discussions with member states in EU working and technical groups concerning the development of biometric passports.

The Council regulation on standards for security features and biometrics in passports and travel documents issued by member states requires biometric facial identifiers to be included in passports by August 2006. It is anticipated that the Council will shortly make a decision on the date from which biometric fingerprints should also be included in passports.

The UK has been excluded from the regulation but we are mirroring the provision and challenging our exclusion in the European Court of Justice. The Home Office has not received any representations from IT companies or businesses on mechanisms for identity verification in regard to e-passports. Identity cards have been discussed at bi-lateral meetings with Justice and Interior Ministers of several EU states. In December 2005 the Justice and Home Affairs Council, acting intergovernmentally, adopted Council Conclusions on common minimum security standards for national identity cards which encompass the inclusion of biometric identifiers. The Identity Cards Programme has held individual meetings with over 90 commercial organisations during the course of consultations and market sounding on ID cards, and has engaged with many more organisations at conferences and other market events. These interactions have been carried out in accordance with procurement guidelines and best practice established by the Office for Government Commerce and most have been facilitated through working with Intellect, a UK based ICT trade association with over 1,000 members. Most of these organisations have commented in some way on security aspects of the scheme and several have commented on more specific operational and technology issues including security issues related to identification and verification. In particular, in October 2004 the programme ran a seminar specifically on verification issues and in December 2004 ran a seminar on security. Both of these seminars would have included representations on security issues related to verification. The seminars were hosted by Intellect. There were 35 commercial organisations represented at the verification event and 51 at the security event. A list of those represented is as follows:

Verification seminar, 14 October 2004

3M Health Care Ltd.
Advantage Business Group
ARM Ltd.
Atkins Management Consultants
Bayer Polymers
BT Group plc
Computacenter (UK) Ltd.
CSC
ECA
EDS
EMEA Architects Office
Entrust (Europe) Ltd.
FFW
Fujitsu Services Ltd.
Giesecke & Devrient GB Ltd.
IBM United Kingdom Ltd.
LogicaCMG plc
Mantix Ltd.
Marconi Selenia Communications Ltd.
Methods Consulting Ltd.
National Identity Cards
Nortel Networks Ltd.
Novell UK
Oberthur Card Systems Ltd.
OGCbuying.solutions
Oracle Corporation UK Ltd.
Ovum Ltd.
PCCW (Europe)
Sagem Communications UK Ltd.
Senselect Ltd.
Tata Consultancy Services
TIBCO
Triad Group plc
Unisys Ltd.

URU Technologies UK Ltd.

Security seminar, 10 December 2004

3M Health Care Ltd.
Accenture (UK) Ltd.
Advantage Business Group
ARM Ltd.
Atkins Management Consultants
Bayer Polymers
BT Group plc
Charteris plc
Cornwell Management Consultants plc
CSC
Daon
Desborough Associates
Detica Ltd.
Digimarc ID Systems
Eads Defence Security Systems Ltd.
Ecebs Ltd.
EDS
EMEA Architects Office
Entrust (Europe) Ltd.
Experian Ltd.
Fujitsu Services Ltd.
Giesecke & Devrient GB Ltd.
Hewlett Packard Ltd.
IBM United Kingdom Ltd.
LaserCard Systems
LINK Interchange Network Ltd.
LogicaCMG plc
MAOSCO Ltd.
Marconi Selenia Communications Ltd
Methods Consulting Ltd.
National Identity Cards
Nortel Networks
Northrop Grumman Information Technology Ltd.
Oberthur Card Systems Ltd
Oracle Corporation UK Ltd.
Ovum Ltd.
PCCW (Europe)
Sapior Ltd.
Senselect Ltd.
Serco Justice
SiVenture
Steria Ltd.
Sun Microsystems Ltd.
Syntegra Ltd.
TIBCO
Triad Group plc
Unisys Ltd.
URU Technologies UK Ltd.
Vega Group plc
Voca Ltd.
Xansa plc

Illegal Immigration

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government is taking in *(a)* Romford and *(b)* Havering to combat illegal immigration; and if he will make a statement. [48556]

Mr. McNulty: Operations are undertaken targeting those who are working here illegally.

Operations are intelligence led. Any information received concerning Romford and the borough of Havering is considered according to priorities and operations set up as necessary.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to allocate a caseworker to the immigration application of Mr. M. P. B. of Aylesbury (reference B1082715). [47633]

Mr. McNulty: Mr M. P. B. was granted discretionary leave to remain in this country for an initial period of three years on 2 February.

Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Bill

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the provisions of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Bill on the availability of low-skilled workers in the UK. [49433]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Bill is not directly concerned with regulating the admission of migrant workers. The Home Office has prepared regulatory impact assessments in respect of the Bill and these have been placed in the Library of the House. The Government have recently undertaken a consultation exercise on its proposals to introduce a point-based system to manage economic migration to the UK, including the admission of migrants to fill vacancies at low-skill levels. The Government's response to that consultation exercise will be published in due course.

IMPACT System

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Impact police intelligence system is due to come into service. [48303]

Hazel Blears: The Impact programme remains on course to deliver a national police information sharing capability over the course of the next five years, as set out in the second progress report on the Bichard Inquiry recommendations published in November last year. The first deliverable—the Impact Nominal Index—was made available in a Child Abuse Investigation Unit in each force in England and Wales on 23 December 2005.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent on the national police intelligence system, Impact. [48165]

Hazel Blears: Including spend by PITO during 2004–05, expenditure on the Impact programme to the end of December 2005 totalled £17.2 million.

Methylamphetamine

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he has taken to control access to the precursors of methamphetamine. [49295]

Paul Goggins: In November 2005 the Advisory Council on the misuse of drugs (ACMD) produced its report on methylamphetamine which included recommendations to control precursors of methylamphetamine.

The ACMD recommended that the precursor chemicals red phosphorus and hydroiodic acid are added to the European drug precursor Legislation.

I have accepted the recommendations in full and we are currently considering how to take these recommendations forward.

Ephedrine and pseudoephedrine are already controlled under European drug precursor legislation.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the street names by which methamphetamine is known. [49297]

Paul Goggins: The report on methylamphetamine by the Advisory Council on the misuse of drugs published in November 2005 identifies a number of street names used for the drug including:

Crystal Ice
GlassTina
Christine Meth
Crank Crystal
Nazi crank

In Thailand the substance is sometimes called Yaba ("crazy drug"), and Shabu in Philippines.

The ACMD methylamphetamine report can be downloaded from www.drugs.gov.uk via the ACMD web pages.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice he has received from the police on the classification of methylamphetamine. [49294]

Paul Goggins: Two representatives of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) are full members of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs and contribute their expertise and knowledge of policing issues to the council.

One such representative was a member during ACMD's consideration of methylamphetamine, and was closely involved in, and supportive of, the recommendations made to the Government in the council's report. In addition, I am aware that ACPO are closely monitoring the situation regarding methylamphetamine in the UK and we will continue to seek the views of the police wherever appropriate.

National Asylum Support Service

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he next plans to review the work of the National Asylum Support Service. [48669]

Mr. McNulty: An independent review was held into the operation of the National Asylum Support Service in early 2003. The implementation of the review's recommendations has been overseen by a steering group chaired by the director general of the Immigration and Nationality Department. The National Audit Office's report on 'The Provision of Accommodation for Asylum Seekers', published on 7 July 2005, identified improvements which had been made by NASS.

There are no plans for a further review of the kind undertaken in 2003.

Police Finance (Hertfordshire)

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost was at current prices of policing per head of population in Hertfordshire in *(a)* 1997–98, *(b)* 2004–05 and *(c)* 2005–06; and how much of this funding came from (i) council tax, (ii) police grant, (iii) national business rate, (iv) revenue support grant and (v) other funding sources in each year. [44393]

Hazel Blears: The information is set out in the table. The figures are not directly comparable because in April 2000 the area covered by the Hertfordshire police authority was increased as a result of a boundary change with the Metropolitan Police area.

We do not distribute grant to police authorities purely on the basis of population. The police funding formula uses a range of socio-demographic data to reflect reasonably the relative needs of each authority. Grant allocations also take into account the relative resources of each authority. Grant allocations are stabilised by damping changes to limit year-on-year variations.

Cost of policing—Hertfordshire

£

	Per head of population				
	(i) Council tax (real terms)	*(ii) Home Office police grant (real terms)*	*(iii) National non-domestic rates (real terms)*	*(iv) Revenue support grant (real terms)*	*(v) Other funding sources (real terms)*[1]
1997–98	24.59	63.55	23.16	15.91	6.41
2004–05	46.22	63.70	13.62	23.86	16.46
2005–06	47.55	64.66	15.87	21.56	18.42

[1] Figures of 'other' income provided by Hertfordshire police.

Notes:

1. Real terms at 2004–05 prices using GDP deflator at 23 December 2005.
2. Approximately half the 'Other' funding for 2004–05 and 2005–06 is from Home Office specific grants.

Police Force Reconfiguration

Mr. Fraser: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is responsible for examining the impact of police force mergers in Norfolk on the system of police funding; and if he will make a statement. [38865]

Hazel Blears: A working group led by my Department with participation from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Welsh Assembly Government, HM Treasury and police representative bodies has been established to examine the financial aspects of reorganisation, including the impact of restructuring on budgets, grant and council tax.

Prisons

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average daily sum spent by the Prison Service was on feeding adult *(a)* male and *(b)* female prisoners and (i) male and (ii) female prisoners in young offenders institutions in the last year for which figures are available. [43583]

Fiona Mactaggart: For 2004–05, the latest period for which data are available, the average public sector Prison Service daily food cost for adult males was £1.79.

For male prisoners held in Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) the figure was £2.26. The average figure for all female prisoners was £2.16. It is not possible to separately identify food costs for female adult and female young offenders as they are held in the same establishments. The differentiation in costs between adult males and male prisoners in YOIs mainly reflects the general recognition that young people require more vitamins and protein to ensure healthy growth.

Respect Agenda

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the implementation of the Government's Respect Agenda will affect the number of police working in Romford. [48553]

Hazel Blears: As part of the Respect Agenda, the Government have committed that, by 2008, every area will benefit from its own neighbourhood policing team. The Respect Agenda also supports the increase in number of PCSOs so that by 2008 there will be over 24,000 which will make a significant difference to policing in our communities. The Metropolitan police will benefit from the increase in PCSOs. The deployment of police officers to Romford is an operational matter for the Havering Borough Commander. The workforce total for the borough is determined annually by the Commissioner, subject to the budget set for the force by the Mayor of London.

Security Industry

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what estimate the Security Industry Authority (SIA) has made of the cost of the security industry regulation to be delivered by the SIA; [26181]

(2) whether the Security Industry Authority has selected and is training eight assessment bodies to operate option four of the Approved Contractor Scheme as detailed in the Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment; [26183]

(3) what the key criteria will be upon which the selection of an Approved Contractor Scheme for the private security industry will be based. [26184]

Paul Goggins: The private security industry has invested approximately £400 million in meeting the requirements of the Government regulations under the Private Security Industry Act 2001 (PSIA).

A Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on the Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS) went out to consultation on 25 August 2005 until 17 November (a period of 12 weeks). The SIA continued working to be ready to proceed with four options under the RIA included in the consultation. This work included a meeting with eight potential assessing bodies.

Following analysis of the responses received from the RIA, Paul Goggins announced, on 12 January, that the Government had decided to introduce an Approved Contractor Scheme which would comprise elements of Options 3 and 4. Option 3 would require companies to possess one or more of a list of specified existing standards, and Option 4, would introduce a new standard defined by the Security Industry Authority. Further details about the shape of the scheme will be announced in due course.

The estimated cost to the private security industry to implement a combination of Options 3 and 4 of the Approved Contractor Scheme ranges from between £2.0 million to £2.6 million per annum.

Special Branch

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what review of the size and structure of Special Branch he *(a)* has undertaken and *(b)* plans to undertake. [44708]

Hazel Blears: The substantive resource allocation, in terms of staffing and associated costs, to Special Branch is the responsibility of Chief Officers in each force. The role of the National Co-ordinator of Special Branch is to set and promulgate Special Branch policy, set standards and codes of practice for Special Branch activity and quality assure its work nationally. As part of his role, the National Co-ordinator reviews and monitors the size and structure of Special Branches.

Following the publication of the HMIC Thematic Inspection Report in 2003, Regional Intelligence Cells (RICs) were established and are now operating in all of the ACPO regions. More recently, the 'Closing the Gap' report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary recommended that the creation of strategic forces offered the best means for providing the Police Service with the necessary capacity and resilience to meet the threats posed by terrorism and organised crime.

Work Permits

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many work permits were granted through the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme in each of the last 10 years. [48604]

Mr. McNulty: The following table provides detail of the numbers of approvals under the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme (HSMP) for each calendar year since the programme was launched in January 2002. These approvals allow individuals to apply either for leave to enter or leave to remain in the United Kingdom as highly skilled migrants.

	Number
2002	1,180
2003	3,695
2004	7,515
2005	17,635
Total	30,025

Note:
This data are not provided under national statistics protocols. They have been derived from local management information and are therefore provisional and subject to change. Figures have been rounded up to the nearest 5.

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individual work permits were issued in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004 and *(c)* 2005; how many of these were (i) long-term permits of a year or more duration and (ii) short-term permits; how many of the short-term permits were in respect of the sector-based schemes; and how many (A) long-term and (B) short-term permits were issued to people who were already residing in the UK. [48758]

Mr. McNulty: The total number of individual work permits issued in 2003, 2004 and 2005 is set out in table 1. Also included is the number of these permits issued with a fixed expiry date. It is not possible to determine the duration of these permits.

The number of individual work permits issued in 2003, 2004 and 2005, for a period of a year or more and a period of less than a year, is set out in table 2. Also included is the number of Sectors Based Scheme (SBS) permits issued for a period of less than a year. These figures exclude any permits issued to a fixed expiry date.

The number of individual work permits issued to people already in the UK in 2003, 2004 and 2005, for a period of a year or more and a period of less than a year is set out in table 3. Also included is the number of permits issued to people already in the UK that were issued to a fixed expiry date where it is not possible to determine how long they were issued for.

(This data is not provided under National Statistics protocols. It has been derived from local management information and is therefore provisional and subject to change.)

Table 1

	Number of permits issued	*Number of permits issued to a fixed expiry date*
2003	141,204	28,125
2004	156,275	31,141
2005	137,061	30,244

Table 2

	Number of permits issued for a year or longer	*Number of permits issued for less than a year*	*Number of SBS permits for less than a year*
2003	102,063	11,016	936
2004	113,054	12,080	951
2005	96,467	10,350	1,279

Table 3

	Number of in-country permits issued for a year or longer	*Number of in-country permits issued for less than a year*	*Number of in-country permits issued to a fixed expiry date*
2003	53,872	2,703	17,013
2004	57,575	2,865	17,941
2005	46,581	2,231	14,985

Worker Registration Scheme

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of workers from EU accession countries who are working within the United Kingdom but are not registered under the Worker Registration Scheme; on what basis he made the calculation of this figure; and if he will make a statement. [47661]

Mr. McNulty: If an accession state worker (those from Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia) works in a job in the UK for 30 days or more, he or she is required to register on the Workers Registration Scheme (WRS) in order to be lawfully employed.

However, all European Economic Area (EEA) nationals have a right of free movement and residence in the United Kingdom. Accession state nationals are not subject to immigration control, and if they are working for less than 30 days, have no requirement to register with the scheme.

This means that an accession state national can be legally working in the UK without registration.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

British Beef Exports

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects the EU to vote to lift the ban on the export of British beef; and for what reasons the ban has not been lifted thus far. [49188]

Mr. Bradshaw: The European Commission's formal proposal to lift the ban is being considered by the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health (SCoFCAH). Provided there is no significant opposition, the Commission has promised to put its proposal to a vote at SCoFCAH on 8 March 2006. The earliest that the lifting of the ban could take place is mid-April.

Previously, the Commission made clear that discussions on lifting the ban could only take place once the UK had satisfied two criteria. First, securing a reduction in the incidence of BSE below 200 cases per million adult cattle. Secondly, achieving a favourable outcome to the inspection

of our BSE controls in June 2005 by the EU Food and Veterinary Office (FVO). The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) confirmed, in March 2005, that the incidence of disease had declined sufficiently. And a satisfactory FVO mission report was published on 28 September 2005. Accordingly, the Commission opened discussions with member states on lifting the ban in November 2005, and made a formal written proposal in January 2006.

Carbon Emissions

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of the displacement of carbon emissions has been achieved through the introduction of energy efficiency measures in each year since 1997. [44788]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* An exercise has been carried for the household sector, for the period 1970 to 2001. The carbon changes are subject to a "decomposition analysis" into seven factors, two efficiency ones—reduced losses from the building envelope, and improved heating system efficiency—and five others which drive emissions both up and down—household numbers, level of energy service demand (e.g. for comfort, hot water), external temperature, the carbon intensity of grid electricity, and fuel switching by households. The changes are presented in terms of tonnes of carbon rather than shares of the net change. The results for the three decades are shown graphically, for each complete decade, to illustrate the longer term effects of the different factors, and eliminate the shorter term annual fluctuations. The table gives the annual changes from 1997 to 2001. The graph will be placed in the Library.

Defra is currently completing a separate exercise to develop energy efficiency indicators for the household sector, and plans to use these, together with decomposition analysis, to report in more detail on the achievements of its various policies. Comparable work on indicators for the Industry and Services sectors is also under way but at a less advanced stage since energy use is much more complex, and energy efficiency technical measures more numerous, than in the household sector.

Components of carbon emission change (MtC)

Between years	Household growth	Level of service	External temperature	Building envelope heat loss	Heating system efficiency	Electricity Supply Industry factors	Other carbon factor changes	Total
1997–98	0.32	1.03	-0.35	-0.08	-0.24	-0.17	0.78	1.30
1998–99	0.35	1.02	0.56	-0.08	-0.81	-0.10	-1.47	-0.51
1999–2000	0.24	1.02	0.03	-0.67	-0.50	-0.13	0.47	0.46
2000–01	0.25	1.06	0.82	-0.76	-0.59	+1.42	1.02	3.22

Cattle Movements

Derek Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many animals have been involved in incidents of non-compliance with cattle movement orders since 2001; where these incidents occurred; and how many animals were involved in each case; [48597]

(2) what the percentage rate of compliance has been with the cattle movement order since 2001. [48598]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* A full breakdown of information on incidents of non-compliance is not available without disproportionate cost.

However, 10 per cent. of all cattle holdings are inspected every year to ensure compliance with the requirements for cattle identification and reporting of movements set out in EC Regulation No 1760/2000 (implemented in domestic law by the Cattle Identification Regulations 1998 as amended).

The results of these inspections are reported annually to the EU Commission. The following table provides the results of inspections between 2002–03 and 2004–05. The inspection programme for 2001–02 was halted because of the foot and mouth disease outbreak.

Percentage

	Rates of non-compliance overall	Rates of non-compliance with cattle movement requirements
2002–03	13.54	3.36
2003–04	14.54	3.61
2004–05	10.49	2.75

These figures are based on the total number of non-compliance incidents divided by the number of cattle that have been inspected. Some animals will be the source of more than one instance of non-compliance.

In addition to these inspections, local authorities also undertake inspections of markets, hauliers and farms each year as part of their duty to enforce the cattle identification regulations. The results of these inspections are not held centrally.

Guidance is available to keepers on the cattle identification and movement recording requirements. The British Cattle Movement Service has a national helpline to answer queries from keepers. Our enforcement authorities are active in correcting non-compliance whenever it is found, and co-operate fully with one another.

Civil Servants (Overseas Visits)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what costs were incurred by her Department as a result of sending civil servants on overseas visits in each of the last 10 years. [46284]

Jim Knight: It is the policy of DEFRA, its agencies, non-departmental public bodies and, where appropriate, its sponsored organisations to make financial redress in accordance with the guidance set out in Chapter 18.7 and Annexes 18.1 and 18.2 of Government Accounting.

Officials within the Department can confirm that all travel complied with the requirements of the civil service management code.

The information you requested is set out in the following table:

DEFRA	
	£000
2001–02	1,792
2002–03	2,468
2003–04	2,242
2004–05	2,730

Conservation Areas

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) when she expects to conclude bilateral biogeographic discussions with the European Commission on the designation of Bolton Fell Moss and Solway Moss as special areas of conservation; [46988]

(2) what scientific objections remain unresolved with regard to the candidature of Bolton Fell Moss and Solway Moss as special areas of conservation under the Habitats Directive; [46989]

(3) what representations she has received from peat extraction companies on Bolton Fell Moss and Solway Moss following English Nature's advice for these sites to become candidate special areas of conservation; [46990]

(4) what the expected timeframe is for concluding the designation of Bolton Fell Moss and Solway Moss as Special Areas of Conservation; and what steps she is taking to conclude the designations within the current financial year; [46991]

(5) what steps the Government is taking *(a)* to address the findings of the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Condition Summary for Bolton Fell Moss and *(b)* to secure the notified conservation interest of the site and the Government's public service agreement target for SSSI condition. [46992]

Jim Knight: A meeting is being arranged with the European Commission to discuss the sufficiency of the UK list of degraded raised bog Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), including the merits of Solway Moss and Bolton Fell Moss. I hope that this will result in the Commission coming to its final view this summer.

There are outstanding objections (including scientific ones) from the peat extraction operators on the criteria used for the selection of the two peat sites, principally concerning the composition of the topography and the restorability of the sites and their margins. English Nature is in discussion with the objectors to resolve these concerns.

During the public consultation undertaken by English Nature on the proposal to designate these sites as Special Areas of Conservation for their degraded raised bog interest, objections were received from the peat extraction companies at each of the sites. Discussions aimed at resolving the objections included correspondence with the Secretary of State over the grounds for including these sites as Special Areas of Conservation.

Given the complex nature of the objections raised about the candidature of Solway Moss and Bolton Fell Moss, it is not possible to give a definite date for their resolution and subsequent conclusion of the consultation. Once concluded, and if Bolton Fell Moss and Solway Moss are required to be included as part of the UK list of sites of degraded raised bog sites within the UK, these will be designated as candidate SACs immediately.

Bolton Fell Moss Site of Special Scientific Interest has been assessed by English Nature as being in an unfavourable condition. As part of its overall work on the SSSI PSA target, which is to bring 95 per cent. of Sites of Special Scientific Interest into favourable condition by 2010, English Nature is identifying the works which need to be put in place, and by whom, to restore all unfavourable sites to a recovering or favourable condition. And it is in the process of discussing options to achieve this with interested parties. Overall the latest figures indicate that 70 per cent. of sites are now in favourable condition.

Cormorants

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many licences for the culling of cormorants were issued in England in 2005–06; how many cormorants were killed under licence in England in 2005–06; and if she will make a statement. [47735]

Jim Knight: The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) protects all wild birds. However, the Secretary of State has authority under section 16(1)*(k)* of the Act to grant licences to permit the killing of cormorants to prevent serious damage to fisheries. Licenses are only issued where DEFRA is satisfied that other non-lethal methods have been tried and found to be ineffective, and where there is no other satisfactory solution.

Licences to shoot cormorants are normally issued for a limited period between 31 August and 15 April so we are still issuing licenses for the 2005–06 season. During the current licence period, 392 licences have been granted so far and 435 cormorants are recorded as having been killed.

Further information on cormorants can be found on the DEFRA website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/vertebrates/piscivorous.htm

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the annual expenditure on vehicles of *(a)* her Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which her Department is responsible in each English region was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40118]

Jim Knight: It is the policy of DEFRA, its agencies, non-departmental public bodies and, where appropriate, its sponsored organisations to make financial redress in accordance with the guidance set out in chapter 18.7 and annexes 18.1 and 18.2 of 'Government Accounting'.

However, the information you requested relating to DEFRA's agencies, NDPB's and other bodies sponsored by DEFRA is not held centrally by the Department and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Since

the Department holds records centrally for the whole of England only, it is not possible to provide the details requested for each English region.

The historical expenditure on vehicles which the core Department has purchased or rented can be analysed as follows:

£000

DEFRA	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Purchased vehicles:			
Department	1,173	795	842
Agencies			
NDPBs			
Bodies sponsored by Department			
Rented vehicles:			
Department	1,119	108	228
Agencies			
NDPBs			
Bodies sponsored by Department			

The planned expenditure on vehicles in 2005-06 within the core Department is not available due to expenditure budgets being held at a higher level than is being requested. Accordingly, this high level budget information would not be appropriate as a response to the question being asked.

The expenditure in 2002-03, both for purchased and rented vehicles, is disproportionately high as a result of costs incurred by the Department in dealing with the foot and mouth outbreak.

For details of expenditure on ministerial vehicles provided to the Department by the Government Car and Despatch Agency, I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 20 December 2005 from the chief executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker). Copies of this letter are available in the Library.

Departmental Transport

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2376W, on departmental transport, if she will place in the Library a copy of the site-wide notice to all staff and contractors issued on 15 December 2005. [46055]

Jim Knight: The notice to which the PQ is referring to, is published on the DEFRA intranet, and says the following:

Guildford Office Notice 37-05

Parking Off Site

It is clear that due to the shortage of parking facilities on the Guildford site, some staff and externals from the DEFRA site have been using local side streets for parking. There has been a significant increase in the number of complaints from the surrounding streets, including Down Road, Darrington Drive, Carroll Avenue, Gateways, Broadwater Rise and Pitt Farm Road, over the last three months.

DEFRA has a responsibility to be a good neighbour and this is an obligation that applies to us all. We therefore ask that staff from the Guildford site, should consider our neighbours when parking in local streets around the site. This means parking only where it is legal to do so and in a way that is reasonable and takes account of neighbours views. It also means parking in a way that does not block the road or access.

There are a number of streets to the west of the site, towards Guildford Town Centre, that have controlled parking zones and the council plan to increase this in the near future. Wherever possible it would be helpful if you parked in these designated areas. Your co-operation in this matter is much appreciated.

Accommodation Section

This notice will expire on 31 December 2006.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2376W, on departmental transport, what further steps she can take to stop staff and contractors from her Department's site on the Epsom Road, Merrow, Guildford continuing to park in residential roads. [46725]

Jim Knight: When Guildford Site Security report that there are potentially vehicles parked off-site, Defra are carrying out patrols in the local roads to try to identify vehicles which belong to IBM or Defra employees. Drivers or their line managers are then contacted and asked to move their vehicles even though these may be parked legally.

Defra have also met with Guildford borough council and with Surrey county council, to see if it would be possible to join Surrey's Car Share Scheme. We are currently waiting for an update from Guildford borough council.

Defra are also negotiating with a local bus company, along with Guildford borough council, to see if we can identify a possible site for a park and ride scheme.

EU Habitats Directive

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government plans to take to meet its obligations under the EU Habitats Directive. [45672]

Jim Knight: Preparations are under way to consult on amendments to legislation that transposes the directive to clarify its application. New regulations will also be introduced to extend the application of the directive to marine areas beyond our territorial seas.

The UK has also done far more than most to address the policy objectives of the Habitats Directive (maintaining or restoring species and habitats favourable conservation status). We were the first country to designate and fully protect all 608 of its proposed special areas of conservation at the end of 2004. In addition, the Government have set itself a public service agreement (PSA) target of bringing 95 percent. of sites of special scientific interest into favourable condition by 2010. The latest figures indicate that 70 per cent. of sites are in favourable condition now.

The UK has also taken significant action to protect marine biodiversity. We were the first country to identify a truly offshore special area of conservation, the Darwin Mounds, and worked through the Common Fisheries Policy to ensure damaging bottom-set trawling in the area was banned. In 2004 the UK unilaterally banned pair trawling for sea bass in its waters, which was widely blamed for high numbers of dolphin and porpoise deaths.

Forestry

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding has been allocated by the Forestry Commission for woodland creation schemes in each of the last three years; and what the allocation is for each of the next three years. [47167]

Jim Knight: The Forestry Commission has paid the following amounts in woodland creation grants over the last three years.

Financial year	*Cash payments (£ million)*
2002–03	9.6
2003–04	8.9
2004–05	10.3

The payments in 2004–05 included a proportion of the £3 million additional funding made available to the Forestry Commission to meet existing commitments at a time of increased demand for grants.

In the current year (2005–06) it is expected that the Forestry Commission will spend £6.4 million on woodland creation grants. The recent change of support mechanism from the Woodland Grant Scheme to the English Woodland Grant Scheme means that claims and most payments for work undertaken during the current planting season will not occur until April 2006. The allocation of funding for woodland creation in 2006–07 currently stands at £7.4 million and like the current planting season some claims and payments for work in the 2006–07 planting season will not be made until the following financial year.

The allocation of funding for any Forestry Commission grants beyond 2006–07 has not been set, but the Commission will continue to meet the commitments made in its grant scheme contracts.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of the woodland grant scheme is allocated to (*a*) woodland creation and (*b*) woodland management in 2005–06. [47170]

Jim Knight: The Forestry Commission expects to spend £6.4 million on woodland creation grants and £10.1 million on woodland management grants in the current financial year. This means that creation grants will make up around 40 per cent. of all grants.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of woodland in England is managed in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard. [47843]

Jim Knight: There is no requirement on woodland owners to provide details of the area that they manage in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard. However, a very large proportion of actively managed woodland in England receives support from the Forestry Commission through its grant scheme agreements or is subject to a felling licence issued by the Commission. Recipients of grants and felling licences are expected to meet the UK Forestry Standard. The public forest estate is also managed to the UK Forestry Standard and has been independently certified under the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme.

The Forestry Commission estimates that the area of actively managed woodland in both public and private ownership that meets the UK Forestry Standard is 470,000 hectares, which is 42 per cent. of the woodland in England.

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance is being prepared in relation to the Habitats Regulations following the recent European Court decision. [47664]

Jim Knight: Preparations are under way to consult on amendments to legislation that transposes the Habitats Directive in the UK to clarify its application and we are considering what new guidance may be required to support any legislative changes. In line with current Government best practice, any guidance needed will be published at least 12 weeks before changes to legislation come into force.

Packaging

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department is taking to reduce the amount of packaging being used for commercial products by companies in England. [47501]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 31 January 2006]*: Two sets of regulations cover packaging in the UK, both of which encourage producers to minimise packaging. The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2005 are intended to increase the recovery and recycling of packaging waste. The amount of packaging waste producers have to recover and recycle is determined, in part, by the amount of packaging they handle. Therefore businesses can save money if they reduce the amount of packaging they use around their products.

The Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations 2003 (as amended) place a number of requirements on all packaging placed on the market in the UK, including a requirement that packaging should be manufactured so that the packaging volume and weight are limited to the minimum adequate amount to maintain the necessary level of safety, hygiene and acceptance for the packed product and for the consumer.

Poultry Slaughterhouses

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many poultry inspection assistants are employed by poultry slaughterhouses; and which slaughterhouses employ such assistants. [44894]

Caroline Flint: I have been asked to reply.

In the United Kingdom, as at 26 January 2006, there were 517 food business operator establishment staff, formerly known as plant inspection assistants, authorised under EC Regulation 854/2004 to carry out post-mortem inspection duties. These staff are employed at 71 poultry slaughterhouses.

The following slaughterhouses employ authorised establishment staff:

Licence number	*Plant name*
1007	Frank Bird (Poultry) Ltd.
1100	Grampian Country Foods Ltd.
1114	Grampian Country Chickens (Bucksburn) Ltd.
1128	J Mitchell (Letham) Ltd.
1659	Scottish Agricultural College
2036	Thorne Poultry Ltd.
2037	2 Sisters Food Group Ltd.
2043	Lakefresh Turkeys
2348	P & R Whitwam
2358	Milford Farm Products
3003	Cherry Valley Farms Limited
3005	Moy Park Ltd.
3007	Faccenda Group Ltd—Willow Road (3007)
3008	Deans Foods Ltd.
3011	MPP Holdings Ltd. T/A Padleys
3021	Iqbal Poultry Ltd.
4007	Harrisons Poultry Ltd.
4021	J & F B White & Sons
4026	Cranberry Foods Limited
4128	Tom Fayre Game Ltd.
4149	Skippers Turkeys Ltd.
4534	Orchard Lee Poultry—T Marsh
4538	Springfield Poultry
4539	Hashaim & Sons
4557	Leicester Fresh Farm Turkey
4559	Taj and Co
4562	Ahmed Jeewa & Sons
4566	J Price Poultry Ltd.
4568	J S & M Bailey & Sons
4571	Heath's Turkeys
4702	Caldecott Turkey Farms
4800	Gafoor Poultry Products Ltd.
5001	Bernard Matthews Foods Ltd.
5004	A E Button & Sons (Kerry Foods)
5007	Crown Chicken Ltd.
5008	Grampian Country Foods Ltd—Eye
5020	Cherryridge Poultry Ltd.
5023	Leonard Ames (Ampthill) Ltd.
5028	A D Harvey
5036	MFD Foods Ltd. T/A Manor Farm Ducklings
5039	Paul Flatman Ltd.
5040	Wishbone Turkeys Ltd
5041	Kedassia Poultry
5049	Bernard Matthews Foods Ltd.
5055	A P Burlton Farms Ltd.
5067	Harefield Development Co Ltd.
5069	Green Label Poultry
5408	Woldsway Foods Ltd.
5415	Telmara Farm Ltd.
5464	Banham Poultry Ltd.
5473	R T Pointer
5482	W E Botterill & Son
6135	Bramble Farm
6298	Copas Traditional Turkeys Ltd.
6321	Sheepdrove Organic Farm
7002	Grampian Prepared Meats
7009	Grampian Country Food Group Sandycroft
7013	Cranberry Foods Limited
7161	Capeston Organic Poultry Ltd.
8002	Faccenda Group Ltd—Sutton Benger
8004	M C Kelly Ltd.
8005	Lloyd Maunder Ltd.
8011	Torbay Turkeys Limited
8013	Greedy Carver Limited
8014	Faccenda Group Ltd—Okeford Fitzpaine
8296	R D Chapman & Son
8365	Cornish Poultry Ltd.
9502	Moypark
9553	Finlays
9552	Kearns Poultry
9518	McKeowns Turkeys

Recycling

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set national standards for recycling which apply to all local authorities. [45698]

Mr. Bradshaw: Government have set each local authority in England a statutory target for 2003–04 and 2005–06 and to assure that further progress is made. I recently launched for consultation options for further recycling/composting targets in 2007–08. Analysis of the responses is under way and there will be a formal announcement once a decision is made.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of corporate waste was recycled in each year between 2000 and 2005. [47502]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 31 January 2006]*: Information on waste management by the businesses has been collected through the Environment Agency's Commercial and Industrial Waste Survey, conducted in 2002–03. This survey estimates that around 37 per cent. of waste from the commercial sector in England was recycled or re-used in 2002–03. Data for other years in the period requested are not available.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans her Department has for increasing *(a)* recycling and *(b)* composting. [46412]

Mr. Bradshaw: Waste Strategy 2000 set out national recycling and composting targets for household waste, of 17 per cent. in 2003–04, rising to 25 per cent. in 2005–06, then 30 per cent. in 2010 and 33 per cent. in 2015. Each local authority was also set a statutory target for 2003–04 and 2005–06 and to assure that further progress is made, I recently consulted on options for further recycling/composting targets in 2007–08. Analysis of the responses is under way and there will be a formal announcement once a decision is made. Provisional figures show more than a fifth (approaching 23 per cent.) of household waste in England was recycled, in 2004–05. Furthermore, waste disposal authorities have been set challenging landfill diversion targets for biodegradable municipal waste which will drive authorities to ensure that the recycling of this waste is maximised.

To support the attainment of these targets, Defra introduced the Household Waste Recycling Act in 2003 which provides that English waste collection authorities shall ensure, except in certain circumstances, that by the end of 2010 they collect at least two recyclable materials from doorsteps separate from the remainder of the waste. About two thirds of households in England now receive a kerbside collection of recyclable materials.

In the Spending Review 2004 the Government announced an increase in the Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services block of £888 million over 2004–05, by 2007–08 and over the three-year period to 2005–06, authorities are also benefiting from a total of 294 million invested through Defra's Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund. Its successor, Defra's Waste

Performance and Efficiency Grant, will run in parallel for the first year and provide a further £260 million over the three years to 2007–08.

Since 2002, Local authorities have also been assisted by targeted support and advice available through the Waste and Resources Action Programme and Defra's Waste Implementation Programme—which will continue to provide targeted assistance to authorities for a further two years and an announcement of its new programme will be made in December 2005.

For the longer-term, as part of the review of waste strategy, Defra is looking at what levels and what forms of targets will be the most efficient at continuing the recent improvements we have seen in waste performance. The review will take into account existing policy levers designed to drive the management of waste up the hierarchy (such as the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme, the landfill tax escalator, and the obligations on producers in relation to packaging and waste electrical and electronic equipment). The Government intend to publish a consultation document on the Waste Strategy review in the next few weeks, followed by a revised waste strategy in the autumn.

Regulatory Reform Orders

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many Regulatory Reform Orders her Department has laid before Parliament in each of the last five calendar years. [46810]

Jim Knight: The Department has laid before Parliament the following Regulatory Reform Orders:

The Regulatory Reform (Sugar Beet Research and Education) Order 2003 (made on 8 May 2003)

The Regulatory Reform (British Waterways Board) Order 2003 (made on 12 June 2003)

The Regulatory Reform (Joint Nature Conservation Committee) Order 2005 (made on 9 March 2005)

The Regulatory Reform (Forestry) Order 2006 (laid on 23 January 2006)

Snares

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the National Farmers' Union on the use of snares. [46434]

Jim Knight: We have had discussions on this issue with a number of key stakeholders, including the National Farmers' Union, in connection with the current consultation on "Controlling the spread of bovine tuberculosis in cattle in high incidence areas in England: badger culling".

I also refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1960W.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research she has commissioned into the use of snares over the last three years. [47862]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1960W, which explained Defra's current testing or research into snares for catching wildlife and the possibility of future work in this area. No additional research has been undertaken in the last three years.

Special Protection Area Status

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs under which EU directive or regulations special protection area status was introduced; and whether the Government published a regulatory impact assessment in relation to its incorporation into UK law. [49813]

Jim Knight: Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are strictly protected sites classified in accordance with Article 4 of the EC Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC), also known as the Birds Directive, which came into force in April 1979. The provisions of the Birds Directive were initially transposed into domestic legislation by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as a mended). No regulatory Impact Assessment was undertaken at that time.

Stewardship Schemes

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farmers have applied, and been accepted, for *(a)* Entry Level Stewardship and *(b)* Higher Level Stewardship. [49377]

Jim Knight: As of 1 February 2006 the following applications have been received and accepted:

(a) Entry Level Stewardship (including Organic Entry Level)—17,296 applications received and 13,762 accepted

(b) Higher Level Stewardship—806 applications received and 297 accepted.

Tyres

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what estimate she has made of the number of tyres which became redundant in the last year for which an estimate is available; and what estimate she has made of the proportion of tyres which were disposed of by each disposal route used; [46019]

(2) if she will make a statement on the use of landfills for redundant tyre disposal; and what steps she is taking to ensure that *(a)* alternative disposal routes exist and *(b)* these routes will be able to deal with the anticipated annual flow of redundant tyres. [46023]

Mr. Bradshaw: The latest available figures for used tyres are for 2003, based on information supplied to the Used Tyre Working Group (UTWG).

	Tonnes
Used tyre arisings	444,000
Re-use	105,000
Materials recovery	160,000
Energy recovery	78,000
Engineering uses	15,000
Exports	13,000
Landfill	85,000

Data for 2004 should be available shortly. They are likely to show growth on overall recovery to over 400,000 tonnes per year, led by increases on the engineering and materials recovery sectors.

A survey was recently completed for DTI to determine the quantity of tyres accepted into landfill in the UK during 2004 and the first 6 months of 2005. The survey sought information on whether tyres were being disposed or used for engineering purposes and whether in whole or shredded form. Tyres are also disposed to landfill as part of automotive shredder residue from end of life vehicles. I will place a copy of the survey in the Library of the House.

There are many ways of putting used tyres to good use, although broadly all of these can be defined as either reuse, recycling or recovery. WRAP (the waste and resources action programme) was established in 2001 in response to the Government's Waste Strategy 2000 to promote sustainable waste management. Its mission is to accelerate resource efficiency by creating efficient market for recycled materials and products. In 2005, WRAP began developing a discrete used tyres programme and is currently working on a series of projects and trials investigating the properties and potential applications of new products made from used tyre rubber. Further information about WRAP, and its tyres programme, can be found on www.wrap.org.uk.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Aircraft Fuel (Taxation)

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with HM Treasury on the impact of a green tax on aircraft fuel on tourism. [49363]

James Purnell: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not discussed this with Treasury Ministers. However, my officials, who are part of the cross Whitehall sustainable tourism group, have discussed this issue with their counterparts in HM Treasury and in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with a view to ensuring that the interests of the tourism sector are fully represented. And my Department contributes to the development of the Government's policies on sustainability and environmental issues, with that aim in mind.

Airport Expansion

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations her Department has made to *(a)* the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and *(b)* planning inquiries on the expansion of capacity at (i) Heathrow, (ii) Gatwick and (iii) Stansted airports on behalf of the tourism industry. [49315]

James Purnell: My Department has made no interventions in these specific planning inquiries. However, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport works with the Department for Transport on transport issues affecting the tourism industry. The vital importance of tourism to the UK economy is reflected in the Government's White Paper on the Future of Air Transport.

BBC

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment will be made of market impact in the approval process for new BBC public services; and what role will be played by Ofcom in the assessment process. [47784]

Tessa Jowell: In the Green Paper on BBC Charter Review, we proposed that any new service or significant change to an existing service should require a public value test. Part of the test should be a market impact assessment, to be conducted according to a formula agreed by Ofcom and the BBC Trust and to be carried out by Ofcom in the case of new services. Our conclusions in this area, following the Green Paper consultation, will be set out in the forthcoming White Paper.

British Grand Prix (Policing)

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent representations she has received requesting financial support for policing at the British Grand Prix at Silverstone. [49176]

Mr. Caborn: I have received a number of representations from the British Racing Drivers Club (BRDC) requesting financial support for policing at the British Grand Prix (BGP) at Silverstone. While there are ongoing discussions between the BRDC, Home Office, Northamptonshire police force and other interested parties about the level of charging, the Government has made clear that it will not provide funding for future police costs incurred as part of the BGP.

Casinos

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what date she has set for the panel's report on the locations for regional, large and small casinos under the Gambling Act 2005 to be submitted to her Department. [49370]

Mr. Caborn: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has asked the Casino Advisory Panel to make its recommendations to her by 31 December 2006.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received from local authorities on the number and location of regional casinos under the pilot scheme. [49371]

Mr. Caborn: We have received a number of letters from local authorities and others in support of an increase in the number of regional casinos permitted by the Gambling Act 2005.

Despite these representations, we do not believe the case has yet been made for an increase, and we are therefore proceeding with implementation on the basis of the one regional casino specified in the Act.

We have established an independent panel to advise the Government on the areas where the 17 new casinos permitted by the Act should be located. Any representations relating to the location of the new casinos will be for the casino advisory panel to consider in developing its recommendations to Ministers.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the value of the *(a)* casino and *(b)* gambling industry to the economy in each year since 1997 in (i) Leicester and (ii) England. [49740]

Mr. Caborn: The Office for National Statistics (ONS) produces an annual estimate of household expenditure on gambling in the UK. The estimated expenditure (stakes less prizes) excluding the national lottery is included in the table. The ONS also makes an annual estimate of employment in the gambling industry through its Annual Business Inquiry, and this information is also provided.

No separate figures are available for the casino industry. However, the Gambling Commission (formerly the Gaming Board for Great Britain) publish annual figures for the house win in casinos in Great Britain, which is included in the table.

No separate data are available for Leicester or England.

Years ended March	*UK gambling expenditure (excluding the national lottery)[1] (£ million)*	*Gambling and betting: average employment through the year[1]*	*Casinos: house win[2] (£ million)*
1997	4371	n/a	471
1998	4350	76,000	486
1999	4432	77,000	464
2000	4304	88,000	546
2001	4511	90,000	533
2002	5061	90,000	619
2003	5660	90,000	669
2004	6743	96,000	674
2005	6754	[b]	715

Notes:
[a] Provisional.
[b] Not yet available.
Sources:
[1] ONS: Annual Business Inquiry.
[2] Gaming Board/Gambling Commission Annual Reports.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the procedures are for increasing the number of regional casinos in the pilot scheme under the Gambling Act 2005. [50099]

Mr. Caborn: Sections 175(1)-(3) of the Gambling Act 2005 specify the maximum number of casino premises licences that may have effect in respect of regional, large and small casinos—currently 1, 8 and 8 respectively. Section 175(8)*(a)* provides that the Secretary of State may by order amend any of sections (1), (2) or (3) so as to substitute a new maximum number of casino premises licences. Any order would be subject to the affirmative resolution procedure, requiring the approval of both Houses of Parliament.

We have no plans to bring forward such an order at this stage.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport under what provisions a casino licence issued under the Gaming Act 1968 may be reinstated after a temporary cessation of trading for unforeseen reasons by the holder. [50100]

Mr. Caborn: A casino licence issued under the Gaming Act 1968 would not lapse automatically if the license holder was temporarily prevented from trading for unforeseen reasons.

Subject to the normal annual renewal process, the licence could be retained. Under the 1968 Act, if the holder of a casino licence was faced with circumstances which meant they had to move or substantially alter their premises, they would be required to apply for a new certificate of consent and casino licence.

Once the Gambling Act 2005 is formally implemented, casinos that had been licensed under the 1968 Act, and which are subsequently licensed under the 2005 Act, will continue to be able to apply to transfer their business to new premises, so long as it is within the area of their licensing authority. Casinos will have a general right to apply for such a move, and would not be limited to circumstances where a move is essential.

Category C Gaming Machines

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the extent to which operators and providers of category C gaming machines *(a)* are crime free and *(b)* can meet conditions on the protection of vulnerable people. [49367]

Mr. Caborn: The Gambling Act 2005 for the first time introduces new requirements on operators of all categories of gaming machines to ensure that gambling remains crime free, and that children and vulnerable people are protected. DCMS and the Gambling Commission are working with the industry and other interested parties to develop the relevant licence conditions and codes of practice that are needed to deliver these protections. The Gambling Commission and licensing authorities will be responsible for monitoring compliance with the new requirements once they are formally implemented in September 2007.

Christmas Cards

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will estimate the cost to her Department of sending Christmas cards in 2005. [45918]

Mr. Lammy: 5,000 Christmas cards were printed at a total cost of £2,019. The cards were sent out by Second Class post.

Circus Industry

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent discussions her Department has had with the circus industry relating to licensing proposals; and if she will make a statement. [49136]

James Purnell: I have had regular meetings with circus representatives to discuss the implications of the Licensing Act 2003, including Arts Council England, the Association of Circus Proprietors of Great Britain and the Circus Arts Forum. My most recent meeting was with a delegation led by the hon. Member for Mid Worcestershire on 26 January 2006.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of (i) her Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) Executive agency and (C) other public body for

which her Department is responsible in each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40070]

Mr. Lammy: Expenditure by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on buildings, including rent and building services was services was £7,040,000, in 2002–03, £7,488,000 in 2003–04 and £7,311,000 in 2004–05; with planned expenditure of £7,300,000 in 2005–06.

Expenditure by the Department on insurance of buildings was £76,200 in 2003–04 and £88,500 in 2004–05; with planned expenditure of £107,400 in 2005–06. Insurance costs for 2002–03 could be extracted only at disproportionate cost.

Neither the Department, nor Royal Parks Agency, insure its staff.

The Royal Parks Agency, did not incur expenditure on insurance of buildings until 2005–06, when there is forecast expenditure of £7,000.

The Royal Parks Agency does not pay rent on the buildings for which it has responsibility. Its building services costs were: £6,941,000 in 2002–03, £7,738,000 in 2003–04, £7,574,000 in 2004–05 and with planned expenditure of £7,000,000 in 2005–06.

Information requested in respect of the non-departmental public bodies could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the annual expenditure on *(a)* fixtures and fittings, *(b)* general office expenses and *(c)* office equipment was of (i) her Department, (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) Executive agency and (C) other public body for which her Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each of the English regions and (4) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40111]

Mr. Lammy: Expenditure by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on fixtures and fittings was £477,000 in 2002–03, £475,000 in 2003–04 and £335,000 in 2004–05; with planned expenditure of £100,000 in 2005–06.

The term "general office expenses" is neither used as part of the Department's accounting procedures, nor those of the Royal Parks Agency.

Annual expenditure by the Department on office equipment, including computers, was £938,000 in 2002–03, £958,000 in 2003–04, £1,100,000 in 2004–05; with planned expenditure of £350,000 in 2005–06.

The Royal Parks Agency's accounts do not identify separately figures for fixtures and fittings and attempts to provide these would be at disproportionate cost.

Annual expenditure by the Royal Parks Agency on office equipment, including computers, was £11,000 in both 2002–03 and 2003–04, £23,000 in 2004–05, with planned expenditure of £23,000 in 2005–06.

Information requested in respect of the non-departmental public bodies could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of (i) her Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which her Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each of the English regions and (4) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40112]

Mr. Lammy: Expenditure by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on buildings, including rent and building services was £7,040,000, in 2002–03, £7,488,000 in 2003–04, and £7,311,000 in 2004–05; with planned expenditure of £7,300,000 in 2005–06.

Expenditure by the Department on insurance of buildings was £76,200 in 2003–04 and £88,500 in 2004–05; with planned expenditure of £107,400 in 2005–06. Insurance costs for 2002–03 could be extracted only at disproportionate cost.

Neither the Department, nor Royal Parks Agency, insure its staff.

The Royal Parks Agency, did not incur expenditure on insurance of buildings until 2005–6, when there is forecast expenditure of £7,000.

The Royal Parks Agency does not pay rent on the buildings for which it has responsibility. Its building services costs were: £6,941,000 in 2002–03, £7,738,000 in 2003–04, £7,574,000 in 2004–05 and with planned expenditure of £7,000,000 in 2005–06.

Information requested in respect of the non-departmental public bodies could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

English Heritage

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the level of resources English Heritage allocates to the scheduling of newly discovered monuments. [49112]

Mr. Lammy: All designation, including scheduling as well as the listing of buildings of special architectural and historical interest, and the Registers of Parks and Gardens and of Battlefields, is undertaken by the heritage protection department of English Heritage.

The heritage protection department includes 58 staff. The department's budget in 2005–06 is £2,169,000.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people English Heritage employs in the designation of ancient monuments. [49244]

Mr. Lammy: English Heritage receives almost £130 million grant in aid from the Department. High level priorities are agreed in the funding agreement, which is co-signed by the ODPM and Defra, in recognition of the contribution English Heritage makes to the delivery of the targets in all three Departments. It is up to English Heritage to decide how much funding to allocate to specific activities.

External Consultants

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much her Department has paid since 2004 to external consultants who had previously been employed by the Department in any capacity within the previous five years. [41206]

Mr. Lammy: Since 2004, the amounts paid to external consultants who had previously been employed by the Department, are as follow:

	£
PKF (2 projects)	283,371
PriceWaterhouseCoopers (5 projects)	239,581
Forethought Associates	47,304
BMRB	43,267
Opsis Renewal Consulting	27,600
Odgers, Ray and Berndtson	26,250
Monterosa	14,965
Enable UK	4,850

Film Council

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the ratio was between the administration costs of the UK Film Council and the funds which it provided for film production in the last period for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [48481]

James Purnell: In 2004–5, UK Film Council operating costs were £9.05 million—11 per cent. of UK Film Councils total expenditure of £79.48 million—of which, £7.7 million were attributed to lottery activities. In 2004–05, new lottery award commitments were made to the value of £50.66 million—of which, £27.25 million related to film production, and £23.41 million related to other schemes covering distribution, exhibition, training and regional awards—including those to delegated bodies.

Freedom of Information

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what total sum has been received by her Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48473]

Mr. Lammy: My Department has received no monies for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation.

The Freedom of Information Act allows for public authorities to determine when the cost of processing a request will exceed the appropriate limit, which for central Government is set at £600 and for the wider public sector £450. In this instance the public authority may decide to either approach the applicant to help them refine their request and where possible to bring it under the appropriate limit. Alternatively, public authorities may charge the applicant the cost of processing the request. There is, however, no obligation for Departments to provide information if the cost of processing the request exceeds the appropriate limit.

Public authorities may also charge for disbursements when handling requests where it is deemed appropriate. Further information on the FOI fees regime can be found on the DCA website at http://www.foi.gov.uk/feesguide.htm

Institutions (Assets)

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the impact of requirements on institutions for which she is responsible to maximise income on *(a)* appropriate and *(b)* sustainable use of their assets. [46132]

Mr. Lammy: No overall assessment has been made, however the financial memoranda that apply to the Department's sponsored bodies stipulate that bodies should seek to optimise income from non-Exchequer sources in a way that does not conflict with their main functions.

Historic Royal Palaces, for example, was set up by Royal Charter with the objective

> "to administer, conserve, renovate, repair, maintain and improve the Palaces to a high standard consistent with their status as buildings of Royal, historic and architectural importance".

It is free to generate and optimise income within the boundaries set out in its Royal Charter, and to use that income to further its historical, cultural and educational objectives. The Secretary of State has given no directions to Historic Royal Palaces to maximise the income and commercial activity outside of their Charter obligations.

The Public Accounts Committee, which considered the issue of income and commercial activities in its thirty-third report (Income generated by the museums and galleries), concluded that the Department's sponsored museums and galleries should set targets for income growth, with an assessment of the risks. The Department is currently finalising three-year funding agreements with the museums and galleries that will set targets for income generation consistent with delivery of their wider objectives.

Licensing

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what data sets are being collected in the 10 scrutiny councils to monitor how the new licensing regime is being delivered. [46003]

James Purnell: The main purpose of the Scrutiny Council initiative is to generate qualitative information about the interaction of the national policy framework with local licensing policy statements and objectives.

Officials from my department are working with council officers and through them with local police and other responsible authorities, residents' groups, businesses and other stakeholders, to gather information about how the new regime is working on the ground.

We will be gathering data from the 10 Councils about, for example, the number of hearings, appeals, reviews and closures and the spread of licensing hours. Of course, this quantitative data will not provide a representative sample, but will help to enrich the other case study material being gathered.

The report on the Scrutiny Council initiative will be made available in the summer.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received on changes to the limits on temporary events notices under the Licensing Act 2003; and from whom. [49375]

James Purnell: In response to a consultation mounted last autumn, we have received over 100 representations about the limits on temporary events notices (TENs), particularly regarding the number of TENs which premises may submit in any one year, and the duration of events for which TENS are required. Submissions were received from a range of organisations including residents' associations, village halls and licensing authorities. We are currently considering the responses and will announce our conclusions, and publish the responses to the consultation, shortly.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received from Action with Communities in Rural England regarding the implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 for village halls. [49376]

James Purnell: Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE) represent an important sector and, as members of my high level group of key stakeholders, I have met them on several occasions to discuss the impact of the licensing act on village and community halls. I have also met with them separately on two occasions. ACRE responded to the consultation on the temporary event notice (TEN) regulations in September. ACRE'S main concerns relate to the limits associated with the new TENs regime and the difficulty for some volunteer-run halls in meeting the requirements for a designated premises supervisor when a licence includes alcohol sales. ACRE are conducting research into how village halls have adapted to the new regime since it came into effect on 24 November 2005. Their views, and any evidence they provide, are being fed into both our review of the statutory guidance and the Independent Review of Licensing Fees.

Marine Historic Review

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will nominate a member of the British Sub-Aqua Club to sit on the Marine Historic Review Working Group; if she will meet representatives of the club to discuss the progress of the working group; and if she will make a statement. [48714]

Mr. Lammy *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* The British Sub-Aqua Club (BSAC) is a member of the Joint Nautical Archaeology Policy Committee (JNAPC), the umbrella group whose membership spans archaeological bodies, diving organisations and other bodies with responsibilities for underwater cultural heritage. The JNAPC is represented on the Marine Historic Environment Review Salvage and Reporting Working Group. At least three members of the working group are also members of the BSAC.

In November 2005 I met with representatives of the JNAPC to discuss, among other things, progress on the Marine Historic Environment Review.

Media Relations

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much her Department has spent on external media relations in each year since 2001. [29571]

Mr. Lammy: There was a zero spend on external media relations in each of the years 2001 through to 2003. In 2004 the cost was £51,000 and in 2005 we are expecting the cost to be £226,000.

Schedule of Ancient Monuments

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many new sites were added to the Schedule of Ancient Monuments in each of the last five years. [49123]

Mr. Lammy: The number of new sites added to the Schedule of Ancient Monuments in the past five years is as follows:

	Number
2005	11
2004	224
2003	437
2002	583
2001	880

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the role of the scheduling of ancient monuments in protecting the UK's archaeological resource. [49124]

Mr. Lammy: Archaeological remains are scheduled to ensure that the case for preservation is fully considered given any proposals for development or other work which might damage the monument. Circa 19,800 are currently protected by scheduling.

The protection of archaeologically important sites, either by scheduling or by other mechanisms, is being considered as part of the current Heritage Protection Review.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many scheduled sites without up-to-date descriptions and for which there is no publicly available information remain to be reassessed; and whether there is a programme in place for this work. [49236]

Mr. Lammy: There are now approximately 19,800 scheduled ancient monuments. Of the 12,500 older schedule entries, approximately 7,000 have been reviewed. Three-quarters of the present schedule thus has up-to-date documentation.

The English Heritage Monuments Protection Programme, which was a review of all recorded archaeological sites in England, was put on hold in 2003. English Heritage are now developing plans for a new strategic designation programme in light of the heritage protection review.

Secondments

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people from science and technology backgrounds have been seconded into the civil service in her Department in each of the last three years. [48411]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is fully committed to interchange and working in partnership with other organisations. In the last three years, 23 people have been seconded into the Department but information on their academic or professional backgrounds is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Television Licences

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what process her Department is following to set the future level of the BBC licence fee; and when a decision is expected to be reached. [47779]

Tessa Jowell: The Government are currently conducting a funding review in line with the commitment in the Green Paper on BBC Charter Review. An announcement on the level of the television licence fee to apply from April 2007 will be made in due course.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what external advice and analysis has been sought by her Department during the process to set the future level of the licence; and whether that advice will be published. [47781]

Tessa Jowell: In line with the commitment in the Green Paper to take independent advice, PKF were appointed in July 2005 to provide the Government with expert financial advice on a range of issues including the value for money of the BBC. Subject to proper consideration of confidentiality, we intend to make PKF's findings public in due course.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps will be taken to ensure that the future level of BBC licence fee funding will take account of the BBC's wider impact on *(a)* the market and *(b)* public service broadcasting on commercial channels. [47782]

Tessa Jowell: The Government are currently conducting a funding review to determine the level of the licence fee to apply from April 2007, and will consider all relevant issues in doing so.

VisitBritain

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects to name a new Chairman for VisitBritain. [49360]

Tessa Jowell: My Department will shortly begin the process of appointing a new Chairman of VisitBritain to succeed Lord Marshall who leaves an excellent legacy following his time in the post. The post will be advertised widely as part of an open process, and the aim throughout will be to identify the best qualified person for this key post in tourism. It is expected that the successful candidate will be appointed in the summer.

HEALTH

Abortion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions were performed on inmates in each prison in England and Wales in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [37535]

Caroline Flint: The information available is shown in the following table.

Number of abortions to women giving a prison postcode as their place of residence, England and Wales, 1995–2004

	Yearly total	Three year total
2004	24	
2003	[1]	
2002	[1]	23
2001	[1]	
2000	[1]	
1999	[1]	16
1998	[1]	
1997	[1]	
1996	[1]	[1]10
1995	[1]	

[1] Suppressed values where totals are between zero and nine. For confidentiality reasons totals less than 10 are not released.

Accident and Emergency Departments

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her opinion piece in *The Independent* on 19 January, on what data her statement that there were 0.75 million more attendances at accident and emergency departments this year than in 1996–97 was based. [45513]

Mr. Byrne: In the opinion piece referred to, the figures quoted for accident and emergency activity (A and E) should have read

'in 1996–97 there were 14.1 million attendances at A and E—this year it is 15.8 million'.

This represents a rise of 1.7 million. The source of 1996–97 attendance data is KH09, Consultant Outpatient Attendance Activity and Accident and Emergency Services Activity and QMAE, Quarterly Monitoring of Key Standards and Targets: Accident and Emergency, England for 2004–05. Attendances at walk in centres have been excluded from this comparison, as they did not exist in 1996–97. Including walk in centres, the 2004–05 figure rises to 17.8 million.

Agenda for Change

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what she expects the cost of implementing agenda for change to be. [40346]

Mr. Byrne: I refer the right hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for South Cambridgeshire (Mr. Lansley) on 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 724W.

Ambulance Service Trusts

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her answer of 8 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 387W, on ambulance services trusts (West Midland), why her Department does not maintain ambulance trust population figures. [45902]

Mr. Byrne: The Department does not directly maintain population figures for ambulance service trusts as the boundaries of the catchment areas for these trusts are not in all cases coterminous with those of the primary care trusts, care trusts or local authorities they serve. From time-to-time approximate populations are calculated and published, most recently in the statistical bulletin, 'Ambulance Services, England: 2001–02', which is available in the Library and on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/02/28/82/04022882.pdf

Benzodiazepine

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the provision of dedicated NHS benzodiazepine withdrawal clinics. [47364]

Caroline Flint: People with dependence on benzodiazepines can access services in primary and secondary care. In primary care, counselling, advice and/or psychological therapy is available, and secondary care services are also available, including specialised mental health services and specialised drug services. While there are some specialist clinics in parts of England, NHS services are commonly provided on the basis of clinical need rather than the causes of need per se. Support for benzodiazepine withdrawal can be provided in a range of settings.

In 2005, responding to advice from professionals in the substance misuse field, and consistent with recommendations made in "Drug misuse and dependence—guidelines on clinical management" (1999),[1] the Department amended prescribing regulation to allow diazepam to be dispensed in instalments for the treatment of drug addiction—to assist doctors in prescribing benzodiazepines more safely.

[1] Guidelines on Clinical Management—Department of Health, The Scottish Office Department of Health, Welsh Office Department of Health and Social Services, Northern Ireland (1999) The Stationery Office.

Breast Cancer

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what targets she has to reduce rates of breast cancer over the next *(a)* five and *(b)* 10 years. [47987]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* There are no specific targets for reducing breast cancer rates. It is important to note that a key Government target is to reduce mortality rates for all cancers in people under 75 by 2010 and we are well on the way to achieving this.

Our strategy for improving the general health of the population leading to the prevention of a number of diseases, including cancer, was set out in the Choosing Health White Paper, published in 2004.

Cigarette Packet Warnings

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what date has been set for the commencement of the planned public consultation regarding the possible inclusion of graphic or pictorial warnings on cigarette packets as permitted by EU Directive 2001/37/EC. [48571]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* No date has yet been set for the Government's public consultation on introducing picture health warnings on tobacco packs.

Crack Cocaine

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many crack cocaine users are in community-based treatment. [47690]

Caroline Flint: 5,000 individuals were reported to the national drug treatment monitoring system (NDTMS) in 2004–05 in community-based treatment, specialist prescribing, general practitioner prescribing, structured day programmes, structured counselling, other structured treatment, with the main problem drug of crack cocaine.

15,373 were reported with crack as their secondary drug of use.

Dentistry

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she plans to increase the number of dental access centres in England. [32330]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As of April 2006, primary care trusts (PCTs) will be responsible for commissioning primary care dentistry. It will therefore be up to individual PCTs to decide what the most appropriate services are, based on the needs of their local populations.

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Written Ministerial Statement of 9 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 17–18WS, on national health service dentistry, how many of the 1,400 new dentists will be placed in *(a)* the general dental service, *(b)* salaried primary care dental services and *(c)* the hospital dental service. [31445]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A precise breakdown of the information requested is not available. However, the vast majority of the 1,459 whole-time equivalent dentists are working in general dental services or personal dental services with a small number working in the salaried primary care dental services. None of the 1,459 dentists are working in the hospital dental service.

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost was of a national health service dental check-up in *(a)* England, *(b)* London and *(c)* Uxbridge constituency in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [46594]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The fee for a national health service dental check-up is fixed across England. This fee is set by the Department and is reviewed each year, usually in April.

The dentists' fees since 1994 have been as follows:

	£
January 1994	4.75
April 1994	4.90
April 1995	5.00
April 1996	5.15
December 1996	5.20
April 1997	5.30
December 1997	5.40

	£
April 1998	5.65
December 1998	5.80
April 1999	5.95
April 2000	6.15
April 2001	6.40
April 2002	6.65
April 2003	6.85
April 2004	7.05
April 2005	7.30

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of the population was registered with an NHS dentist in *(a)* England, *(b)* London, *(c)* the London borough of Hillingdon and *(d)* Uxbridge constituency in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [46595]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information available is shown in the tables. Information on people registered with a national health service dentist in the Uxbridge constituency is not provided as population data are not available at this level.

The drop in registrations between September 1997 and September 1998 is mostly attributable to the reduction in re-registration period from two years to 15 months.

Estimated percentage of the population registered in general dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS) as at 30 September each year

Population (percentage)	
England	
1997	56
1998	49
1999	49
2000	50
2001	49
2002	49
2003	49
2004	47
2005	48
London	
1997	52
1998	43
1999	42
2000	42
2001	42
2002	41
2003	42
2004	40
2005	42
London borough of Hillingdon	
1997	59
1998	50
1999	49
2000	50
2001	46
2002	47
2003	44
2004	43
2005	44

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* dentists and *(b)* patients were registered in Welwyn, Hatfield in each year since 1997. [46366]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of national health service dentists and number of patients registered in Welwyn Hatfield Primary Care Trust as at 30 September in each year specified, are provided in the table.

	Dentists	*Registrations*
1997	50	57,514
1998	52	50,733
1999	47	50,387
2000	51	50,442
2001	52	52,110
2002	55	50,061
2003	64	49,123
2004	69	49,106
2005	68	50,007

Notes:
1. Data include General Dental Services (GDS) and Personal Dental Services (PDS) registrations/PDS patients seen (counts patients seen in the past 15 months for some PDS schemes).
2. The drop in registrations between September 1997 and September 1998 is mostly attributable to the reduction in re-registration period from two years to 15 months.

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Departmental Performance Support Team

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the functions of her Department's performance support team; how many staff it has; and what the differences are between the roles of the performance support team and the turnaround teams she announced in her statement of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS, on NHS Finance. [46612]

Mr. Byrne: The performance support team is a national health service team which works with a small number of hospital trusts which need additional support in meeting the clinical and .managerial requirements of the NHS Plan. It has 23 employees.

Turnaround teams will comprise of experts with a mix of commercial and NHS turnaround skills. The first stage of their work was a baseline assessment with those organisations with the largest financial challenges. The first phase assessed 62 organisations and the second 35. Following the initial assessments, they will agree a tailored package of turnaround support with the organisations facing the largest risks and with their strategic health authority. This will help them to achieve financial balance and provide services more efficiently.

Drug Prescribing

Mr. Blizzard: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the annual level of prescribing of *(a)* carmustie implants and *(b)* temozolomide outside the context of clinical trials was in the last three years for which figures are available, broken down by (i) strategic health authority and (ii) primary care trust. [44794]

Jane Kennedy: The estimated cost of temozolomide and carmustine dispensed in hospitals and in the community (primary care) in England over the last three financial years is shown in the table.

A separate figure for carmustine implants is not provided due to contractual restrictions on how data on drugs issued in hospitals can be used. The figure includes all preparations of carmustine.

Estimated cost of temozolomide and carmustine dispensed in hospitals and in the community—England

	Cost (£000)		
	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Temozolomide			
Dispensed in hospitals	2,758.9	3,126.9	4,336.9
Dispensed in the community	38.7	—	4.0
Total	2,797.6	3,126.9	4,340.9
Carmustine			
Dispensed in hospitals	55.1	68.6	121.3
Dispensed in the community	—	—	—
Total	55.1	68.6	121.3

Source:
IMS Health (2005) and PCA data

The usage of temozolomide in primary care is negligible and carmustine is not used at all in primary care. Therefore, since the primary care usage is so low, sub-national data cannot be provided for patient confidentiality reasons.

Usage of carmustine in hospitals is low. Data on carmustine at a sub-national level is not provided due to contractual restrictions.

Data for temzolomide at cancer network level were published by the Department as part of the review undertaken by the National Cancer director on the variations in usage of cancer drugs appraised by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. The report is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/08/38/95/04083895.pdf.

Data on drugs issued in hospitals are not available at primary care trust level.

Drug Treatment Programmes

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people involved in providing drug treatment programmes have *(a)* resigned and *(b)* taken leave for medical reasons in each of the last five years. [47723]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Financial Targets

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS trusts have been investigated by her Department over the last 12 months due to failure to meet financial targets; and if she will make a statement. [47464]

Mr. Byrne: The performance management of national health service trusts is the responsibility of strategic health authorities (SHAs). There are continuous discussions between the Department and SHAs regarding the financial performance of NHS trusts within their health economy. The Department has not carried out specific investigations of NHS trusts due to a failure to meet financial targets, but it has commissioned an external assessment by KPMG of the financial position in 48 NHS trusts.

Genetic Testing

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which staff groups specialise in genetic testing; how many staff in these groups there were in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* the latest date for which figures are available; and how many full-time equivalent posts those figures represent. [44734]

Mr. Byrne: Information on genetics staff in England for the specified years is shown in the following table.

National health service hospital and community health services: genetics staff in England by level as at 30 September each specified year

	1997		2004	
	Full-time equivalent	Headcount	Full-time equivalent	Headcount
All medical genetics staff	94	121	149	188
Clinical genetics	87	106	142	180
Clinical cytogenetics and molecular genetics	7	15	8	8
All non-medical genetics staff	n/a	n/a	607	656
Qualified genetics staff	n/a	n/a	570	610
Unqualified genetics staff	n/a	n/a	37	46

n/a = not available.

Sources:
Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census
Health and Social Care Information Centre Medical and Dental Workforce Census

Information prior to 2004 for non-medical genetics staff is unavailable as this was the first year that detailed information on healthcare scientists was collected.

Health Service Initiatives (Costs)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was budgeted for the *(a)* general practitioner contract, *(b)* consultant contract and *(c)* Agenda for Change; and how much each has cost to implement. [38379]

Mr. Byrne: For the General Medical Service contract, forecast spend based on available primary care trust (PCT) data is shown in the table.

Forecast spend against PCT allocated resources

Financial year	Allocation	Outturn	£ billion Over
2003–04	5.7	5.8	0.1
2004–05 [1]	6.8	6.9	0.1
2005–06 [1]	7.4	7.5	0.1

[1] Forecast outturn, i.e. still subject to finalised PCT accounts.

The consultant contract was costed on a methodology agreed with the British Medical Association and on that basis the estimated cost of the contract, and the funding, was £133 million in 2003–04 rising to £250 million in 2005–06. In late 2004 we adjusted the tariff for 2005–06 by £150 million in response to suggestions from the

service that this was the further cost pressure. However, our national survey, published in February 2005, indicated that the actual additional cost to the service was around £90 million.

The agreed funding envelope for agenda for change was £480 million in 2004-05 rising to £950 million in 2005-06.

There are local concerns based on monitoring in a number of sample sites that initial costs may have been higher than expected in some places, and follow-up work is currently being carried out on the costs of implementation within each Strategic Health Authority to test this. The agenda for change funding envelope is due to increase in 2006-07 and 2007-08 and it is too soon to conclude whether or not the overall envelope will be exceeded.

Health Worker Pay

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what account is taken of differences between the value of NHS pension provision and that of workers in comparable jobs in the private sector in setting the pay of health workers. [24815]

Mr. Byrne: The pay levels for most national health service staff is determined by independent pay review bodies after they receive evidence from Government and staff side trade unions. When making recommendations the review bodies are able to take into account pensions benefits.

Heart Disease

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in *(a)* England and *(b)* Forest of Dean constituency suffered from heart disease in each of the last five years; and what the mortality rate was in each year. [36869]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of people diagnosed with coronary heart disease (CHD) is collected at primary care trust (PCT) level, and is not held by constituency. The number of patients diagnosed with CHD identified by general practitioner (GP) practices in West Gloucestershire PCT (which includes residents in Forest of Dean constituency) in 2004-05 was 7,908. The number of patients diagnosed with CHD identified by GP practices in England in 2004-05 was 1,893,184. Figures are not available for previous years.

Source:
2004-05 Quality and Outcomes Framework data published by the Health and Social Care Information Centre

Death rates (per 100,000 population standardised to the European Standard Population) from coronary heart disease in England and the local authority of Forest of Dean

	England	*Forest of Dean*
2000	135	127
2001	130	133
2002	124	130
2003	119	120
2004	109	122

Notes:
1. Based on deaths registered in each calendar year, selected using the original underlying cause. Cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD9) for 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD10) for 2001-04 (codes for coronary heart disease: ICD9 410-414; ICD10 120-125).
2. Figures have been provided for Forest of Dean local authority as population data by parliamentary constituency are unavailable.

Source:
Death registrations and population estimates, Office for National Statistics

Hospital Bed Occupancy

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the optimal level of bed occupancy in NHS hospitals. [45514]

Mr. Byrne: Evidence from the national beds inquiry (February 2000) and elsewhere suggests that the optimal bed occupancy rate is around 82 to 85 per cent. These figures however, are merely a guideline and it is up to the national health service locally to decide how best to manage their services. Some hospitals operate at occupancy levels in excess of these levels while still delivering a high quality of care, patient safety and the key access targets.

Influenza

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of recent evidence on the effectiveness of Tamiflu; and what effect this has had on her Department's planning for an influenza pandemic. [45381]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* We are aware of the recent review of antiviral effectiveness published in *The Lancet*[1] and have given it full consideration. Studies in the review are specific to seasonal flu and do not affect our plan for pandemic flu. The findings to date are of little public health significance as the change to make the strain more resistant to antivirals also makes it less infectious.

Tamiflu was chosen for the United Kingdom stockpile on the basis of independent expert advice that reflected its efficacy and ease of administration. Internationally, this is agreed as the product of choice. Our antiviral strategy is kept under constant review and we are looking carefully at alternatives as a possible back-up to Tamiflu.

[1] de jong MD, Thanh T.T, Khanh T.H et al. Oseltamivir Resistance during Treatment of Influenza A (H5N1) infection. N Engl J Med 2005; 353:2667-72

International Recruitment of Health Workers

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many recruitment agencies have signed the Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Workers in each of the past five years for which records are available. [44440]

Mr. Byrne: NHS Employers is responsible for monitoring the code of practice on international recruitment and maintains a register of international recruitment agencies that comply with the code.

A revised code was published in December 2004, which tightened arrangements for locum recruitment and the private sector and made it a requirement that all agencies supplying permanent and temporary healthcare professional staff to the national health service comply with the code of practice.

The number of agencies on the NHS Employers list is shown in the table.

	NHS Employers list[1]
2003	64
2004	164
2005	[2]140

[1] As a list of agencies compliant with the code of practice was not established until 2003, data cannot be provided prior to this date.
[2] The reduced number in 2005 reflects in part the effect of mergers in the commercial recruitment agency sector.

Lyme Disease

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many specialist consultants in England are involved in the treatment of extreme cases of Lyme disease. [46384]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* As of June 2005, 111 consultants in infectious diseases were employed in the national health service in England. They have the principal role in the treatment of Lyme disease of differing levels of severity. In addition, the Health Protection Agency (HPA) employs 118 consultants in communicable disease control who have a role in the diagnosis of Lyme disease.

All of these consultants have rapid and easy access to the HPA's Lyme Borreliosis specialist diagnostic service for confirmation of diagnosis of Lyme disease in accordance with internationally agreed diagnostic criteria.

Mental Health Services

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of the level of funding for mental health services in *(a)* Cambridgeshire and *(b)* Peterborough. [33478]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department assesses annually the investment in mental health services published in the national survey of mental health services. The report details the level of investment by strategic health authorities (SHAs) in adult mental health services and compares it with results reported in previous years. The latest national survey for 2004–05 showed Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHAs7 planned investment in mental health services per head of weighted working age population was £169.551 million. This is an increase of £27.283 million on the previous year.

The analysis in the report is derived from the detailed finance mapping exercise co-ordinated by local implementation teams as part of the regular adult mental health review process undertaken each autumn.

A copy of the "National Survey of Investment in Mental Health Services 2004–05" is available at the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/52/96/04115296.pdf or by contacting:

DH Publications Orderline
PO Box 777
London
SE1 6XH
Tel: 0870 155 54 55

Midwives

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many supervisors of midwives there have been in England in each year since 1997. [45735]

Mr. Byrne: This information is not collected centrally.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council collates statistics on the number of practising midwives per supervisor. This information is available on the Nursing and Midwifery Council's website at www.nmc-uk.org

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance her Department has issued on financial payments by NHS trusts to supervisors of midwives. [45843]

Mr. Byrne: The NHS Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook provides that employers may use their discretion, subject to partnership arrangements, to reward staff undertaking statutory, regulatory duties performed outside of those required by the job description and/or measured by the NHS Job Evaluation scheme.

Ministerial Meetings

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which *(a)* maternity, *(b)* children's and *(c)* young people's organisations the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Care Services has met since his appointment. [33109]

Mr. Byrne: I have met the following maternity, children's and young people's organisations:

Alder Hey Children's Hospital
Association of Children's Hospices
Barnardo's Willow Young Carers project
Bristol North Primary Care Trust
Building Bridges (Liverpool)
Christie Hospital (Manchester)
Dual Diagnosis Team for Children with Learning Disability and Mental Health (Sheffield)
Fathers Direct
Gospel Oak Early Years Centre
Great Ormond Street Hospital
Hear Our Voice (Cornwall)
I CAN
Keepsafe Project (Bath)
Leeds General Infirmary
Liverpool Women's Hospital
Maternity Alliance
Mayday Trust
NCH
National Childbirth Trust
North East London Strategic Health Authority
Nottingham City Hospital
Nottingham North West Sure Start
On the Edge (Devon)
On Track (Luton)
Post-Natal Illness Support and Help Association (PIMi-SHA)
Reframe Conduct Disorder Outreach Team (London)
Royal Bolton Hospital
Royal College of Anaesthetics
Royal College of Midwives
Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

Royal College of Psychiatrists

Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust

Rusholme Sure Start Children's Centre

South East Sheffield Primary Care Trust

Springfield Youth Club (London)

The FRIENDS Programme (Bath)

The Junction—Colchester Mind

Tower Hamlets Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (London)

YoungMinds

And the Donna Louise Trust in a personal capacity.

In addition, I will be meeting the Children's Society in the new year.

Mobile Phone Masts

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research has been evaluated by her Department into the health effects of non-thermal pulsed microwave radiation associated with mobile telephone masts. [47303]

Caroline Flint: The independent expert group on mobile phones (IEGMP), under Sir William Stewart produced the Stewart Report in May 2000 and its principal conclusion in relation to exposures to radiofrequency radiation (RF) from base stations (masts) was that

"the balance of evidence indicates that there is no general risk to the health of people living near to base stations on the basis that exposures are expected to be small fractions of the guidelines."

A more recent report, 'Mobile Phones and Health 2004', reviewed measurements of exposures to radiofrequency radiation from masts (or base stations) made by Ofcom and by National Radiological Protection Board and noted that they were consistent with those available at the time of the Stewart Report 2000. These reports are available on the Health Protection Agency's website at www.hpa.org.uk/radiation

It had been noted that concern had been expressed about exposures to pulsed fields. However, a 'Review of Scientific Evidence for Limiting Exposure to Electromagnetic Fields' (0–300 GHz) was published in 2004 (Docs NRPB Vol. 15 No. 3 2004) in support of its 'Advice to Government on Exposure Guidelines for EMFs'. This review included a consideration of possible biological effects of exposure to pulsed radiofrequency fields. Overall, no convincing and consistent evidence in support of low-level pulsed fields having detrimental effects was found.

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what plans the Government have to undertake research into the health effects of non-thermal pulsed radiation associated with mobile telephone masts; [48000]

(2) whether her Department has *(a)* conducted and *(b)* commissioned research into the effects of non-thermal pulsed radiation associated with mobile telephone masts. [48001]

Caroline Flint: Mobile phone base stations and handsets comply with national and international guidelines that were introduced to prevent thermal effects from exposure to radiofrequency (RF) electromagnetic fields (EMF). The guidelines have been based on extensive scientific reviews by the International Commission on Non-ionizing Radiation Protection, the World Health Organisation (WHO) and, in this country, the Health Protection Agency (HPA). This includes consideration of non-thermal effects in tissues and a variety of pulsed signals at the levels normally encountered from mobile phone technology in use today. Independent measurements near base stations (masts) have demonstrated that RF exposures are very much lower than the guidelines (www.ofcom.org.uk).

In response to recommendations for continuing research, the mobile telecommunications and health research (MTHR) programme, jointly funded by Government and industry, has supported about 30 individual studies to investigate the potential health effects of RF exposures from mobile phone technology. A description of the programme and the individual studies is available on its website at www.mthr.org.uk The studies in the MTHR programme concentrate largely on the exposures from the mobile phone handsets because these exposures are considerably higher than those from base stations.

Worldwide research is evaluated periodically by the WHO and the HPA's radiation protection division. The report, 'Mobile Phones and Health 2004', available on the HPA's website at www.hpa.org.uk/radiation, noted that there are continuing concerns about the impact of base stations on health and well-being

"despite the current evidence which shows that exposures of individuals are likely to be only a small fraction of those from phones".

The report recommended

"studies focused on ascertaining the exposure of people to RF fields".

In line with this recommendation, the MTHR programme is supporting a number of studies in relation to base stations.

National Carers Grant

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to maintain the National Carers Grant after 2008. [47544]

Mr. Byrne: The comprehensive spending review (CSR) 2007 will set the Government's priorities for the longer term. It will examine what has already been achieved and should identify what further steps must now be taken, by undertaking a zero-based review of baseline expenditure.

The National Carers Grant, along with other Department adult's social care specific grants, will be examined as part of the CSR 2007.

CSR 2007 will cover the period between 2008 and 2011.

NHS Chemotherapy Budget

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total NHS chemotherapy budget was in each of the last five years. [42474]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 16 January 2006]*: This information is not held centrally. It is for individual primary care trusts to decide and allocate funding for chemotherapy in their area.

NHS Finance

David Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the projected financial out-turn for 2005–06 is for each of the NHS trusts in the West Midlands Government Office area. [44406]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested on the financial outturn for 2005–06 for each of the national health service trusts in the West Midlands Government Office is provided in the table.

The forecast outturn position for 2005–06, as submitted by NHS organisations at the mid-year point (month six), is available in the Library. Copies of this information is also available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/fs/en

West Midlands government office area: NHS Trusts forecast outturn surplus/(deficit) as at month 6 2005–06

NHS Trust Name	*£000*
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Trust	0
Birmingham Children's Hospital NHS Trust	0
Birmingham Women's Health Care NHS Trust	0
Burton Hospitals NHS Trust	(1,200)
Coventry and Warwickshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust	0
Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust	0
George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust	(5,359)
Good Hope Hospital NHS Trust	(4,500)
Hereford and Worcester Ambulance NHS Trust	0
Hereford Hospitals NHS Trust	0
Mid Staffordshire Gen Hospitals NHS Trust	0
North Staffs Combined HC NHS Trust	0
Rob Jones and A Hunt Orthopaedic NHS Trust	0
Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	0
Royal Wolverhampton Hospital NHS Trust	(10,146)
Sandwell and West Birmingham Hosps NHS Trust	(5,100)
Sandwell MH Social Care NHS Trust	0
Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust	(10,000)
South Staffordshire Healthcare NHS Trust	0
South Warwickshire Gen Hosps NHS Trust	(1,851)
Staffordshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust	0
Univ Hosps Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust	0
University Hospital of North Staffordshire Hospital NHS Trust	(18,147)
Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust	0
West Midlands Ambulance NHS Trust	(1,100)
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	(3,794)
Worcestershire MH Partnership NHS Trust	0

Note:
These figures exclude foundation trusts.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether slipping payment on pay-as-you-earn and national insurance contributions, as mentioned in her interview with the *Health Service Journal* on 19 January, is a method sanctioned by her Department for controlling deficits in NHS organisations; what discussions she has had with *(a)* strategic health authorities and *(b)* other NHS organisations regarding delaying payment; what the content of these discussions was; and if she will make a statement. [45518]

Mr. Byrne: The Department's policy is that all national health service organisations should ensure that payments of pay-as-you-earn tax and national insurance contributions are made when they are due, or by the date agreed with the Inland Revenue. The issue has been discussed with all strategic health authorities and they have been reminded of the Department's policy. Where it has come to our attention that organisations are making specific proposals to delay payment, we have reminded them of the policy.

NHS Finance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1575W, on NHS finance, what the end-of-year financial position of the NHS in total was in each year since 1997–98. [41958]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 12 January 2006]*: The year-end financial position of all national health service organisations, including NHS trusts, primary care trusts and strategic health authorities, is shown in the table for the period 1997–98 to 2004–05. In the year immediately before this period the deficit was £460 million.

	Total Net (Deficit)/Surplus (£ million)
1997–98	(121)
1998–99	(18)
1999–2000	(129)
2000–01	112
2001–02	71
2002–03	96
2003–04	73
2004–05	(256)

Note:
The 2004–05 figures include foundation trusts.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her written statement of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS, on NHS finance data, if she will place in the Library a copy of the latest in-year financial forecasts for each NHS trust, primary care trust and strategic health authority for 2005–06. [46859]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 30 January 2006]*: The forecast outturn position for 2005–06, as submitted by national health service organisations (strategic health authorities, primary care trusts and NHS trusts) at the mid-year point (month six), is available in the Library and is also available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/FreedomOfInformation/ClassesOfInformation/fs/en

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the current overall national financial deficit of the NHS is; what the deficit is of each *(a)* strategic health authority and *(b)* primary care trust which has one; and what percentage of debt is (i) historical and (ii) recurring in each case; [42690]

(2) what account she has taken of the unexpected costs incurred by primary care trusts in implementing the Government's required changes to GP contracts and out of hour services in assessing the overall national NHS deficit; and if she will make a statement; [42698]

(3) what guidance she has issued to primary care trusts in the priority they should give to *(a)* repayment of debt and *(b)* delivery of services; [42699]

(4) what assessment she has made of the effects of *(a)* short-term financial pressures on primary care trusts (PCTs) and *(b)* Government requirements on PCTs to address financial deficits on (i) patients and (ii) healthcare services; and if she will make a statement; [42700]

(5) to what timescale a primary care trust in a financially balanced recurrent expenditure position but with an accrued historic budget deficit is required to repay that historic element. [42723]

Jane Kennedy: The net deficit for 2004–05 across the national health service was £256 million, which includes the financial outturn of NHS Foundation Trusts (NHSFTs). The forecast outturn position for 2005–06, as submitted by NHS organisations at the mid-year point, is a net deficit of around £620 million, excluding NHSFTs. The 2004–05 financial position and the 2005–06 forecast month six position for NHS organisations, excluding foundation trusts is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4119175&chk=JuzTDZ

Overspending and underspending by NHS bodies is carried into the following year, as part of the carry forward regime. This is operated by the Department at strategic health authority level (SHA), and SHAs have the authority to determine how the regime operates for organisations within their health economy. For this reason we do not know how much of the carry forward was applied to individual organisations, so it is not possible to distinguish between historical and recurring deficits for primary care trusts (PCTs) and SHAs. For the purposes of comparison, the turnover and financial position for all SHAs and PCTs for each of the last two years, 2003–04 and 2004–05 has been placed in the Library.

All NHS Trusts and PCTs should break even every year. Where an organisation has a historic deficit, the SHA can provide financial support to the organisations to allow them more time to break even whilst the recovery plan is implemented. SHAs have the responsibility for ensuring the organisations across its area are in financial balance every year, so to provide planned support to one organisation requires other NHS organisations within the health economy to underspend over the same period. Any such arrangements would have to be subject to the agreement of local providers, commissioners and the managing SHA.

All NHS organisations have minimum standards of quality they must deliver, including targets for maximum waiting times. These are dramatically better than the standards of the NHS in the past and there can be no trade-off between these quality standards and removing deficits. All areas of the country have seen dramatic improvements in care, and all areas of the country will continue to see improvements. Going further in a specific hospital cannot be achieved if it is unaffordable. This would, in effect, be one part of the NHS spending the money of another part of the NHS to deliver a better service, which is unfair on the other parts of the country.

The Department allocated PCTs £4.5 billion through primary medical services (PMEDS) funding arrangements in 2005–06, contributing towards the implementation of new general medical services (GMS) contract arrangements including out of hours and quality outcome framework (QOF) services for both GMS and personal medical services.

The latest available data, which are still being validated, is for 2004–05. This data indicates that PCTs are having to manage overspends on allocations around the quality outcome framework (£200 million) and out of hours (£100 million). This has been offset by lower than expecting growth in other areas, such as hospital elective activity and prescribing expenditure.

The NHS has received record increases in funding, and the majority of PCTs are delivering improved services as well as living within their budget. Where organisations are failing to do this it is due to poor management, so there is no need to sacrifice the delivery of the required standards and targets to deliver financial balance.

NHS Financial Deficits

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the year-end financial deficits of *(a)* Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Trust, *(b)* East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust, *(c)* Medway NHS Trust, *(d)* Royal United Hospital Bath NHS Trust, *(e)* Royal West Sussex NHS Trust and *(f)* Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust were in (i) 2002–03, (ii) 2003–04 and (iii) 2004–05; whether trusts which have failed to achieve breakeven or a surplus in three consecutive financial years are considered by her Department to have failed in their duty laid out in section 10 of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990; what measures are put in place when a trust fails to achieve the duty laid out in section 10 of the 1990 Act; and if she will make a statement. [46397]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* The year-end surplus/deficit position for the years 2002–03 through 2004–05 for the trusts is shown in the table.

£000

Organisation name	*Final accounts surplus / deficit 2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Trust	(916)	(1,689)	(1,049)
East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust	(1,450)	(1,787)	(4,983)
Medway NHS Trust	(967)	2,372	(279)
Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Trust	(24,784)	(1,968)	1946)
The Royal West Sussex NHS Trust	(1,349)	(3,572)	(15,483)
Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust	2	(744)	(3,490)

The NHS and Community Care Act 1990 sets out the breakeven duty for national health service trusts as a requirement to breakeven "taking one financial year with another".

In agreement with the Audit Commission and other audit bodies, this has been clarified by the NHS Finance Manual as a requirement to breakeven over a three-year period, starting from first year of deficit. This period can be extended by agreement with the local strategic health authority (SHA) for up to five years.

Furthermore, the accumulated deficit at the end of the financial year must be material for the trust to be deemed to have failed to breakeven in that year. Material has been clarified as meaning greater than 0.5 per cent. of turnover.

Using these criteria, Medway NHS Trust has achieved its breakeven duty in 2003–04 and 2004–05. Similarly, Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust achieved its breakeven duty in 2002–03 and 2003–04; its three-year breakeven duty period therefore commenced in 2004–05.

The remaining four trusts have all agreed extended five-year recovery terms with their SHAs, and therefore none are in breach of their statutory duty to break-even "taking one year with another".

Compliance with the statutory duty to breakeven is inextricably linked to improving financial performance. Various measures are taken to improve this, the most recent being the announcement of the turnaround teams. Details of the turnaround team process, and the organisations covered is available on the Department' website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot?04/12/71/88/0412 7188.pdf.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the likely impact of financial deficits in primary care trusts on the achievement of Government targets. [46662]

Mr. Byrne: All national health service organisations have minimum standards of quality they must deliver, including meeting targets for maximum waiting times. These are dramatically better than the standards of the NHS in the past and there can be no trade-off between these quality standards and removing deficits.

NHS Staff (Attacks)

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many attacks on NHS staff have been recorded in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency, in each year since 1997. [43287]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested has not been collated centrally for the period 1997–99. Data outlining the estimated number of reported violent incidents collected by the Department for 2000–01, 2001–02, 2002–03 for each strategic health authority (SHA), national health service trust and primary care trust (PCT) in England has been placed in the Library.

In April 2003, the NHS security management service (NHS SMS) was created and assumed responsibility for the issue of tackling violence against NHS staff. The NHS SMS has collected data on the number of physical assaults on NHS staff in England for the period 2004–05. The figure for assaults on staff who work in mental health or learning disabilities was 43,301. For the acute sector the figure was 11,482 and for the ambulance service the figure was 1,329. Figures on physical assaults in the primary care sector are currently being validated and will be released shortly.

A breakdown of figures for each SHA, NHS trust and PCT in England for the year 2004–05 will be released shortly.

NHS Tariff Uplift

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1304W, on NHS tariff uplift, what the NHS tariff uplift *(a)* will be between 2005–06 and 2006–07 and *(b)* was between 2004–05 and 2005–06; and if she will provide a breakdown of the major components contributing to uplift between (i) 2005–06 and 2006–07 and (ii) 2004–05 and 2005–06. [45421]

Mr. Byrne: The national health service tariff uplift will be 4 per cent. between 2005–06 and 2006–07. It was 5.3 per cent. between 2004–05 and 2005–06.

A breakdown of the major components contributing to the uplift for these two periods is shown in the following table.

	2005–06 (over 2004–05 baseline)		*2006–07 (over 2005–06 baseline)*	
	£ million	*Percentage*	*£ million*	*Percentage*
Baseline	45,214		49,806	
Increase in pay and prices				
Pay	1,260	2.8	1,028	2.1
Non-pay inflation (prices)	209	0.5	253	0.5
Clinical negligence costs	135	0.3	141	0.3
Secondary care drugs	213	0.5	287	0.6
Revenue cost of capital	92	0.2	218	0.4
Gross pay and price increase	1,908	*4.2*	1,926	*3.9*
Efficiency savings	*-769*	*-1.7*	*-1,245*	*-2.5*
Net pay and price increase	1,140	2.5	681	1.4
Reform and quality				
Consultant contract	140	0.3	50	0.1
NCCG reform	0	0.0	50	0.1
Agenda for change	460	1.0	635	1.3
NICE appraisals and clinical guidelines	389	0.9	291	0.6
Investment in new capital	156	0.3	103	0.2
Total reform and quality	1,145	2.5	1,129	2.3
Implementation of the national programme for IT	0	0.0	163	0.3

	2005–06 (over 2004–05 baseline) £ million	Percentage	2006–07 (over 2005–06 baseline) £ million	Percentage
Technical adjustments				
Revaluation of NHS estate	115	0.3	0	0.0
Total technical adjustments	115	0.3	0	0.0
	Overall	*5.3*	*Overall*	*4.0*

NHS Trusts (Invoices)

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which NHS trusts *(a)* paid and *(b)* did not pay 95 per cent. of undisputed invoices within contract terms or 30 days where no terms have been agreed in the last period for which figures are available; and what the total value is of those invoices. [44928]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

The most recent period for which figures are available is as reported in the individual final accounts of national health service trusts for 2004–05.

Parkinson's Disease

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government are taking to ensure that general practitioners are adequately trained in the *(a)* diagnosis and *(b)* treatment of Parkinson's disease; and if she will make a statement. [47347]

Mr. Byrne: Government do not specify the content of the general practitioner (GP) training curriculum. This is the job of the Postgraduate Medical Education and Training Board (PMETB), which is the competent authority for postgraduate medical training in the United Kingdom. PMETB is an independent professional body.

Regulations specify seven competencies which must be tested, and which the curriculum must therefore teach:

> factual medical knowledge sufficient to enable the doctor to perform the duties of a GP; the ability to apply factual medical knowledge to the management of problems presented by patients in general practice;
>
> effective communication, both orally and in writing;
>
> the ability to consult satisfactorily with general practice patients;
>
> the ability to review and critically analyze the practitioner's own working practices and to manage any necessary changes appropriately;
>
> clinical skills; and
>
> the ability to synthesize all of the above competencies and apply them appropriately in a general practice setting.

GPs are expected therefore to learn in trailing the skills needed to deal with all their patients.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to answer questions *(a)* 28223 tabled on 14 November 2005 and *(b)* 29705 tabled on 11 November 2005 by the hon. Member for Yeovil. [40645]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 718–19W, and to the reply given to him by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health on 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2636W.

Pension Liability

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the level of pension liability is for health sector workers. [46797]

Mr. Byrne: The Government Actuary's Department has valued the total liabilities of the NHS Pension Scheme as at 31 March 2005 to be £127.9 billion. The NHS Pension Scheme covers staff directly employed in the national health service; staff employed in general practices; and, under specific direction from the Secretary of State for Health, staff employed in other organisations including health charities, universities, and other government departments who are engaged in healthcare related activities.

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many NHS in-patient beds are available for the specialist treatment of those with post-traumatic stress disorder or related conditions. [49187]

(2) how many NHS in-patient beds are available for the specialist treatment of those with post-traumatic stress disorder and related conditions. [49473]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answers 6 and 7 February 2006]:* National health service beds are allocated to in-patients on the basis of clinical need, and beds are not set aside for the management of specific medical conditions.

NHS organisations were given guidance on the management of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in primary and secondary care by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) in March 2005. Local NHS organisations should review their existing clinical guidelines, care pathways and protocols in the treatment and management of PTSD in the light of this guidance, and revise them accordingly.

The NICE guidance is available on its website at www.nice.org.uk/CG026NICEguideline This guidance should be used in conjunction with the national service framework for mental health, which is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/07/72/09/04077209.pdf

Primary Care Trusts (Financial Deficits)

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many primary care trusts incurred financial deficits in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05; and how many she expects will be in deficit at the end of 2005–06. [46029]

Mr. Byrne: In 2003–04, 41 primary care trusts (PCTs) posted a deficit. In 2004–05, 90 PCTs posted a deficit. 70 PCTs are forecasting a deficit for 2005–06 at month six.

Private Finance Initiative

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total capital sum is of each of the private finance initiative schemes over £10 million *(a)* in operation and *(b)* where the outline business case has been approved for which her Department is responsible; and what the (i) total optimism bias percentage, (ii) net value at commencement and (iii) amount of optimism bias for the public sector comparator is in respect of each scheme. [44806]

Jane Kennedy: Table 1 shows the capital value for all private finance initiative schemes over £10 million which are open. Table 2 shows the capital value for private finance initiative schemes which have reached financial close with work started on site or have advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union. All these schemes have an approved outlined business case.

The requirement to make explicit quantified adjustments for optimism bias in business cases, complementing the risk analysis already undertaken, was announced by Treasury in January 2003 and is applicable to national health service schemes that reached the invitation to negotiate stage from April 2003. Schemes which applied optimism bias are indicated in Table 2. This information is only available for schemes above £25 million. To collect and collate percentages and amounts of optimism for all these schemes could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Table 1

Strategic health authority	*Scheme*	*Capital value (£ million)*
Kent and Medway	Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust	94
Cumbria and Lancashire	North Cumbria Acute Hospitals NHS Trust-Carlisle	67
Thames Valley	Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust	45
South East London	Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	96
West Yorkshire	Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust	65
County Durham and Tees Valley	County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (North Durham)	61
Greater Manchester	South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	67
Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire	Norfolk and Norwich NHS Trust	158
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	Hereford Hospitals NHS Trust	64
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	87
North Central London	Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	54
County Durham and Tees Valley	County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (Bishop Auckland)	48
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Swindon and Marlborough NHS Trust	100
West Yorkshire	Leeds Community and Mental Health Services Teaching NHS Trust	47
South East London	King's Healthcare NHS Trust	76
North West London	Bromley Healthcare NHS Trust	118
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	22
Thames Valley	Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust	30
North West London	West Middlesex University Hospitals NHS Trust	60
County Durham and Tees Valley	South Tees Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	122
South West London	St George's Hospital NHS Trust	46
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wilshire	Gloucestershire Royal NHS Trust	32
Birmingham and the Black Country	Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust	137
North Central London	University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	422
South East London	Queen Mary's hospital Sidcup	15
Trent	Queens Medical Centre—Nottingham University Hospital	17
Surrey and Sussex	West Sussex Health and Social Care	22
Shropshire and Staffordshire	North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare	28
South East London	Oxleas	11
North East London	North East London Mental Health	11
Birmingham and the Black Country	Northern Birmingham Mental Health	18
South West Peninsula	Cornwall Healthcare-Bodmin East London and The City Mental Health	10
North East London	Newham	15
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	Luton and Dunstable	15
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Northumbria Healthcare-Wansbeck	18
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	Royston, Buntingford and Bishop Stortford PCT	15
Birmingham and the Black Country	Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals	13
Northumberland, Tyne Wear	Northumbria Healthcare-Hexham	29
Surrey and Sussex	Guildford and Waverley PCT-Farnham	29
County Durham and Tees Valley	County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospitals-Chester-le-street	10
South West Peninsula	Mid Devon PCT-Tiverton	10
County Durham and Tees Valley	County Durham and Darlington Priority Services-West Park	16
West Yorkshire	Leeds Teaching Hospitals-Wharfedale	14
Thames Valley	Newbury and Community PCT	19

Table 1

Strategic health authority	*Scheme*	*Capital value (£ million)*
North West London	Brent PCT-Willesden	21
South Yorkshire	Doncaster and South Humber Healthcare	15
West Yorkshire	North Kirklees PCT	27
Birmingham and the Black Country	Sandwell and W Birmingham Hospitals-City Hospital	26

Table 2

Strategic health authority scheme	*Scheme*	*Capital value (£ million)*
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust-Walsgrave	379
Trent	Southern Derbyshire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	312
Cumbria and Lancashire	East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust-Blackburn	110
Thames Valley	Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	134
North East London	Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	238
North West London	North West London Hospitals NHS Trust-Central Middlesex	69
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	Avon and Western Wiltshire Mental Health NHS Trust	83
Surrey and Sussex	Brighton Health Care NHS Trust	36
South East London	Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	72
West Yorkshire	Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	265
Greater Manchester	Central Manchester Healthcare/Manchester Childrens Hospitals NHS Trusts	512
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust	299
Trent	Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]326
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]193
Thames Valley	Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]129
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Newcastle, Nrth Tyneside and Northumberland MH-Morpeth	32
Thames Valley	Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre	37
North Central London	The Whittington	32
North East London	Newham Healthcare	55
Cumbria and Lancashire	East Lancashire Hospitals-Burnley	30
Dorset and Somerset	Salisbury Health Care	24
South West London	Wandsworth PCT-Queen Mary's Roehampton	75
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	Addenbrookes NHS Trust	76
South Yorkshire	Sheffield Teaching Hospitals	35
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	New Forest PCT-Lymington	36
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	Daventry and South Northamptonshire PCT	28
South West London	Kingston Hospital	33
Thames Valley	Buckinghamshire Hospitals-Stoke Mandeville	47
North East London	Barts and The London NHS Trust (remaining Wave 1A)	1,128
Birmingham and the Black Country	University Hospital Birmingham/South Birmingham MH NHS Trust	[1]696
Shropshire and Staffordshire.	University Hospital of North Staffordshire NHS Trust	391
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust	574
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]64
West Yorkshire	Mid Yorkshire Hospitals-Wakefield	266
Cheshire Merseyside	St Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]380
North West London	North Middlesex Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]108
Essex	Mid Essex Hospitals NHS Trust	186
Greater Manchester	Salford Royal Hospitals NHS Trusts	[1]190
Greater Manchester	Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	[1]115
Essex	Essex Rivers Healthcare NHS Trust	[1]216
Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire	Peterborough Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]381
North East London	Whipps Cross Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]328
Birmingham and the Black Country	Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]165
Surrey and Sussex	Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells/Invicta Community Care NHS Trusts	[1]428
South West Peninsula	South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	[1]341
County Durham and Tees Valley	Tees and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust	[1]78
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	Northamptonshire Healthcare	31
Essex	Brentwood, Billericay and Wickford PCT	26
Dorset and Somerset	Taunton and Somerset	48
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	Selby and York PCT	24
Essex	Ipswich Hospital	35
Essex	South Essex Partnership	25
County Durham and Tees Valley	Langbaurgh PCT	40
Trent	Derbyshire Mental Health NHS Trust (Mental 29 H[illegible]tch scheme)	29
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	East Lincolnshire PCT (Mental Health batch scheme[illegible])	25

[1] Optimism bias used

Sleep Disorders

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department *(a)* has undertaken and *(b)* plans to undertake into possible links between induced abortion and (i) sleep disorders and (ii) sleep disturbances; and if she will make a statement. [47980]

Caroline Flint: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1054W.

Ward Closures

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital wards in England have been closed

(*a*) permanently or (*b*) temporarily since 30 June 2005 due to financial constraints; and if she will make a statement. [4746[3]]

Mr. Byrne: This is not information held centrally. These are operational matters for decision locally having regard to patients' needs.

Research Funding

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the amount of NHS research funding, broken down by disease area or type for each of the last five years. [45596]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is shown in the table.

National health service research and development estimated spend by type

					£ million
	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Support for Science[1]	293	301	328	346	371
NHS Priorities and Needs[2]	87	94	92	97	110
National Programmes[3]	66	77	92	92	106
Excess treatment costs[4]	3	3	2	4	4
Total	449	475	514	539	591

[1] Funding allocated to the NHS to meet the NHS costs of hosting R and D supported by eligible external funders, such as the Medical Research Council and medical research charities.
[2] Funding allocated to the NHS for R and D to meet the priorities and needs of the NHS.
[3] R and D commissioned by the Department to meet the priorities and needs of the NHS.
[4] Funding provided exceptionally to the NHS to defray the treatment costs of eligible R and D, normally met from patient care budgets.

Details of individual projects supported by NHS research and development (R and D) funding can be found on the national research register on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/research

Retinal Screening

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if she will make support available for the use of fundus cameras in opticians practices to provide convenient diabetes retinopathy screening for patients; and if she will make a statement [46659]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* Capital funding of £27 million has been made available to buy digital cameras and related equipment for retinal screening. £5 million has been made available in 2003–04, £9.6 million in 2004–05 and £12.4 million in 2005–06. The capital has been apportioned on a population basis through strategic health authorities.

Primary care trusts are responsible for implementing diabetic retinopathy screening to national standards as set out in "Improvement, Expansion and Reform: the next three years", the planning and performance framework for 2003 to 2006 and diabetes national service framework delivery strategy. It is for local health services to decide how they want the programme to be delivered locally. At national level optometrists have played an important role on the national diabetic retinopathy screening project advisory group set up to steer the development of the programme.

School Nurses

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many school nurses there are in each strategic health authority area. [46735]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Number of school nurses in each strategic health authority area as at 30 September 2004

		Headcount
	Qualified nurses working in school nursing	*Of which qualified school nurses*
England	2,409	856
County Durham and Tees Valley SHA	83	26
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear SHA	62	38
Cheshire and Merseyside SHA	141	17
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	155	62
Greater Manchester SHA	172	78
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire SHA	110	25
South Yorkshire SHA	106	34
West Yorkshire SHA	87	56
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland SHA	106	25
Trent SHA	124	13
Birmingham and The Black Country SHA	84	54
Shropshire and Staffordshire SHA	62	35
West Midlands South SHA	39	21
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA	85	42
Essex SHA	95	28
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA	6	1

Number of school nurses in each strategic health authority area as at 30 September 2004

	Qualified nurses working in school nursing	*Headcount Of which qualified school nurses*
North Central London SHA	44	17
North East London SHA	91	36
North West London SHA	54	4
South East London SHA	77	47
South West London SHA	97	27
Hampshire and Isle of Wight SHA	59	9
Kent and Medway SHA	49	25
Surrey and Sussex SHA	133	57
Thames Valley SHA	52	36
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA	124	7
Dorset and Somerset SHA	43	2
South West Peninsula SHA	71	34

Smoking

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the average age at which people start smoking in England. [39343]

Caroline Flint: Data on smoking are available from the general household survey. We are able to provide estimates for 2003, of the average age at which people started smoking in England, using the results of the general household survey 2003. The raw data required to calculate the average at which people start smoking regularly are available to us up to 2003.

The general household survey 2004 has recently been released (December 15 2005) and we are able to provide estimates of the age range people started smoking in England for 2004. The sample population for this survey is adults aged 16 and over.

The available data for 2003 (average age) and 2004 (age ranges) are shown in the table.

Average age started smoking regularly by sex, 2003, England

	Years
Male	16.7
Female	17.6
Total	17.1

Source:
General Household Survey 2003, Office for National Statistics

Age started smoking regularly by sex: England 2004
Persons aged 16 and over who had ever smoked regularly

Age started smoking regularly	*Men*	*Women*	*Percentage All persons*
Under 16	42	35	38
16–17	26	28	27
18–19	16	18	17
20–24	11	12	11
25 and over	5	7	6
Weighted base (000's) = 100 per cent.	9,113	8,234	17,347
Unweighted sample	3,195	2,948	6,143

Source:
General Household Survey 2003, Office for National Statistics

Further information on the General Household Survey is available at: www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk = 5756.

Strategic Health Authorities

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total cost of running strategic health authorities was in 2004–05, broken down by authority. [29870]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is shown in the table.

Running costs budgets for strategic health authorities in 2004–05

Strategic health authority	*£ million*
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	5.1
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	4.6
Birmingham and the Black Country	6.2
Cheshire and Merseyside	5.2
County Durham and Tees Valley	5.1
Cumbria and Lancashire	4.6
Dorset and Somerset	5.3
Essex	5.5
Greater Manchester	5.2
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	4.6
Kent and Medway	5.0
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	5.3
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	5.2
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	4.6
North Central London	4.6
North East London	4.9
North West London	4.7
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	4.6
Shropshire and Staffordshire	4.9
South East London	4.7
South West London	4.7
South West Peninsula	4.6
South Yorkshire	5.0
Surrey and Sussex	5.1
Thames Valley	5.2
Trent	4.8
West Midlands South	4.6
West Yorkshire	5.1
England	139.3

Suffolk Coastal Primary Care Trust

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when the financial and management specialist team sent to Suffolk Coastal primary care trust is due to report its findings to her Department; and when those findings will be made public; [47654]

(2) which patient representative bodies the financial and management specialist team met during its visit to Suffolk Coastal primary care trust. [47655]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 2 February 2006]*: Suffolk Coastal primary care trust (PCT) was subject to a baseline assessment exercise. The aim of this exercise is to ensure there is an agreed understanding of the local financial problem and that actions are in hand to address this. This involved the strategic health authority (SHA) and an assessment of the PCTs financial management.

It is the responsibility of the PCT to work with stakeholders, including patient representative bodies and such discussions were outside the scope of the baseline line assessment.

The PCT will then agree a tailored package of turnaround support with their SHA.

A report from the Director of Finance of the Department on 25 January 2006 was released which gives the results of the assessments. Suffolk Coastal PCT was assessed as needing drive and focus to maintain their high priority to turnaround.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 9 February 2006

PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Victor Bout

Harry Cohen: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the United Nations on whether Mr Victor Bout should be on a list of those subject to planned UN sanctions on arms trafficking; and if he will make a statement. [49806]

The Prime Minister: I have had no discussions with the United Nations on this matter.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Mitigation Speeches

23. **Mr. Borrow:** To ask the Solicitor-General if he will encourage prosecutors to challenge derogatory attacks on a victim's character made by defence lawyers in mitigation. [49932]

The Solicitor-General: Yes, on 21 October 2005 I announced the publication of the revised Attorney General's Guidelines on the Acceptance of Pleas and the Prosecutor's Pledge. Both require prosecutors robustly to challenge defence mitigation which is derogatory to a victim's character.

Electoral Fraud

24. **James Duddridge:** To ask the Solicitor-General what role he expects the Law Officers' Departments to play in ensuring prosecutions are brought in relation to electoral fraud. [49934]

The Solicitor-General: Prosecutions for election offences, including electoral fraud, are conducted by the special crime division of the Crown Prosecution Service, based in London and York.

A specialist Crown prosecutor will review the case, as in all cases, in accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors.

The Law Officers, who superintend the work of the Crown Prosecution Service, would be informed about high profile cases, however the DPP does not require law officers consent to prosecute a case.

Crime Victims

25. Keith Vaz: To ask the Solicitor-General when he last met the Director of Public Prosecutions to discuss liaison between the Crown Prosecution Service and victims of crime. [49935]

The Solicitor-General: The Attorney General and I and our officials have regular discussions with the Director of Public Prosecutions and his officials on a wide range of victim related issues, including the No Witness No Justice initiative and the Prosecutor's Pledge, which are significantly changing the relationship between prosecutors and victims and witnesses of crime.

Criminal Cases

26. **Mr. David Jones:** To ask the Solicitor-General what steps the Crown Prosecution Service is taking to improve management of the procedure of criminal cases in court. [49936]

The Solicitor-General: The Criminal Procedure Rules Committee (CPRC) sets the rules which govern the practice and procedure of the criminal courts and give courts explicit powers actively to manage criminal cases and to avoid unnecessary delays and promote consistency between courts.

The DPP is a member of the CPRC and both the CPS and my office play a leading role in contributing to the work of the CPRC and its sub-groups. The CPS was closely involved in the drafting of the overriding objective, the case management rules and forms. Significant contributions were made on the disclosure and terrorism protocols. The CPS regularly provides comment and suggestions on issues which the Committee are considering. In addition the criminal case management framework complements the rules in setting out the role and responsibilities of the CPS and others involved in managing criminal cases through the courts.

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Solicitor-General what steps the Crown Prosecution Service is taking to improve the delivery of court papers. [49933]

The Solicitor-General: Steps are being taken to improve service—including the timely service of papers by the police. The electronic service of papers is increasingly being used by the CPS in the more complex criminal cases such as complex frauds and complex computer related crimes. The CPS in electronically serving evidence on the court has to ensure that the police have signed paper statements of all witnesses. The statements themselves can then be served electronically on the court and defence; this can be done by CD or e-mail. The signed paper bundle has to be retained by the police.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Solicitor-General what the average time taken by the Crown Prosecution Service to decide whether to prosecute a juvenile was in the last year for which figures are available. [50064]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service maintains no central record of the time taken to reach pre-charge decisions, nor is the information recorded on individual case files. The time varies considerably, partly due to the need to gather evidence and talk to witnesses.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Child Care

9. **Mr. Leigh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research her Department is undertaking on whether cost acts as a barrier to take-up of child care. [49945]

Maria Eagle: The Department has commissioned a series of surveys of parents' use, views and experiences of Childcare and Early Years Services. The latest of these was conducted between 2004 and 2005. The survey collected data on a wide range of issues associated with childcare early years provision, including information on the barriers to such provision.

The findings from the survey are expected to be published in a research report at the end of March 2006.

Setting/Streaming

10. **Adam Afriyie:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures her Department has introduced since 1997 to promote setting and streaming in schools. [49946]

Jacqui Smith: We have published case studies and research evidence to inform school practice on pupil grouping. Through our national strategies and gifted and talented programmes, we have issued guidance to schools to consider a range of ability grouping practices, which includes setting and streaming, to better meet the learning needs of pupils. As a result the evidence suggests that there are more young people taught in ability sets now, than in 1997.

Children's Centres

13. **Vera Baird:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made in the establishment of children's centres. [49949]

Maria Eagle: I am delighted to report that we now have over 500 Sure Start children's centres, supporting nearly 400,000 children in the most disadvantaged areas. We are on course to have centres supporting 650,000 children being supported by children's centres by March. From April we will start rolling out children's centres beyond the most disadvantaged areas, as part of our drive to have 2,500 children's centres by March 2008. Our goal is to have 3,500 children's centres by 2010, one for every community.

School Discipline

14. **Michael Gove:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on school discipline. [49950]

Jacqui Smith: Although the great majority of schools are orderly places we remain determined to reduce misbehaviour to an absolute minimum. So we are implementing a major national programme that makes behaviour management training available to all schools and provides extra resources for schools facing the greatest challenges. We are also legislating to give school staff an unequivocal power to discipline pupils and extend the use of court orders to reinforce parents' responsibility for behaviour in school.

Education Standards

15. **Mr. Ellwood:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment she has made of standards in education for 16 to 18-year-olds; and if she will make a statement. [49951]

Bill Rammell: This year saw the highest standards we have ever achieved at every key stage and at A-level. In the 14–19 Education and Skills White Paper and Implementation Plan, we set out our plans for a new 14–19 curriculum and qualifications entitlement which will transform opportunities for 16–19-year-olds and introduce greater stretch and challenge. There will be 14 sets of specialised diplomas, at three levels up to A-level equivalent, covering all sectors of the economy, delivered through partnership arrangements between schools, colleges and training providers.

16. **Mr. Crabb:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures her Department is taking to improve the standard of basic skills of school leavers. [49953]

Jacqui Smith: The 14–19 Education and Skills White Paper set out our plans. We will provide catch up opportunities at key stage 3; toughen GCSE English and maths so that no-one can get a higher grade without mastering the functional basics; make these a core element of our new specialised diplomas; introduce a general diploma to recognise those who achieve five good GCSEs or equivalent, including English and maths, and reflect this in the attainment tables.

Skills Olympics

17. **Margaret Moran:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to bring the Skills Olympics to the UK. [49954]

Phil Hope: Following a successful Pre-Qualification Visit from the WorldSkills Executive in January, we are now preparing a formal bid to host the 2011 WorldSkills Competition in London. The final decision will be made in Melbourne on 10 May, by secret ballot of WorldSkills member countries. A period of international lobbying prior to this will focus on securing the votes of countries considered undecided or unlikely to vote for the UK.

Our bid will focus on the UK's ability to raise WorldSkills' profile and reputation by giving the competition a global stage from which to spread its messages. We aim to establish links with media interest in the 2012 Olympics (held only six months after WorldSkills 2011) to associate world class achievement in sport with world class achievement in skills in the public mind, and change perceptions of vocational education and training positively and permanently.

The social and economic diversity of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland offers a distinctive experience to competitors and observers alike, and a unique opportunity to extend the reach and impact of the competition to many different countries and communities.

If our bid is successful, the Government will build a social partnership with individuals, partners and business to encourage skills investment across the UK. This will be a national wide celebration of world class

vocational skills, and promises to be a very exciting time, with the potential to offer great economic and social rewards for the whole of the UK.

Education White Paper

18. **Mr. Jack:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research was undertaken which supported the contents of the Education White Paper; and if she will make a statement. [49955]

Ruth Kelly: A wide range of research was used to inform the White Paper and the policies contained within it.

All the research commissioned by the Department is published on the Department's website when it is complete.

Language Teaching

19. **Keith Vaz:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent guidance she has issued to schools on the teaching of foreign languages. [49956]

Jacqui Smith: On 27 January I wrote to all secondary schools setting out measures being introduced from September 2006. I expect all schools to set a benchmark for numbers of students studying languages leading to a recognised qualification at Key Stage 4. Schools will decide a target to set themselves between 50 per cent. and 90 per cent., dependant on their circumstances. Also, on 27 October 2005 the Key Stage 2 Framework for Languages was launched introducing languages into primary schools.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she has taken to reduce the total administration costs of *(a)* her Department, *(b)* its non-departmental public bodies and *(c)* Ofsted; and what assessment she has made of the savings made as a consequence. [5012]

Bill Rammell: The Department has agreed budgets which reflect a commitment to make 15 per cent. efficiency savings in real terms in administrative expenditure by 2007–08, within the Department itself, and across the landscape of its non-departmental public bodies and Ofsted. We are monitoring spend across all these budgets to ensure spend does not exceed profiled levels.

My Department reported progress towards our Gershon Review target in the Department's Autumn Performance Report. It will report further progress in the Departmental Annual Report which we expect to publish in April.

Higher Education

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on measures to promote fair access to higher education. [49999]

Bill Rammell: The Government remains committed to fair access and widening participation in higher education for reasons of social justice and economic need. In England, from 2006, no full-time student will have to pay fees up-front, nor will they repay anything until they leave higher education (HE) and are earning a reasonable wage. Repayments are suspended when not earning and interest will grow only in line with inflation. Students from low income households will once again be entitled to non-repayable grants.

Alongside this, we have established the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) to promote fair access. OFFA has approved access agreements from 180 institutions intending to charge higher level fees. These will deliver around £300 million in financial support to students from low income backgrounds.

In 2005–06, HEFCE has allocated £282 million to higher education institutions to help offset the costs associated with recruiting and retaining students from groups under-represented in HE.

Our Aimhigher programme seeks to raise aspiration and attainment levels among those currently under-represented in HE. We have announced that Aimhigher will continue until at least 2008.

In addition, we have set out proposals to reform the higher education applications process to make the system fairer to all applicants. We will publish our response to the consultation in the spring.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what recent discussions she has had on the Higher Education Funding Council for England's review of its methods of funding teaching; and if she will make a statement; [49231]

(2) what representations she has received on the Higher Education Funding Council for England's proposal that funding for teaching in higher education institutions should be based on the number of credits obtained by students; and if she will make a statement; [49277]

(3) if she will make it her policy that changes in the funding mechanisms for higher education institutions should provide those with a high proportion of part-time students with appropriate support. [49278]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* We discuss these matters on a regular basis with HEFCE. The council has been consulting the higher education sector on the future formula to be used for the distribution of grant for teaching. I am sure the council will consider carefully any arguments and evidence which are put forward in the consultation exercise on these issues. We have already brought forward proposals to provide additional support amounting to £40 million over the next two years for part-time students from non-traditional backgrounds.

Learning and Skills Council

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to encourage greater involvement of small companies in funding the Learning and Skills Council and its initiatives. [50034]

Bill Rammell: The Department funds a wide range of learning provision through the Learning and Skills Council's Learner Participation budget which is £6.7 billion for 2005–06. In April 2006 we will roll out Train

to Gain which will target small and hard to reach employers in particular. Train to Gain will provide skills brokers whose role will be to help employers analyse their skill needs and source the training to meet those needs. Some of the provision will be funded by the LSC, employers themselves will contribute to the funding of other learning.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how local Learning and Skills Council offices will be funded to deliver partnership arrangements and economic regeneration; and if she will make a statement. [50037]

Bill Rammell: As part of its restructuring plans, the Learning and Skills Council proposes to establish 148 local partnership teams which will work closely with their local communities, understand the needs of individuals and employers at grass roots level and build strategic relationships with local schools, colleges and other learning providers. The local partnership teams will work alongside 35 economic development teams which will focus on skills for employment, regeneration and economic development.

The local partnership and economic development teams will be funded from within the LSC's existing administration budget. The new structure is expected to achieve savings of around £40 million, which can be reinvested in front-line delivery. The final agreed changes will take effect from summer 2006.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures are in place to resolve differences between national and local priorities in the Learning and Skills Council, with particular reference to those between level 2 and level 3 obligations. [50041]

Bill Rammell: The Government's priorities for post-16 learning are set out in my right hon. Friend's annual Grant Letter to the Learning and Skills Council and in the LSC's "Priorities for Success" document published in October 2005.

The LSC has introduced a new business planning cycle which is helping to strengthen the local, regional and national planning process. The LSC's Annual Statement of Priorities, along with the more detailed guidance in "Planning for Success" set out the priorities for the LSC. These provide the strategic framework for the development of local plans, which themselves reflect the key learning and skills priorities for the local area, as well as taking into account key national and regional priorities. National priorities include tackling basic skills and extending a new entitlement for fully funded first full Level 2 qualifications in all regions from September 2006. Through the mechanisms outlined above we anticipate a marked increase in the delivery and achievement of first full Level 2s from 2006–07 while also supporting progression to Level 3 and higher skills including technician, advanced craft and trade skills and apprenticeships for adults.

The LSC's proposed new structure will help to further strengthen its ability to respond flexibly and rapidly to local priorities, while at the same time providing stronger drivers at regional level. The national office will continue to provide the overarching planning and funding framework.

Park Life Centres (Gloucestershire)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how Park Life centres in Gloucestershire will be funded after the movement of funds to regional offices of its Learning and Skills Council. [50040]

Bill Rammell: Parklife centres offer a valuable link between the key business parks and business support services in Gloucestershire. The initiative has been jointly funded by the South West Regional Development Agency and Gloucestershire LSC from its discretionary budgets. As my hon. Friend is aware, the Learning and Skills Council is undertaking a major organisational restructuring. However, this should not impact on local arrangements to support the Parklife project.

Qualifications

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of the population in *(a)* West Yorkshire, *(b)* Wakefield District and *(c)* Normanton constituency aged between 16 and 65 years have no qualifications. [48390]

Phil Hope: The following table shows estimates of the proportion of the population aged between 16 and 65 years who have no qualifications. Data come from the Local Labour Force Survey for 2004–05.

	Percentage
West Yorkshire	17
Wakefield District	17
Normanton constituency	11

Note:

As with all sample surveys the estimates presented in this table are subject to sampling variability.

Student Finance

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment she has made of the period of time which elapses before student loans begin to be repaid; and if she will make a statement. [45665]

Bill Rammell: It is difficult to generalise about how long it takes people to find jobs after graduation and enter repayment as this is largely dependent on individual circumstances. The annual Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey (conducted by the Higher Education Statistics agency) illustrates this. For the 2003/04 cohort of graduates surveyed six months after graduation, 64 per cent. were in employment, 10 per cent. in employment combined with further study, 14 per cent. in further study, 6 per cent. unemployed, and 6 per cent. were not available for

work. Of those in employment who gave details of their salary, nearly two thirds were earning £15,000 or more and were thus eligible to make repayments.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Bin Liners

Mrs. Riordan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether local authorities have the power to charge their residents for bin liners; and if she will make a statement. [46318]

Mr. Bradshaw: Under section 46(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, waste collection authorities may serve notice on the occupier of a household requiring that specified receptacles be used for waste awaiting collection.

Under section 46(3) of the Act waste collection authorities may propose that receptacles be provided on payment by the occupier. A bin liner may be classed as a receptacle.

Abandoned Vehicles

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many abandoned vehicles were removed and destroyed in each London borough in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [47382]

Mr. Bradshaw: Results for abandoned vehicles removed and destroyed have been reported in the DEFRA municipal waste management survey from 2000–01 until 2003–04. Results for 2004–05 onwards are being collected through WasteDataFlow. The results for London boroughs are shown in the table.

London	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–01*	*2003–04*
Barking and Dagenham	2,761	n/a	3,201	2,080
Barnet	3,287	4,431	3,940	2,697
Bexley	1,356	1,776	2,391	910
Brent	3,471	4,115	4,184	1,775
Bromley	3,895	4,215	3,129	1,086
Camden	1,629	1,897	1,676	1,304
City of London	n/a	n/a	158	140
Croydon	2,878	4,376	4,200	4,000
Ealing	3,754	4,916	3,975	4,352
Enfield	4,711	6,347	4,973	3,318
Greenwich	3,120	4,200	4,429	2,653
Hackney	2,700	4,066	3,609	1,540
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,430	1,473	2,188	1,629
Haringey	6,500	[1]4,560	5,900	1,950
Harrow	1,914	[1]2,249	2,650	1,919
Havering	1,250	3,126	2,086	1,584
Hillingdon	2,286	3,128	3,741	807
Hounslow	2,247	3,118	3,125	2,207
Islington	2,619	3,643	2,748	1,703
Kensington and Chelsea	195	232	265	209
Kingston upon Thames	739	2,159	3,053	780
Lambeth	3,308	3,775	3,577	1,669
Lewisham	5,000	4,671	3,554	1,996
Merton	1,683	2,140	2,165	2,256
Newham	6,704	8,117	3,105	2,601
Redbridge	1,562	2,219	2,005	1,152
Richmond upon Thames	1,201	1,201	970	757
Southwark	1,934	2,848	2,245	3,375
Sutton	1,651	2,166	2,055	860
Tower Hamlets	n/a	n/a	2,781	1,490
Waltham Forest	2,716	3,466	3,351	2,358
Wandsworth	2,571	2,794	2,753	2,156
Westminster	496	333	336	301

n a = not available.
[1] GLA estimate.

Air Quality

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the local authorities that have passed orders declaring air quality management areas; and whether they are still in force. [49341]

Mr. Bradshaw: The following local authorities in England have declared air quality management areas since the first declaration in 1999. Where the authority has subsequently revoked all of its air quality management areas, this is indicated in brackets after the authority name.

Adur
Aylesbury Vale DC
Babergh DC (Revoked)
Barnsley MBC
Bath and North East Somerset
Bedford BC
Birmingham MBC
Blaby DC
Blackburn with Darwen BC
Blackpool BC
Blyth Valley BC
Bolsover DC

Bolton MBC
Boston BC
Breckland DC
Brentwood BC
Bridgnorth DC
Brighton and Hove
Bristol City Council
Bromsgrove DC
Broxbourne BC
Broxtowe BC
Bury MBC
Calderdale MBC
Cambridge City Council
Carlisle City Council
Charnwood BC
Chelmsford BC
Colchester BC
Congleton BC
Corporation of London
Coventry City Council
Dartford BC
Derby City Council
Doncaster MBC
Dover DC
Dudley MBC
East Hertfordshire DC (Revoked)
Eastleigh BC
Ellesmere Port and Neston BC
Elmbridge BC
Erewash BC
Exeter City Council
Fenland DC
Gateshead MBC
Gedling BC
Gloucester City Council
Gravesham BC
Harborough DC
Hastings BC
Herefordshire Council
Hertsmere BC
Hinckley and Bosworth BC (Revoked)
Huntingdonshire DC
Kensington and Chelsea, The Royal Borough of
Kerrier DC
King's Lynn and West Norfolk BC
Kingston Upon Thames, The Royal Borough of
Kingston-Upon-Hull City Council
Lancaster City Council
Leeds City Council
Leicester City Council
Lewes DC
Lincoln City Council
Liverpool City Council
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
London Borough of Barnet
London Borough of Bexley
London Borough of Brent
London Borough of Camden
London Borough of Croydon
London Borough of Ealing
London Borough of Enfield
London Borough of Greenwich
London Borough of Hackney
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
London Borough of Haringey
London Borough of Harrow
London Borough of Hillingdon
London Borough of Hounslow
London Borough of Islington
London Borough of Lambeth
London Borough of Lewisham
London Borough of Merton
London Borough of Newham
London Borough of Redbridge
London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames
London Borough of Southwark
London Borough of Sutton
London Borough of Tower Hamlets
London Borough of Waltham Forest
London Borough of Wandsworth
Luton Borough Council
Maidstone BC
Manchester City Council
Medway Council
Melton BC (Revoked)
Mid Bedfordshire DC
Mid Devon DC
New Forest DC
Newcastle City Council
North Lincolnshire
North Somerset (Revoked)
North Warwickshire BC
North West Leicestershire DC
Northampton BC
Norwich City Council
Nottingham City Council
Oadby and Wigston BC
Oldham MBC
Oswestry BC
Oxford City Council
Plymouth City Council
Portsmouth City Council
Preston BC
Reigate and Banstead BC
Rochdale MBC
Rotherham MBC
Rugby BC
Runnymede BC
Rushcliffe BC
Rushmoor BC
Salford City Council
Salisbury DC
Sandwell MBC
Scarborough BC
Sedgemoor DC (Revoked)
Sevenoaks DC

Sheffield City Council
Shrewsbury and Atcham BC
Slough BC
South Bedfordshire DC
South Bucks DC
South Gloucestershire (Revoked)
South Hams DC
South Kesteven DC
South Lakeland DC
South Northamptonshire DC
South Oxfordshire DC
South Ribble BC
South Somerset DC
Southampton City Council
Spelthorne BC
St. Albans City Council
St. Edmundsbury BC (Revoked)
Stockport MBC
Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Stroud DC (Revoked)
Surrey Heath BC
Tameside MBC
Taunton Deane BC
Teignbridge DC
Telford and Wrekin Council (Revoked)
Tewkesbury BC
Three Rivers DC
Thurrock BC
Tonbridge and Malling BC
Torbay BC
Trafford MBC
Tunbridge Wells BC
Wakefield City MBC
Walsall MBC
Warrington MBC
Warwick DC
Waverley BC
West Oxfordshire DC
West Wiltshire DC
Westminster, City of
Wigan Council
Winchester City Council
Windsor and Maidenhead, The Royal Borough of
Wokingham DC
Wolverhampton MBC
Wycombe DC
Wyre Forest DC
York, City of

Bovine TB

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the likely change in *(a)* stores, *(b)* finished cattle and *(c)* fat cattle going to live auction market following the introduction of the requirement for testing for tuberculosis in cattle; [47839]

(2) what assessment she has made of the likely effect on prices of *(a)* stores, *(b)* finished cattle and *(c)* fat cattle of the introduction of the requirement for testing for tuberculosis in cattle. [47861]

Mr. Bradshaw: Pre-movement testing will be introduced in England on 20 February. It will apply to cattle over 15 months of age moving out of one-two year tested herds, unless the herd or the movement meets any of the exemptions set out in the TB (England) Order 2005 (as amended).

The impact of pre-movement testing on cattle prices and auction markets was considered by the Tuberculosis Pre-Movement Testing Stakeholder Group. It is also addressed in a regulatory impact assessment, available on the Defra website at: www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/tb/premovement/index.htm.

We will keep the policy under review.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs under what legislation the Department has the authority to block a second bovine tuberculosis test for a calf that tested positive to the initial tuberculin skin test when the owner is willing to pay for the test: [48713]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 6 February 2006]*: The current skin test for bovine tuberculosis (TB) is an effective test. It is the accepted standard laid down in both national and international legislation for determining the existence of disease in a cattle herd.

The Tuberculosis (England and Wales) Order 1984 requires cattle failing the tuberculin test, and those considered to have been direct contacts exposed to TB, to be compulsorily slaughtered. There is no provision for a second TB test nor is there a mechanism for appeals.

In the case of statutory tuberculin testing of cattle, any request to release tuberculin for a further private test will always be declined by the Department. Approval for private tests is generally granted in the context of a test for purchaser assurance, or as a condition for cattle export in herds not subjected to tuberculosis restrictions.

Canada Geese

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons Canada geese treated for fishing line injuries in sanctuaries are not allowed to be released back into the wild. [48361]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 6 February 2006]*: As with other non-native species of goose that have become naturalised, the Canada goose can have a localised impact on habitats. This can include the destruction of vegetation, as well as competing with native wildfowl for food and resources, such as nest sites. They can also pose a health risk to other animals and humans, for example through deposited faeces. This is why the Canada goose was added to Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It means that Canada geese are subject to the provisions of section 14 of the Act, and it is an offence to release them or allow them to escape into the wild.

We have recently publicly reviewed the provisions of Part I of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 including the possible adoption of a general licence to allow the release of certain non-native species that have been rehabilitated. I am currently working up more detailed proposals on these issues for inclusion in a consultation paper that we hope to issue later this year. The Canada goose is one of the possible species under consideration.

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the research projects being undertaken by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. [48177]

Mr. Morley: The current research projects undertaken by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs are listed as follows:

1. A Literature Review and Gap Analysis of Grassland Restoration Research in the UK and Europe

2. Acid Deposition Processes in the UK

3. Bioenergetics of Salmon Migration

4. Comparison of New and Existing Agri-Environment Scheme Options for Biodiversity Enhancement on Arable Land

5. Conservation of Biodiversity in a Changing Climate

6. Critical Loads and Dynamic Modelling for Acidity and Nitrogen

7. Curation of the Data Collected in the Farm-Scale Evaluations

8. Development of a Customised Global Information Systems Tool for Retrieving Node Information from River Networks to Assist the Modelling of Spread of Exotic Aquatic Pathogens

9. Developing a UK-Wide Butterfly Monitoring Scheme Integrating the Wider Countryside

10. Environmentally Sustainable and Economically Viable Grazing Systems for Restoration and Maintenance of Heather moorland

11. Environmentally Sustainable Techniques to Establish and Manage Wildlife Seed Mixtures, and Pollen and Nectar Seed Mixtures

12. Farm Scale Evaluations: Further sampling of soil 5. Seed bank and Seedling Emergence

13. Long Term Ecological Monitoring of the Managed Realignment Scheme at Tollesbury

14. Management of Wet Grassland Habitat to Reduce the Impact of Predation on Breeding Waders. Phase 1

15. Modelling Concentrations and Deposition of Long Range Air Pollutants

16. Multivariate Evaluation of the Health of a Sentinel Fish Species Exposed to STW Effluent (Endocrine Disruption in Catchments (EDCAT5))

17. Novel Methods for Spatial Prediction of Soil Functions within Landscapes

18. Novel Strategies to Exploit Existing Natural Infections: Synergisms between Baculoviruses and other Toxins

19. Preparing for Countryside Survey 2006 Phase 1

20. Programme Management for EDCAT (phase 1) EDCAT 1

21. Regionalised Impacts of Climate Change on Flood Flows

22. Restoration and Management of Bumblebee Habitat in Agricultural Landscapes

23. Restoration of Wet Grasslands Through Re-Instatement of Surface Grips

24. Spatial and Temporal Prediction of Steroid Hormone Concentrations in River Catchments (EDCAT2)

25. Sustainable Management Strategies for the Creeping Thistle

26. Targeted Monitoring of Atmospheric Pollution and Climate Change Impacts on Biodiversity

27. Terrestrial Umbrella—Eutrophication and Acidification of Terrestrial Ecosystems in the UK

28. The UK Application of the EMEP Model ((The cooperative programme for monitoring and evaluation of the long-range transmission of air pollutants in Europe)

29. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) International Co Operative Programme on Vegetation

30. Towards Adaptation to Climate Change (England Biodiversity Strategy)

31. Application of Eulerian Models at Fine Spatial Resolution

32. Emissions by Source and Removals by Sinks due to Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry Activities.

Climate Change

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the National Assembly for Wales about extending the Climate Challenge Fund to Wales. [47638]

Mr. Morley: There have been no ministerial discussions about extending the fund to Wales. However, officials from Defra and the National Assembly for Wales have been in discussion about the scope of the initiative since its inception last year. Public communication on climate change is a devolved matter, so the existing resources for the fund are for England only. The fund could only be extended to the devolved Administrations if they were to contribute towards it.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on what date she expects to publish the outcome of the Climate Change Review. [48524]

Mr. Morley: We expect to publish the review of the UK Climate Change Programme as soon as possible.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which Departments she has consulted as part of the Climate Change Review process; and if she will make a statement. [48525]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 6 February 2006]*: We have been working closely with other Government Departments throughout the Climate Change Programme review. We are aiming to publish the outcomes of this work in the revised UK Climate Change Programme as soon as possible this year.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether it is her policy to secure a 20 per cent. reduction of UK carbon dioxide emissions by 2010. [48526]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 6 February 2006]*: The Government remains fully committed to reducing UK carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent. below 1990 levels by 2010.

Commercial Developments (Energy Efficiency Standards)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government are taking to promote zero carbon renewable energy systems in commercial buildings; and if she will make a statement. [49539]

Malcolm Wicks: The Major PV Demonstration Programme has offered £3.7 million in grants to fund the installation of solar PV panels on commercial buildings. The Low Carbon Buildings Programme (to be launched in April, subject to state aids approval) will continue to provide grants for the installation of renewable energy systems in commercial buildings. In addition the Government strategy for the promotion of micro generation will aim to encourage the installation of small-scale renewable energy systems in all buildings.

Countryside and Rights of Way Act

Tom Levitt: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many and what mileage of new (*a*) byways and (*b*) bridleways have been created since the enactment of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. [49995]

Jim Knight: This information is held by local highway authorities and could be gathered only at a disproportionate cost.

Drought (Contingency Plans)

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what contingency plans are in place in case of drought in summer 2006.[48624]

Mr. Morley: Each water company has a drought plan to manage short term water shortages that contains various triggers to be used depending on the severity of a drought. The provision of drought plans became a statutory requirement in October 2005.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many gallons below their capacity level are the (*a*) reservoirs and (*b*) other areas of water supply that supply Leicester; and what these figures are as a proportion of their capacity level. [48625]

Mr. Morley: The Dove and Derwent reservoirs supply Leicester. The Dove is 94 per cent. full and the Derwent is 95 per cent. full. It would require 3,415 cubic metres (751,209 gallons) of water to bring these reservoirs to full capacity.

EU Habitats Directive

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the UK has implemented the EU Habitats Directive. [49379]

Jim Knight: Yes. In the UK there are three principal instruments transposing the directive:

The Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994 (SI 1994 No. 2716) in relation to England, Wales and Scotland.

The Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (SR 1995 No. 380), in relation to Northern Ireland, and

The Nature Protection Ordinance 1991, in relation to Gibraltar.

Fuel Poverty

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to eradicate fuel poverty. [48700]

Mr. Morley: We have a PSA target in place that affirms our commitment to eradicate fuel poverty, as far as reasonably practicable, in vulnerable households in England by 2010. More information on the target, which is shared with the Department for Trade and Industry, and information on the targets in place in other parts of the UK, is available in the UK Fuel Poverty Strategy, published in November 2001.

The Government's main tool for eradicating fuel poverty in the private sector in England is the Warm Front Scheme, which offers a range of heating and insulation measures to householders in receipt of one of a range of qualifying benefits. The Scheme has assisted over one million households since its launch in June 2000. The new phase of the Scheme got under way in June last year, and is better equipped to target and assist those most in need in a sustainable way. The Scheme benefited from a boost in fuel poverty funding in England announced in the 2005 pre-Budget report of £250 million. This is additional to the extra £140 million announced in the last Spending Review and takes DEFRA's total fuel poverty funding over the 2005 08 period to over £800 million.

We are also working closely with colleagues across Government, not just with DTI but also ODPM, DWP, DH and HMT. Defra has a PSA Management Board that brings senior officials from these Departments together to monitor and tackle the range of issues relating to our targets. This ensures that the full policy agenda is properly considered, moving beyond the central tenets of energy efficiency and energy prices and taking in concerns relating to poor housing, benefit take-up, health risks and wider points relating to deprivation more generally.

GM Food

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the delegation from her Department which will attend the conference in April in Austria to discuss genetic modification in the EU will represent different shades of opinion on the subject of GM crops; and if she will make a statement. [49340]

Mr. Morley: The membership of the UK delegations which will attend the two conferences on genetic modification in April in Austria has yet to be finalised. However, those Defra officials who attend will represent agreed UK government policy on genetically modified organisms.

Greenhouse Gases

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will estimate the annual emission of methane gas emitted by (*a*) cattle, (*b*) sheep and (*c*) pigs; and if she will make a statement. [48242]

Mr. Bradshaw: *[holding answer 2 February 2006]*: The following table presents the total UK emissions of methane (CH_4) from cattle, sheep and pigs for the years 1990 and 2004, in million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO_2 equivalent). This data is taken from the most recent UK greenhouse gas inventory.

Category	Methane emissions (Mt CO_2 equivalent) 1990	2004
Cattle	15.85	14.25
Sheep (includes goats and deer)	4.48	3.73
Pigs	0.71	0.49

Between the years 1990 and 2004, annual UK methane emissions fell by 10 percent. for cattle, by 17 percent. for sheep and by 31 percent. for pig categories.

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the carbon dioxide emission levels were for *(a)* the United Kingdom, *(b)* the EU, *(c)* the USA, *(d)* Russia, *(e)* China, *(f)* India, *(g)* Japan, *(h)* Brazil, *(i)* Indonesia and *(j)* the world in the last year for which figures are available; and what her projections are for (i) 2020 and (ii) 2030. [48344]

Mr. Morley: The following table shows historical and projected carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions in million tonnes of CO_2 ($MtCO_2$) for the UK, EU, USA, Russia, China, India, Japan, Brazil, and Indonesia, together with global emissions.

Countries submit emission estimates to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UK, EU, USA, Russia and Japan are developed country (Annex I) Parties to the UNFCCC, and submit emissions inventories annually; the most recent year for which data are available is in general 2003. China, India, Brazil and Indonesia are developing country (non-Annex I) Parties to the UNFCCC; the most recent data they have submitted is for 1994. Annex I CO_2 emissions for 1994 are provided for comparison. The data in the table cover all sectors including land-use, land-use change and forestry. Global emissions are estimated as the sum of those submitted to the UNFCCC in 1994 by 136 participating countries, including all major developed economies, plus an estimated 680 $MtCO_2$ for emissions from international shipping and aviation which are not included in national totals under international reporting guidelines.

The UK, EU, USA and Russia have submitted projections to the UNFCCC for CO_2 emissions in 2020, and Japan has submitted projections for 2010. China, India, Brazil and Indonesia have not submitted projections. UK projections are have been updated for consistency with the inventory and projections information published in January 2006. Projections to 2030 are not available for any of the countries, although the UK policy, as set out in the 2003 Energy White Paper, is to put ourselves on a path to a reduction of some 60 per cent. by 2050.

CO_2 emissions including LULUCF

Country	1994	2003	$MtCO_2$ 2020
UK	559.2	559.2 (for 2004)	536.4
EU	2,963.8	3,138.3	3,238.0
US	4,327.8	5,013.5	6,763.0
Russia	1,421.9	n/a (1,297.3 in 1999)	1,180–1,430
China	2,666.0	n/a	n/a
India	793.5	n/a	n/a
Japan	1,104.6	n/a	1,183.7 (for 2010)
Brazil	1,029.7	n/a	n/a
Indonesia	333.8	n/a	n/a
Global (136 countries)	21,090	n/a	n/a

n/a = not available

The International Energy Agency provides estimates of projected emissions from use of fossil fuels which indicate, for China and India respectively, increases of about 110 per cent. and about 140 per cent. over the period 1994–2020. Fossil fuels account for the majority of CO_2 emissions in China and India but do not include land-use, land-use change and forestry which in 1994 reduced emission from China by about + 5 per cent. and increased those of India by about 8 per cent.

For Brazil the IEA data indicate an increase of about 120 per cent. in emissions from fossil fuel use over the period 1994 to 2020; however this does not include projections of emissions from deforestation, which accounted for about three-quarters of total CO_2 from Brazil in 1994. We do not have projections specific to Indonesia. In total, emissions from world fossil fuel usage, including emission from international marine and aviation, are predicted by IEA to increase by 55 per cent. between 1994 and 2020.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of carbon emissions generated by water desalination plants; and if she will make a statement. [48454]

Mr. Morley: Water companies have duties to maintain water supplies and the inclusion of desalination plants in their water resource plans is an option to overcome supply deficits. In considering planning permission for such plants, the planning authority will take into account sustainability factors including energy requirements and carbon emissions. Any appeal against a refusal of planning permission would come before the Secretary of

State. One such appeal, by Thames Water, is currently before the Secretary of State for determination once a public inquiry has been held.

Incineration

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans her Department has to increase incineration capacity in England. [46404]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government have no plans to increase incineration capacity to any particular level; local authorities are responsible for deciding the most appropriate waste management facilities for their areas. Incineration with energy recovery is a sustainable option for the treatment of residual, post-recycling waste and preferable to landfill.

Landfill Licences

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to speed up the process of granting landfill licences. [47857]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Environment Agency is responsible for determining applications for landfill permits. It set up the Strategic Permitting Groups (SPGs) in March 2003 to oversee Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) permitting applications. To date, the Environment Agency has determined some 1,150 applications for PPC permits received from the landfill and industry sectors.

SPG operation has become more effective and quicker as the Groups have become established. Determination times have been reduced by 20 per cent. The Environment Agency intends to build on this in 2006 by continuing to improve the permitting tools, for instance, by updating permit templates to make them easier to use.

Official Gifts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the gifts received by *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in her Department in each of the last two years for which information is available; what the approximate value of each was; and how many were (i) accepted and (ii) returned. [34749]

Jim Knight: The Government publishes an annual list of gifts received by Ministers valued at more than £140. The list provides details of the value of the gifts and whether they were retained by the Department or purchased by the Minister.

Information relating to the period 2003-04 and 2004-05 is available in the Library of the House.

No details are held centrally of gifts to officials and this information could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Organic Entry Level Stewardship

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will provide compensation for those farmers who have been unable to register their applications for Organic Entry Level Stewardship due to the timing of the provision of necessary data for farmers from the Rural Land Registry; and if she will make a statement. [49075]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* It is not our intention to provide compensation for farmers who have been unable to submit applications for Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) or Organic Entry Level Stewardship (OELS) due to delays with the registration of land parcels on the Rural Land Register (RLR). Well in advance of the launch of the new scheme it was made clear to farmers and land managers that registration of land on the RLR would be a pre-requisite for joining the scheme. Environmental Stewardship (ES) is a voluntary environmental scheme and while we are aware that delays with land registration have caused difficulties for some farmers, we believe that reasonable steps have been taken to limit the impact of these delays as far as possible. All applicants who submit a valid application will secure a full five-year agreement, so although their entry to the scheme may have been delayed, they will not be disadvantaged. The Rural Development Service (RDS) will process all valid applications with a view to applying the earliest available monthly start date.

Waste Paper

Stephen Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what guidance is offered by her Department to *(a)* private businesses and *(b)* other Government departments on minimising waste paper and paper usage; [42732]

(2) what guidance her Department issues to *(a)* private businesses and *(b)* other Government Departments on minimising waste paper. [46684]

Mr. Bradshaw: Envirowise, funded by DEFRA and DTI, promotes the resource efficiency message to business, with an emphasis on prevention (avoidance and minimisation of production of waste including paper). Envirowise solutions are driven by the specific needs of individual firms, to y improve their business practices, profitability and competitiveness. Since 1994, Envirowise has helped UK industry save more than £1 billion pounds. The BREW programme also funds initiatives which provide advice to businesses on minimising waste.

From 1 November 2003, all new central Government Department contracts have been required to apply minimum environmental standards when purchasing certain types of product. At present standards have been set for 27 product types including copier paper (100 percent. recycled with a minimum being 75 percent. post-consumer waste) and paper for printed publications (minimum 60 percent. recycled of which 75 percent. should be post-consumer waste).

Work is underway to expand this list to around 50 products (details can be viewed at:

http://www.ogcbuyingsolutions.gov.uk/environmentalproducts/environmentalquickwins.asp)

The OGC website also includes best practice advice for Government Departments.

The Sustainable Procurement Task Force are due to produce an action plan in spring this year setting out recommendations to help enable the UK to be amongst

the leaders in sustainable procurement by 2009. We cannot say anything about the content of the action plan as it has yet to be completed and agreed with taskforce members.

Pedigree Cattle

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice she received on the criteria for tuberculosis slaughter valuations for pedigree cattle *(a)* under six months and *(b)* over three years of age. [49096]

Mr. Bradshaw: New table valuation based compensation arrangements for bovine tuberculosis were introduced on 1 February 2006. Under the new system, compensation rates for pedigree cattle are calculated monthly using the average sales price obtained for animals within the same category over the previous six months. For pedigree cattle there are 18 table categories. These categories, which are based on the animal's age, sex and sector, were drawn up with the assistance of industry advisors.

There is no table value for pedigree cattle under 6 months. Animals that age would always be suckling, and it would be unusual to sell them without the dam.

Plant Imports

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the basis was for her application to extend the derogation on the import of plants under Commission Decision 2005/775/EC on 8 December 2005; and if she will make a statement. [48121]

Mr. Bradshaw: Under EC plant health legislation the import of certain genera of conifers from the Republic of Korea is normally prohibited. However, following interest from a number of traders and a request from the UK, a derogation allowing the import from the Republic of Korea of bonsai plants of the genera *Chamaecyparis*, *Juniperus* and *Pinus* was agreed by the European Commission in June 2002. A thorough assessment of the potential plant health risks associated with the import of such material was undertaken as part of the derogation process and stringent measures put in place, both pre-export in Korea and for handling the material on arrival in the EC, to mitigate any potential risk. The original derogation expired in 2005. Following a request from importers in the UK the derogation has been extended to 2007.

There have been no instances of quarantine pests or diseases being found on material imported under the derogation.

Recycling Targets

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the Government's plans are for future recycling targets; and if she will make a statement. [47808]

Mr. Bradshaw: Waste Strategy 2000 set out national recycling and composting targets for household waste, of 25 per cent. in 2005–06, then 30 per cent. in 2010 and 33 per cent. in 2015. I recently consulted on options for local authority recycling/composting targets in 2007–08. Analysis of the responses is under way and there will be a formal announcement once a decision is made.

For the longer-term, as part of the review of waste strategy, Defra is looking at what levels and what forms of targets will be the most efficient at continuing the recent improvements we have seen in waste performance. The review will take into account existing policy levers designed to drive the management of waste up the hierarchy (such as the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme, the landfill tax escalator, and the obligations on producers in relation to packaging and waste electrical and electronic equipment). The Government intend to publish a consultation document on the waste strategy review in the next few weeks, followed by a revised waste strategy in the autumn.

Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what time period elapsed between the publication of each Report by the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution and the publication of the official response by the Government; and what the time scale is for publishing outstanding responses. [48457]

Mr. Morley: The Government aims to respond to reports of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution (RCEP) within one year of their publication. Government needs to consider fully the reports and their recommendations before responding, so response timings depend on the complexity of the reports and the need to take account of the development of policy and proposals for new legislation.

There are two reports currently awaiting Government response:

1. 25th Report: "Turning the Tide—Addressing the Impact of Fisheries on the Marine Environment", launched in December 2004. The Government response will be published after the publication of the draft Marine Bill this year in order to reflect the new proposals under the Bill.

2. Special report "Crop Spraying and the Health of Residents and Bystanders", launched in September 2005. Government expects to publish its response to this report by the summer.

Previous responses were issued as follows:

Report	*Date published by RCEP*	*Date of Government response*
Main Reports (Command Papers)		
1st Report	February 1971	March 1975[1]
2nd Report: Three Issues in Industrial Pollution	March 1972	March 1975[1]
3rd Report: Pollution in some British Estuaries and Coastal Waters	September 1972	March 1975[1]
4th Report: Pollution Control: Progress and Problems	December 1974	March 1975[1]
5th Report: Air Pollution Control: an Integrated Approach	January 1976	December 1982
6th Report: Nuclear Power and the Environment	September 1976	May 1977
7th Report: Agriculture and Pollution	September 1979	December 1983
8th Report: Oil Pollution of the Sea	October 1981	December 1983

Report	*Date published by RCEP*	*Date of Government response*
9th Report: Lead in the Environment	April 1983	July 1983
10th Report: Tackling Pollution-Experience and Prospects	February 1984	December 1984
11th Report: Managing Waste: The Duty of Care	December 1985	September 1986
12th Report: Best Practicable Environmental Option	February 1988	December 1992
13th Report: The Release of Genetically Engineered Organisms to the Environment	July 1989	June 1993
14th Report: GENHAZ-A System for the Critical Appraisal of Proposals to Release Genetically Modified Organisms into the Environment	June 1991	December 1994
15th Report: Emissions from Heavy Duty Diesel Vehicles	September 1991	December 1992
16th Report: Freshwater Quality	June 1992	February 1995
17th Report: Incineration of Waste	May 1993	July 1994
18th Report: Transport and the Environment	October 1994	1996 Green Paper "Transport: The Way Forward" addressed issues raised
19th Report: Sustainable Use of Soil	February 1996	January 1997
20th Report: Transport and the Environment-Developments since 1994	September 1997	October 1998
21st Report: Setting Environmental Standards	October 1998	July 2000
22nd Report: Energy-The Changing Climate	June 2000	February 2003
23rd Report: Environmental Planning, England	March 2002	July 2003
24th Report: Chemicals in Products-Safeguarding the Environment and Human Health	June 2003	August 2004
Special Reports		
Special Report: The Environmental Effects of Civil Aircraft in Flight	November 2002	No official response but recommendations were incorporated in "The Future of Air Transport" White Paper published in December 2003
Special Report: Biomass as a Renewable Energy Source	May 2004	October 2004

[1] Part of the consolidated response to the first four reports.

Special Protection Area Status

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what role English Nature plays in the planning process for special protection area status; and if she will make a statement. [49814]

Jim Knight: As the statutory conservation advisor for England, one of English Nature's roles is to recommend sites to DEFRA that qualify as special protection areas (SPAs). Before making a recommendation, English Nature undertakes a scientific assessment of sites using the UK SPA selection guidelines (available at http://www.incc.gov.uk/page-1405). English Nature also carries out consultations with interested parties on behalf of the Department.

Seed Imports

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many lots of seeds for *(a)* maize and sweetcorn, *(b)* winter oilseed rape, *(c)* spring oilseed rape, *(d)* sugar beet, *(e)* fodder beet, *(f)* beetroot and *(g)* winter brassicas were imported into the UK in each of the last six years; and what the (i) weight and (ii) country of origin of the seeds was in each year. [46866]

Mr. Bradshaw: Imports of seeds for sowing by country of despatch from 1999 to November 2005 are provided in the attached table.

Note that oilseed rape seeds are not separated into winter and spring varieties. Also imports of fodder beet seed are not separated from salad beet seed. Information is only available on the quantity of seeds imported rather than the number of individual consignments.

These statistics reflect levels of trade as recorded by traders. It is possible that some imports for consumption or processing have been inadvertently recorded as seed for sowing. They therefore need to be treated with a degree of caution.

UK imports of Seeds for 1999 to November 2005

Tonnes

Description	*Countries*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*January to November 2005*
Maize Seed	Irish Republic	692	26	36	14,923	19,822	14,064	12,447
	France	1,676	1,607	5,521	3,899	3,120	2,587	5,788
	Netherlands	1,480	248	1,634	1,306	1,883	1,454	1,817
	Germany	1,967	1,156	1,020	2,315	1,270	868	731
	Chile				109	130		12
	Spain				107			
	Italy						89	
	Others	14	18	10	14	44	43	85
Oil Seeds	Germany	152	133	217	121,296	2,931	382	352
	France	103	147	212	49,652	15,397	19,598	3,562
	Australia			0	61,550		1	
	Denmark	102	11		13,179	20	22	0
	Irish Republic		1	1	2,898	2,170	3,637	2,839
	Poland				2,291	1		
	Netherlands	1	3	6	163	298	11	2
	Others	0	45	73	503	21	30	261

UK imports of Seeds for 1999 to November 2005

Tonnes

Description	*Countries*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*January to November 2005*
Sugar Beet Seed	Italy	—	—	38	—	127	243	311
	Germany	134	101	119	168	67	10	8
	France	222	176	32	9	18	59	65
	Belgium	24	30	21	9	3	14	4
	Others	15	22	0	23	3	26	11
Beet other than Sugar Beet	Netherlands	4,584	5,567	6,648	2,480	0	0	0
	Belgium	6,714		1,831				
	Germany	3,882	—		—	2,224	120	70
	France	35	2,862	1,265	17	33	≤	3
	Denmark	830	1	0	0	0	—	
	Others	3	17	4	0	2	1	0
Salad beet seed and fodder beet root seed	Netherlands	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	90	34	24
	U S A	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	2	1	34
	Australia	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	—	—	3
Brassicas Seed	New Zealand	0	—	20	13	36	57	85
	U S A	0	—	0	45	27	25	0
	Others	3	1	1	2	2	2	0
Grand Total		22,633	12,172	18,713	276,970	49,741	43,385	28,515

[1] This was not recorded as a separate item until 2003

Data prepared by Trade statistics, Food Chain Analysis 3, DEFRA

2005 data is subject to amendments

Source:

H M Revenue and Customs

Severn Trent Water

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government are taking to ensure a good service for customers of Severn Trent Water. [49036]

Mr. Morley: Customers of water and sewerage companies are entitled to guaranteed standards of service, as laid down in the Water Supply and Sewerage Services (Customer Service Standards) Regulations. These regulations, known as the guaranteed standards scheme, set minimum standards of services to be met for all customers and prescribe minimum payments where service is below these standards.

The economic regulator Ofwat monitors the level of service provided to customers by water companies. Each company's performance against a number of measures is included in "Levels of service for the water industry in England and Wales report 2004–05". Performance is measured against a number of indicators. Severn Trent's performance is acceptable or better for each of these measures. At reviews of price limits companies are rewarded for good performance and penalised for poor performance in delivering services to customers.

Fair comparisons between companies depend on Ofwat receiving accurate information of a comparable nature from the companies. Following allegations by a member of Severn Trent's staff Ofwat is undertaking an investigation into the accuracy of information submitted by Severn Trent. The Serious Fraud Office is also investigating matters referred to it by Ofwat. Ofwat will shortly be publishing a report on its findings. The company has agreed that if it were found that customers had been overcharged any necessary corrections would be effected in a prompt manner to be agreed with Ofwat.

Social Exclusion

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans the Government have to provide core funding for *(a)* wheels to work and *(b)* wheels to learning schemes in rural areas. [50069]

Jim Knight: Across England there are 69 'wheels to work' and 'wheels to learning' schemes, providing short term transport solutions for young people who have difficulties accessing training, employment and educational opportunities. Many of the schemes have operated successfully for a number of years, supported by funding from a range of different sources.

It is up to each RDA to determine the priorities for its region and, through its corporate plan, how they will achieve their agreed outcomes. A number of RDAs are planning ongoing support for 'wheels to work' schemes in their regions. For example, following a successful evaluation of the region's wheels to work schemes, Advantage West Midlands have determined to ensure a consistent region wide service is in place from the beginning of the 2006–07 financial year. The Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) has commissioned a region-wide proposal to deliver a 'wheels to work' scheme across rural areas. This will draw on good practice from the ex-Countryside Agency schemes, which will come to an end on 31 March.

Local authorities continue to be the main funders of transport in rural areas. And guidance for those who are seeking funding is available in the Countryside Agency's publication "A guide to finding funding for Rural Transport Partnership projects", which is available at:

http://www.countryside.gov.uk/Publications/articles/Publication_tcm2-20283.asp?bMultiplePDFs=true

Spent Nuclear Fuel

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much spent nuclear fuel has been stored in Wales in each year since 1997, (*a*) in total and (*b*) broken down by (i) low level waste, (ii) intermediate level waste and (iii) high level waste; and if she will make a statement. [43330]

Mr. Morley: Currently around 400 tonnes of spent fuel is stored in Wales. Spent fuel from Welsh reactors is of the Magnox type and is not regarded as waste and is routinely reprocessed at Sellafield. Reprocessing spent fuel there does create high level waste but there is no high level waste in Wales. More detailed information on the location of spent fuel at specific locations at specific times is not normally made public for security reasons.

Data are not separately recorded for the wastes produced at Sellafield as a result of reprocessing spent fuel from Welsh reactors. However, there has been and still is intermediate and low level waste in Wales which arises from both reactor operations and radio-pharmaceutical production. Data from the 1998, 2001 and 2004 UK radioactive waste inventories have been used to generate the following table of wastes in Wales. The cost of obtaining annual figures exceeds the normal threshold.

Waste type	*1998*	*2001*	*2004*
Low	161	633	558
Intermediate	2,208	2,851	2,740
High	0	0	0
Total	2,369	3,484	3,298

Notes
1. Units: cubic meters of waste in stock.
2. Aggregated conditioned and not-yet conditioned volume fractions.

Syngenta

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the occasions on which she met representatives of Syngenta during (*a*) 2004 and (*b*) 2005. [50176]

Mr. Morley: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, did not meet with representatives of Syngenta during 2004 and 2005.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when (*a*) she and (*b*) her officials last met representatives of Syngenta. [50177]

Mr. Morley: According to records dating back to 2002, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, has not met with representatives of Syngenta during this time.

Officials in the Department dealing with GM policy have met with representatives of Syngenta as part of their regular engagement with industry and other key stakeholders. The last such meeting involving Syngenta was on 26 August 2005.

Timber

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment the Government have made of the compatibility of further legislative options for prohibiting the import of illegal timber into the EU with World Trade Organisation rules; and when she expects to make a decision on the compatibility of such options. [49632]

Mr. Morley: The European Commission's proposal to tackle illegal logging, the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan, was adopted by Council Conclusions in October 2003. This included proposals for bilateral agreements with timber producing countries and a commitment that the Commission would investigate 'additional options' to tackle illegal logging. Government is frustrated at the time it has taken the European Commission to produce this additional options report.

One of these 'additional options' could be measures to prohibit the import of all illegal timber into the EU. This option was raised at a European stakeholder consultation meeting held by the European Commission and the UK's Chatham House (the Royal Institute of International Affairs) in Brussels on 31 January 2006. Some support for the proposal was voiced as well as concern that the effective enforcement of such a ban would demand additional evidence on all imports of timber to the EU. As such demands would be unlikely to be required of domestic producers, this could raise the likelihood of a challenge in the World Trade Organisation.

The European Commission will consider all the options and issues raised at the stakeholder consultation meeting and produce the delayed report on addition options by early summer 2006.

Once the Report is published, Government will review the applicability of the options presented, including compatibility with the World Trade Organisation, before deciding what, if any, additional measures the UK Government will pursue at a national or EU level.

Correspondence

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects a reply to be sent to the letters of 12 July 2005 and 20 November 2005 to the Fisheries Minister on behalf of Mr Tom Purborough. [50280]

Mr. Bradshaw: My reply to the hon. Member's letter of 12 July 2005 was sent on 17 October 2005. I will arrange for a further copy to be sent.

We have no record of having received the hon. Member's letter of 20 November 2005.

Veterinary Surgeons

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many veterinary surgeons have abandoned farm animal practice in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [48914]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* The Department does not hold this information. However, we are working with the veterinary profession to improve our understanding of the latest trends within farm animal practice. We contributed to the development of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons' survey of the profession for 2006 and we are

also working with the British Veterinary Association, which is consulting its regional divisions on the availability of farm animal veterinary services.

Waste Management

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list levels of household waste recyling by each local authority in 2004–05. [48072]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra issued a News Release on the 2004–05 Best Value Performance Indicators of local authority recycling and composting rates on 23 January 2006. Both this news release and the individual local authority recycling and composting rates are available from the Defra website at: www.defraweb/news/2006/060123a.htm. The full list of individual local authority Best Vale Performance Indicators for 2004–05 can additionally be viewed on the Audit Commission's website at: www.audit-commission.gov.uk/performance/dataprovision.asp

Water

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent representations she has received on water supply shortages in East Sussex; and what plans she has to combat such shortages. [49469]

Mr. Morley: I have received no specific representations concerning water supply in East Sussex. Water companies have drought plans which set out how the company will continue to meet its duties to supply adequate quantities of wholesome water during drought periods with as little recourse as possible to drought orders and permits.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of *(a)* water shortage in East Sussex and *(b)* the possible effect of such shortages on consumer supply in (i) 2006 and (ii) the next five years. [49470]

Mr. Morley: We have asked the Environment Agency to monitor and report on the drought prospects for 2006. This will focus particularly on south-east England where the continuing drought is most pronounced.

Any projected shortage in supply this year will be addressed though the relevant water company's drought plan. These plans set out how the company will continue to meet its duties to supply adequate quantities of wholesome water during drought periods with as little recourse as possible to drought orders and permits.

For longer term planning water companies maintain 25 year water resource plans which seek to reconcile supply with anticipated demand. These water resource plans are produced voluntarily every five years at present but will become a statutory requirement under the provisions of the Water Act 2003. The Department is currently consulting on the exercise of the new powers in respect of statutory water resource plans.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much water on average was *(a)* available to and *(b)* consumed by each person in the UK in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by (i) water company and (ii) region. [48527]

Mr. Morley: The Director General of Water Services publishes data on the extent of water supply annually in the 'Security of Supply, Leakage and the Efficient Use of Water' reports, copies of which are available in the Library of the House. In 2004–05, the figures for England and Wales were as follows:

Water company	*Distribution input (Ml/d)*	*Average household Consumption (l/h/d)*
Anglian	1,163	143
Bournemouth and W Hants	164	167
Bristol	287	153
Cambridge	75	148
Dee Valley	68	145
Dwr Cymru	868	151
Folkestone and Dover	46	159
Mid Kent	163	167
Northumbrian North	719	146
Northumbrian South	464	158
Portsmouth	180	159
Severn Trent	1,925	132
South East	391	173
South Staffordshire	332	146
South West	456	161
Southern	586	157
Sutton and East Surrey	161	173
Tendring Hundred	30	125
Thames	2,809	159
Three Valleys	877	178
United Utilities	1,953	142
Wessex	372	146
Yorkshire	1,287	145
Region		
Midlands	2,257	139
Eastern	1,733	143
Northumbria	719	146
NorthWest	1,953	142
Southern	1,367	163
SouthWest	456	161
Thames	3,847	170
Wales	936	148
Wessex	823	155
Yorkshire	1,287	145

Regional data for average household consumption are based on unweighted averages.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment she has made of the *(a)* merits, *(b)* practicality and *(c)* costs of constructing a water grid to enable the transportation of large volumes of water over long distances. [48528]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* The Environment Agency is the statutory body with a duty to manage water resources in England and Wales. As part of the Agency's management role it has national and regional water resource strategies, published in 2001, which set out the pressures over the next 25 years.

A good deal of water is already transferred within water companies' areas of operation, and between companies, to give individual companies greater flexibility to meet local shortages. The Agency's national strategy notes though that water transfers can be a relatively expensive option. Pipelines for long distance transfers are large and their construction may be disruptive. Pumping can consume much energy and add to carbon emissions.

Water companies have statutory duties to maintain water supplies. It is for them to plan the investment necessary to deliver their services, including the necessary financial provision, and it is for Ofwat, in the light of companies' plans, to secure that companies carry out and are able to finance their functions. I am not aware that water companies collectively are considering the establishment of a water grid.

The merits of a water grid would be considered by Ministers if applications for planning and other consents came before them for determination.

Wind Turbines

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effects of wind farms on wild birds; what research her Department has commissioned on the impact of wind turbines on wildlife; how many protected birds have been recorded as killed in collisions with wind turbines in the last five years; what steps her Department is taking to reduce the risks to birds of wind turbines; and if she will make a statement. [49603]

Malcolm Wicks: I have been asked to reply.

Applications for consent for wind farms submitted to the DTI are accompanied by an environmental impact assessment that includes details of the likely impact of the project in question on the environment and wildlife, among other things. In considering an application, the Department will consult with a range of stakeholders, including the statutory advisers on nature conservation—English Nature and the Countryside Council for Wales, as appropriate—as well as others with an interest in the project. This ensures that decisions on whether to grant consent for a wind farm are considered in the light of the best available information about its likely impacts.

The Department has established a Research Advisory Group to fund research into the impact of wind farms on the environment. This has included a joint study with wind farm developers and DEFRA to collect data on the distribution of sea birds in the three strategic offshore wind farm areas, the results of which will inform decisions on the grant of consent for wind farm projects in those areas. However, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) make clear that the available evidence suggests that appropriately positioned wind farms do not pose a significant hazard for birds. The RSPB's conclusion is supported by a report last year for the Swedish State Energy Authority, which found that only 14 of the total 1.5 million migrating seabirds that each year passes two wind farms at Kalmarsund in south east Sweden are at risk of being killed.

In any case, the likely impact on wildlife must be kept in context. A paper in Nature, by a large group of scientists including one from the RSPB, indicated that in sample regions covering about 20 per cent. of the Earth's land surface—15 per cent. to 37 per cent. of species (not just birds) will be committed to extinction as a result of mid-range climate warming scenarios by 2050.

TRANSPORT

A1079

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many accidents there have been on the A1079 road in each of the last five years; and how many resulted in fatalities in each year. [50128]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is as follows:

	Total accidents	*Fatalities*
2001	59	3
2002	59	2
2003	55	3
2004	59	4
2005	[1]43	[1]4
Total	[1]275	[1]16

[1] Provisional data.

A21

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from the South East of England Regional Assembly regional prioritisation and the proposed A21 upgrade. [49467]

Dr. Ladyman: On 31 January the Government received the South East region's advice on funding priorities, including schemes on the A21. This was submitted jointly by the South East of England Regional Assembly and Development Agency.

Heathrow Noise Review

Alan Keen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what account his Department took of the potential impact of the Review of the British Airports Authority Heathrow Noise Fines Fund in preparation of the Civil Aviation Bill; what discussions his Department has had with the review team; what assessment he has made of its terms of reference; when he expects it to report; and whether his Department plans to respond to its findings. [49860]

Ms Buck: The BAA Heathrow Noise Fines Fund is a matter for the airport operator concerned. The Department is aware that BAA is reviewing this fund, but has not discussed it with the review team or made any assessment of the review's terms of reference.

Highway Policy

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make it his policy to permit traffic to turn left at red lights. [50073]

Dr. Ladyman: No.

Light Dues

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will assess the ruling of the Petitions Committee of the European Parliament in favour of a petition from the Independent Light Dues Forum, with particular reference to the Petitions Committee's request that the European Commission and the Internal Market Committee of the European Parliament begin a

preliminary investigation into the compatibility of the British-Irish subsidy of navigational aids with the treaty establishing the European Community; [48387]

(2) whether he has conducted research into the likely consequences of the European Parliament and the European Commission finding that the Irish subsidy regime on navigational aids is incompatible with the Single Market. [48725]

Dr. Ladyman: We have received no notification or approach for information from either the European Commission or the European Parliament's Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection. We will await their consideration of the petition before deciding whether further action needs to be taken.

Rail Safety

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of trains are fitted with data recorders; and if he will make a statement. [47460]

Derek Twigg: All passenger and freight trains that operate on Britain's mainline rail network are fitted with a form of data recording system. The data recorded include information such as train speed, the brake controller position and brake equipment response. The information can be used to record and monitor a driver's and the train's performance. It is also of vital importance for investigating rail incidents.

Stage Cottage

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what refurbishment work has been undertaken at Stage Cottage, Hurst Green, East Sussex; and what the total cost of this work is expected to be. [49466]

Dr. Ladyman: Stage Cottage has undergone substantial re-decoration and refurbishment to make it suitable for the rental market. The ground floor bathroom has been converted into a study and a new family bathroom has been created upstairs. Floors in the kitchen, utility areas, and family bathroom have been tiled. Some bedroom walls have been re-boarded and plastered. The master en suite has been converted into a shower room. A large range cooker has been provided in the kitchen. Curtain poles have been fitted to windows and blinds fitted to kitchen and bathroom. Externally unstable paving slabs have been removed and the area re-turfed. A rendered wall has been redecorated and the fascia and soffit boards have been repaired and redecorated. The total cost of the work is £22,000.00 plus vat. This expenditure will be recovered from rental income within the next two to three years and reduced maintenance costs during the letting period.

Transport Demand Research

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with the Association of Train Operating Companies regarding using peak fare differentiation as a means of demand management on the railway network; and if he will make a statement. [49569]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 8 February 2006]*: The possibility of cheaper shoulder-peak fares to spread peak travel demand is one of many fares-related issues which need to be considered. However, no discussions with operators have yet been held.

Vegetable Oil

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department has spent on research into the use of vegetable oil as a fuel in each of the last five years. [50904]

Dr. Ladyman: The only such research this Department has funded was a study in 2003 of the relative emissions performance of two light duty diesel vehicles using various fuels, including unprocessed vegetable oil. The study showed that the use of unprocessed vegetable oil could result in significant increases in emissions of certain air pollutants compared to the use of ultra low sulphur mineral diesel. The total cost of the study was £80,153, and the results are available at http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_roads/documents/page/dft_roads_027622.pdf

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Accountancy Profession

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what dates he *(a)* wrote to and *(b)* met with representatives of the recognised supervisory bodies in relation to their policies on ethnic monitoring and racial discrimination within the UK accountancy profession. [49721]

Mr. Sutcliffe: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not written or met with representatives of the recognised supervisory bodies in relation to their policies on ethnic monitoring and racial discrimination

Alternative Fuels

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when companies will be able to bid for the £15 million funding package for UK demonstrations of hydrogen and fuel cell energy technologies announced by his Department on 14 June 2005. [50066]

Malcolm Wicks: The precise timing of the launch of the demonstration scheme is dependent upon EC state aid approval. The department is working up the details of the demonstration scheme in discussion with industry players, and has begun the process of obtaining EC state aid approval. The Department will publicly invite bids for project proposals when such approval has been obtained.

Carbon-free Electricity

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research the Government are *(a)* commissioning and *(b)* sponsoring on the development of a hydrogen-based economy, with particular reference to the production of carbon-free electricity. [49343]

Malcolm Wicks: The DTI commissioned two reports in 2004 in relation to hydrogen: "Hydrogen Energy Support in the UK" and "A Strategic Framework for Hydrogen Energy in the UK". These reports have been published on the Department's website[1].

Government research funding includes support for industrial collaborative research and development for fuel cell and hydrogen technologies through the DTI's Technology Programme. The programme seeks to advance these technologies for both stationary power generation and transport applications, with a view to achieving the cost reductions and performance levels necessary for commercial deployment. This support currently amounts to approximately between £2 million–3 million per annum.

Basic research in universities on both fuel cells and hydrogen is supported by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), including through the SUPERGEN initiative. SUPERGEN supports the UK Sustainable Hydrogen Energy Consortium (UK SHEC) which has received funding of £2.5 million. This programme is supporting projects on: hydrogen generation; hydrogen storage; and socio-economic implications for a hydrogen economy. In addition to SUPERGEN, EPSRC has awarded £1 million to investigate the potential role of formic acid as a chemical method for the storage of hydrogen. £500,000 has been granted to three projects on fundamental science and engineering relevant to the hydrogen economy. EPSRC also contributes to projects through the DTI's Technology Programme. More widely, the research councils EPSRC, ESRC, and NERC have recently established the UK Energy Research Centre.

Hydrogen and fuel cell projects are also eligible to apply to the Carbon Trust for research funding. The list of projects currently funded (including those that relate to hydrogen and fuel cells) is available on their website at: http://www.thecarbontrust.co.uk/carbontrust/low_carbon tech/dlct2_1_4.aspx.

On 15 June 2005, I announced the Government's response to the report "A Strategic Framework for Hydrogen Energy Activity in the UK"[2] which includes a funding commitment of £15 million over four years for a UK wide hydrogen and fuel cell demonstration programme. The demonstration scheme is currently in preparation, and will require EC state aid approval.

The Government have also provided funding of over £450,000 for the trial of three hydrogen-powered fuel cell buses in London as part of the EU CUTE (Clean Urban Transport in Europe) project. £7.5 million of funding has been provided for the fuel cell and low carbon vehicle technology Centre of Excellence (CENEX) based in Loughborough.

The Department for Transport announced in January, as part of their Horizons innovative research programme, a competition for projects to investigate the options for the further steps required to move to the adoption of a hydrogen transport infrastructure. It is hoped to support between two and four projects examining the practicality and timing of the introduction of the required infrastructure to support hydrogen-fuelled vehicles at a cost of up to £500,000.

[1] The text of these reports is freely available at: http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/sepn/hydrogen.shtml.

[2] The Government's response is also available on the website.

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he made of likely job losses at the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. [48173]

Barry Gardiner: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given in another place on 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column WA107 by my noble Friend Lord Bach, the Minister with responsibility for farming and food to the noble Baroness Byford.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people have been employed by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology in each of the last five years. [48174]

Barry Gardiner: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column WA102 to my hon. Friend the Member for Bridgend (Mrs. Moon).

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what is the estimated cost of his restructuring proposals for the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. [48175]

Barry Gardiner: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given in another place on 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column WA3 by my noble Friend the Minister for Science and Innovation to the noble Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer.

Civil Servants (Overseas Visits)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what costs were incurred by his Department as a result of sending civil servants on overseas visits in each of the last 10 years. [46280]

Alan Johnson: Overseas Travel and Subsistence for the Department of Trade and Industry has been carried out in compliance with the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code and the expenditure for the past three financial years is shown in the following table. Information for the other years requested is not readily available on a consistent basis and would be available only at disproportionate cost.

Financial year	*Expenditure on Overseas Travel and Subsistence (£000)*
2002–03	5,508
2003–04	5,684
2004–05	5,484

Departmental Paper

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of total paper consumption by his Department in their conference and seminar literature was recycled paper, in the last year for which figures are available. [42380]

Alan Johnson: The information on conference and seminar literature is not separated from the Department's general marketing materials. All the

marketing literature that is handled centrally (by the Department's Marketing Directorate) is printed on recycled paper.

Energy Supplies

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the Eurobarometer Public Opinion Survey on attitudes to renewable energy and nuclear power, published by the European Commission on 24 January. [47247]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government has noted this survey. In bringing forward proposals to help the UK meet its medium and long-term energy policy goals, we will take account of the opinions and evidence (including this survey) brought forward in the consultation exercise that was launched earlier this year.

Estate Agent Regulation

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if the Government will undertake a consultation on *(a)* how to strengthen regulation of estate agents, *(b)* the setting up of a redress mechanism, *(c)* possible qualifications and national quality standards for estate agents and *(d)* measures to increase the effectiveness of the Office of Fair Trading and local trading standards departments in protecting consumers and making estate agents' dealings with consumers more transparent following the March 2004 report by the Office of Fair Trading; [49574]

(2) if he will bring forward legislation to regulate estate agents; and if he will make a statement. [49575]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Yes. It remains our intention to issue a consultation document covering the issues raised by the Office of Fair Trading report, and developments since then.

The Government have also made clear their intention to bring forward legislation when parliamentary time permits to expand upon the provisions of the Housing Act 2004 relating to a redress scheme for estate agents. We intend to allow a statutory redress scheme to deal with a wider range of consumer complaints against estate agents and to provide for redress schemes in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

European Union Directives

Peter Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations have been received on the proposed *(a)* waste electrical and electronic equipment directive and *(b)* the restrictions on hazardous substances directive; what response the Government have made to those representations; and what estimate has been made of the (i) cost and (ii) other implications of implementation. [49578]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government have received a large number of representations on the proposed waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) directive as well as on the restrictions on hazardous substances (RoHS) directive.

As I announced on 14 December 2005, we are in the process of reviewing progress on implementation of the WEEE directive. We will make an announcement in due course, which will take into account the representations made to us during the review.

The Government's view of the costs and implications of the implementation of the WEEE directive were set out in our regulatory impact assessment (RIA), which is available on the DTIs website. Any revised proposals would be the subject of a further RIA. I also refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 1 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 553W.

The RoHS directive has already been transposed into UK law and will enter into force in July 2006. The RIA for the implementing regulations, together with information about representations made to the DTI, are available on the Department's website.

Executive Agencies

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* targets, *(b)* advice and *(c)* guidance his Department has given to executive agencies that fall under the remit of his Department on the reorganisation of their administrative functions on a regional basis; and if he will make a statement. [41649]

Alan Johnson: My Department has not issued any such guidance and advice to its executive agencies.

External Consultants

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much his Department has paid since 2004 to external consultants who had previously been employed by the Department in any capacity within the previous five years. [41199]

Alan Johnson: The information requested is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Money Transfer Services

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received on the regulation of international money transfer services. [49643]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Treasury has consulted a wide range of stakeholders in relation to a variety of issues related to the regulation of international money transfer services.

In particular, the Treasury has participated in a series of seminars aimed at consulting the industry on the future direction of the UK's regulatory regime for money service businesses.

In addition, Treasury officials have discussed forthcoming European legislation on payment systems in detail with a variety of stakeholders in the international money transfer market on a number of occasions.

New Delhi Declaration

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how co-operation between India and the United Kingdom in the fields of *(a)* civilian nuclear

activities, *(b)* civilian space programmes and *(c)* high technology trade has changed since the 2002 New Delhi Declaration. [48397]

Ian Pearson: The information requested is as follows.

(a) Civilian Nuclear Activities

The UK Government seeks to promote scientific, technological and academic co-operation with India, consistent with our international commitments. India is a key international partner and we attach great importance to developing our strategic partnership on civil nuclear activities and to stopping onward proliferation. In August 2005, the Government revised the position adopted in 2002 on our policy regarding the export of nuclear related items to India. The restrictions now in force are less stringent than that in force in 2002 and conform to the UK's current international obligations and non-proliferation commitments. The effect of our approach is to refuse only those exports or scientific contacts that are of serious concern, taking into account the circumstances of each particular case.

(b) Civilian Space Programmes

The British National Space Centre (BNSC) held a meeting with the Indian National Institute of Advanced Studies to discuss areas of collaboration, in December 2004. We continue to look for further opportunities to co-operate bilaterally with India and in multilateral fora.

The British High Commission in New Delhi is working with the Indian Space Research Organisation on space programmes.

A workshop on using Earth Observation to measure the effects of climate change on agricultural productivity is due to take place from 28–30 March 2006. Two of BNSC's partner organisations, the Natural Environment Research Council and the Met Office are also involved.

(c) High Technology

The UK-India joint economic and trade committee (JETCO) has followed up on the 2002 Delhi Declaration with high technology as an area for bilateral co-operation. The most recent discussions were held on the 30 January 2006 in London by the JETCO working group to explore synergies and co-operation in the area of high technology. The group presented its report to the Secretary of State for the Department of Trade and Industry and the Indian Minister of Commerce and agreed that they would focus on collaboration in the biotechnology sector, advanced manufacturing, and forging alliances between high technology regions in India with clusters in the UK.

North Sea Energy Reserves

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions he has had with the Norwegian Government regarding North sea energy reserves; and if he will make a statement. [49644]

Malcolm Wicks: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has had no such discussions. However, I have met the Norwegian Energy Minister on three occasions—on 26 October 2005, 31 November 2005 and 2 February 2006. We discussed a wide range of energy related issues including matters relating to the recovery of North sea oil and gas resources and carbon capture and storage.

Officials from the Department of Trade and Industry also regularly meet their counterparts in the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate and the Norwegian Ministry of Petroleum and Energy to discuss ways of maximising the economic recovery of hydrocarbons from the North sea. This includes the review of future exploration, appraisal and development activities in both countries.

Since the beginning of 2005, co-operation between UK and Norwegian Governments have resulted in the approval of six development projects involving Norway, including the construction of the Langeled pipeline to Easington in Yorkshire and the redevelopment of the transboundary Statfjord field. The Langeled pipeline, which is due to deliver gas to the UK later this year, will also deliver gas from the Norwegian Ormen Lange field when the field begins production in 2007. New pipeline infrastructure will also be built as part of the Statfjord redevelopment and will provide further capacity to deliver gas from major new gas reserves being developed on the Norwegian Continental Shelf.

Nuclear Power

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions he has had with the Welsh Assembly Government on the future of nuclear power. [44054]

Malcolm Wicks: Neither my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry nor I have had recent discussions with the Welsh Assembly Government which relate specifically to the future of nuclear power.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much it cost to dispose of spent nuclear fuel in Wales from the *(a)* Trawsfynydd and *(b)* Wylfa nuclear power plants in each year since they were built; and if he will make a statement. [49742]

Malcolm Wicks: It is not current UK policy to dispose of spent nuclear fuel and therefore no costs have been incurred to dispose of spent nuclear fuel in Wales.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been spent from public funds on *(a)* purchasing and *(b)* moving uranium for use in the (i) Trawsfynydd and (ii) Wylfa nuclear power plants in each year since they were built; and if he will make a statement. [49743]

Malcolm Wicks: Until the creation of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority on 1 April 2005, the now decommissioning power station at Trawsfynydd and the operating nuclear station at Wylfa were owned by BNFL, Magnox Electric Ltd or its predecessors, during which time no public funds were spent on purchasing and moving uranium for use in the Trawsfynydd and Wylfa power plants. Operational costs were matched year on year by income from electricity generation.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been spent from public funds on *(a)* moving spent fuel out of Wales and *(b)* disposing of nuclear fuel from the (i) Trawsfynydd and (ii) Wylfa nuclear power plants in each year since they were built; and if he will make a statement. [49744]

Malcolm Wicks: Until the creation of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority on 1 April 2005, the now decommissioning power station at Trawsfynydd and the operating nuclear station at Wylfa were owned by BNFL, Magnox Electric Ltd or its predecessors, during which time no public funds were spent on moving spent fuel out of Wales from the Trawsfynydd and Wylfa power plants. Operational costs were matched year on year by income from electricity generation.

It is not current UK policy to dispose of spent nuclear fuel and therefore no costs have been spent from public funds on disposing of nuclear fuel from Wales.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what is the timetable for planning the clean-up of ex-military and civil nuclear programmes; and which companies are advising him on the project. [50328]

Malcolm Wicks: The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority assumed responsibility for the decommissioning and clean up of the UK's civil nuclear legacy on 1 April 2005. It now has responsibility for nuclear sites previously operated by UKAEA and BNFL. Its remit is to provide national strategic control and direction to deliver accelerated clean up at its sites whilst maintaining high standards of safety. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority has set out its proposed approach to the decommissioning and clean up of its sites in its draft Strategy. The Scottish Ministers and I have until 31 March to consider and approve the NDA's proposed Strategy. Further information is available on the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority website at www.nda.gov.uk

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he will provide an answer to question 10236, on departmental expenditure, tabled by the hon. Member for Monmouth on 4 July 2005.[49837]

Alan Johnson: According to our database this question was answered on 21 July 2005 but, unfortunately did not find its way into the *Official Report* for that day. The answer was as follows:

"Expenditure on advertising by my Department through COI for 2000/1, 2001/2, 2002/3, 2003/4 and 2004/5 was £6.1 million, £9.4million, £11.5million, £4.1 and £2million respectively. Figures include advertising by the Small Business Service and exclude VAT".

Press Complaints

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 he has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* his Department; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47078]

Alan Johnson: The Department of Trade and Industry has not made any complaints to the Press Complaints Commission about press coverage of *(a)* Ministers or officials or *(b)* the Department since 1 April 2003.

Renewable Power

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of the renewable power generated in England and Wales was accounted for by co-firing in 2004–05. [50779]

Malcolm Wicks: In 2004, 7.2 percent. (or 1,022 GWh out of 14,171 GWh) of renewable power generation in the UK came from the co-firing of bio fuels. We do not have statistics for England and Wales only.

Information on electricity generated from renewable sources is published in the Digest Of UK Energy Statistics (DUKES). A copy of DUKES is available from the Libraries of the House.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans he has to reduce surplus co-fired renewables obligation certificates; and what assessment he has made of the implications for *(a)* their market price, *(b)* co-firing and *(c)* carbon dioxide emissions. [50781]

Malcolm Wicks: Under the rules on co-firing within the renewables obligation, licensed electricity suppliers can meet up to 25 percent. (from 1 April 2006, this changes to 10 percent.) of their obligation by presenting renewables obligation certificates (ROCs) from co-fired generation.

Above this level, co-fired ROCs cannot be redeemed. For this reason, we would not expect the market to generate a significant number of surplus co-fired ROCs, and any surplus would only arise due to miscalculation on the part of electricity suppliers or co-firers.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assistance is available to microgenerators in relation to the sale of renewables obligation certificates. [50284]

Malcolm Wicks: Sale of Renewable Obligation Certificates (ROCs) is a matter for the generator concerned. However, the Government does recognise the barriers that microgenerators may experience in accessing the benefits of the Renewables Obligation (RO) and intends to introduce several measures, through the Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Private Member's Bill, which will make this easier. In particular, allowing agents to act on behalf of small generators and to amalgamate output for several small generators as well as the removal of the need for a sell and buyback agreement. The detail of these changes will be set out in secondary legislation and subject to full consultation.

Shell

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will publish his Department's report on Shell's oil and gas reserves. [49720]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has not made a report on Shell's oil and gas reserves. The Financial Services Authority (FSA) is responsible for regulating the financial services industry and investigating potential cases of market abuse. The FSA formally investigated various issues surrounding the oil and gas reserves announcements made by Shell leading up to Shell's announcement in January 2004 in which it restated its hydrocarbon reserves. The FSA's Final Notice setting out its findings in relation to Shell is available on the FSA website (www.fsa.gov.uk). Shell also published the conclusions of its own inquiry in April 2004.

Singapore

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make it his policy to negotiate a free trade agreement with Singapore. [47768]

Ian Pearson: The European Commission has competence for trade policy, and conducts all trade negotiations on behalf of EU member states.

The UK and the EU's number one trade priority remains a successful conclusion to the Doha Development Agenda (DDA). The multilateral rules-based system, under the WTO, is the most effective means of managing and expanding trade relations. However, the EU has not ruled out a possible expansion to its network of bilateral and regional trade agreements once the DDA negotiations have been completed and will evaluate the merits of any future proposals on a case-by-case basis.

Zirconium Silicate (Iran)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry with which company his Department had discussions about the export of zirconium silicate to Iran *(a)* before its shipment in September and *(b)* subsequent to this shipment's interception by the Bulgarian authorities; whether the company informed the Department (i) to whom they were supplying this material and (ii) what its end use was; and if he will make a statement. [34698]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 6 December 2005]:* The DTI did not discuss the export in question with any company prior to its shipment. The goods were not controlled for export from the UK and the exporter was not therefore required to submit an export licence application when he would have been required to provide details of the end-use and end-user of the goods. Subsequent to its interception by the Bulgarian authorities however, DTI was in contact with the exporter who provided full information about the consignment, including its end-user and expected end-use.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Broadcasting

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many households are unable to receive *(a)* Channel 5 and *(b)* Freeview, broken down by Government office region; whether her Department plans to offer these households a reduction in their licence fee; and if she will make a statement. [50072]

James Purnell: Information on the availability of television services by Government office region is not held centrally. For the United Kingdom as a whole, the Channel 5 analogue service is available to an estimated 80 per cent. of households and Freeview services to 73 per cent.

The Government have no plans to offer households unable to receive these services a reduction in their television licence fee. The level of the licence fee has never varied according to the range of services that can be received. The vast majority of UK households can, with the right equipment, access the free to view digital channels, including Channel 5, via either terrestrial, satellite or cable platforms.

Following digital switchover the coverage of digital terrestrial television will match current analogue levels, all of whom will also be able to watch the BBC's digital channels.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much was spent on advertising by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which her Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by her Department in each year since May 1997. [39104]

Mr. Lammy: The Department had a zero spend on advertising from 1997 to 2002. The expenditure on advertising from 2003 has been as follows:

	Spend (£)
2003–04	[1]20,987
2004–05	[1]37,085
2005–06	[2]153,545

[1] BBC Charter
[2] Licensing

Information on advertising spend by non-departmental public bodies, executive agencies and independent statutory bodies is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Library Closures

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment the Government have made of the causes of public library closure for those due to do so in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07. [51056]

Mr. Lammy: Public libraries are delivered by local authorities. Of those authorities who are reported to be considering library closures currently, I understand that the rationale ranges from service restructuring following review processes to budget-setting considerations. I recognise that locally elected representatives are best placed to judge the needs of the people they serve.

However, I also believe that public libraries are valuable community assets and local decision makers should think carefully about what might be lost through closures.

London Olympics

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Warley of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1469W, on the London Olympics, when her Department expects the Local Employment and Training Framework for the London Olympic and Paralympic games to be published; and if she will make a statement. [49226]

Mr. Caborn: The Government are committed to using the London 2012 Olympic games and Paralympic games to maximise the potential for job creation, training and

business growth so that the games leave a lasting social and economic, as well as physical, legacy for London and the rest of the UK. The Government and the Mayor for London have supported the setting up of the London 2012 Employment and Skills Task Force. It will work to ensure effective support for both local people, and those drawn from across London, in accessing direct and indirect employment opportunities arising from the games.

The London Development Agency (LDA), together with the local boroughs and other partners, is working to ensure that communities located in and around the Olympic park are well placed to benefit from the opportunities offered by the games. The Local Employment and Training Framework (LETF), a condition of the Olympic planning permissions, is a first step in this process.

A draft LETF document has been submitted by the LDA to the Joint Planning Authorities Team (JPAT) as a basis for negotiation. These negotiations will be concluded in the next few weeks with the submission of a final revised document to JPAT for formal consultation. At the conclusion of this consultation process the four local planning authorities of Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest and Hackney, in conjunction with Greenwich council, will then make a decision regarding the framework. The precise date of this decision is for the local authorities themselves to determine and, as such, is not yet known.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 50W, on the Olympic games, if she will list the occasions on which (*a*) the Inter-Departmental Steering Group and (*b*) the network of Olympic co-ordinators have met; and if she will make a statement. [49380]

Mr. Caborn: As I explained to the hon. Member on 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 640W the inter-departmental steering group and the network of Olympic co-ordinators will meet on a quarterly basis.

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether the 2012 London Olympic Games will use renewable energy derived from fuel cell technology. [50068]

Mr. Caborn: Renewable energy will play a vital role in fulfilling the commitment to host 'low carbon Games' in 2012. While plans for energy provision at the Games are, as yet, at an early stage, fuel cell technology will certainly be one of the techniques considered as the programme moves forward.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will place in the Library a copy of the local government finance data and methodology used to calculate how much the proposed Olympics precept on London council tax bills would rise over 10 and 12 years. [47891]

Mr. Woolas: I have been asked to reply.

Council tax is one element of a public funding package, which has been put in place to cover the cost of hosting the Games. This package includes provision for up to £1.5 billion of lottery funding and up to £625 million from London council tax.

The council tax element of the funding package is a matter for the Mayor and the Greater London Authority (GLA).

Looted Works of Art (Nazis)

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what estimate she has made of the number of works of art in public collections which are thought to have been looted by the Nazis; [50067]

(2) what estimate she has made of the number of objects in museums or galleries for which her Department has responsibility that are considered to be objects stolen by the Nazis. [50130]

Mr. Lammy: The National Museums Directors' Conference, which is funded by Government to represent national UK museums, maintains a database on its website of items held in national collections which may be of uncertain provenance during the 1933-45 period. It has made no estimate of the number which are thought to have been looted by the Nazis.

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many parliamentary questions tabled in the last 12 months for answer by her on a named day (*a*) were transferred and (*b*) received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named. [49885]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport aims to ensure that hon. Members receive a substantive response to their named day questions on the named day. However, as my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House said at business questions on 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 475, it is also important that Departments have the opportunity to produce accurate and detailed responses to such questions. From time to time, that necessitates the issuing of a holding answer. DCMS does make every effort to meet the deadline requested.

314 parliamentary questions were tabled to DCMS for answer on a named day during the last 12 months (1 February 2005 to 31 January 2006. 184 (58.6 per cent.) received a substantive answer on the day named with 130 (41.4 per cent.) receiving an answer after the day named.

Information on questions transferred to other Government Departments could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by her in the last 12 months have been answered (*a*) within 14 days, (*b*) between 14 and 28 days, (*c*) between 28 days and two months and (*d*) in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if she will make a statement. [49808]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport aims to answer Ordinary Written questions within a working week of being tabled. Unfortunately, this is not always possible but DCMS does make every effort to achieve these timescales.

The following table provides details of the response times for those Ordinary Written parliamentary questions received and answered by the department in the last 12 months.

	Number	Percentage
Answered within 14 days	1,177	84.0
Between 14 and 28 days	142	10.1
Between 28 days and 2 months	27	1.9
In excess of 2 months after the date of tabling	56	4.0

54 of the 56 questions were tabled just prior to the summer recess. These questions were formally answered and printed in the Official Report when the House returned in October. Answers to the majority of these questions were issued to hon. Members during the recess period. The parliamentary questions database however only records the date that a question is formally answered.

Source:
Information derived from the DCMS parliamentary questions database

Public Relations

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much was spent on her Department's public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [48963]

Mr. Lammy: The Department's public relations spend in the last five years only occurred in 2004-05 and 2005-06 and both relate to the digital campaign. They are:

	Spend (£)
2004-05	100,000
2005-06	250,000

With regard to the spend on information services (web services and phone lines set up as part of advertising campaigns) no costs were involved in the development of either the digital campaign or the BBC Charter Review websites as they were built internally. Neither campaigns had an associated phone line.

The only spend on a phone line associated with a campaign was for licensing in 2005-06 at a cost of £40,000. The licensing campaign did not have a specific website and all related information is currently available on the DCMS website.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bolivia

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance the UK has provided to Bolivia following the recent flooding; and if he will make a statement. [49596]

Mr. Thomas: Initial assessment findings from joint missions involving the Government of Bolivia, United Nations agencies, the Red Cross and non-governmental organisations report that 12,000 families have been affected by the recent floods in Bolivia, brought on by heavy rainfall over the last few weeks. Heavy rains are expected to continue in parts of the country before slowing down towards the end of this week. A total of 2,3000 families are reported to be displaced and in temporary shelters across the affected areas (largely in the departments of Santa Cruz and Beni). 2,400 houses have been damaged or destroyed. The immediate relief needs identified are food (for up to 7,000 families), water (for 4,645 families, temporary shelter, mosquito nets and mattresses (for approximately 3,500 families).

The United States Agency for International Development has already provided $300,000 of relief assistance including sufficient plastic sheeting for 1,000 tents, seven water bladders of 10, 12,000 litres capacity and 3,000 wool blankets. It has also provided 100 tons of food and is considering additional funding. The United Nations office for the coordination of humanitarian affairs has allocated an emergency grant of $30,000 for the purchase of relief items. The European Commission's humanitarian office is also considering a response.

The early response of traditional donors in the region indicates that the immediate emergency needs of affected people appear to have been or will soon be met. However, DFID is continuing to monitor the evolving situation in Bolivia closely.

Public Relations

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much was spent on the Department's public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [48956]

Mr. Thomas: DFID expenditure on public relations is through the Press Office in the following table are the figures available:

Financial year	Amount £
2001-02	[1]48,000
2002-03	[1]191,000
2003-04	404,000
2004-05	682,000
2005-06[2]	600,500

[1] staff costs only
[2] to 7 February 2006

DFID's information services are through the DFID website and the public inquiry point.

The public inquiry point is an integral part of the larger building support for development team, and as such, the costs have never been held separately and would incur disproportionate costs to disaggregate them.

Website costs

Financial year	Amount £
2001-02	122,504
2002-03	64,677
2003-04	147,958
2004-05	[1]130,370
2005-06[2]	121,983

[1] estimated
[2] to date

Please note that the figure for financial year 2004 05 is an estimate because of structural re-organisation within DFID, which has made costs difficult to disaggregate.

Economic Partnership Agreements

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the UK position is on (*a*) investment, (*b*) public procurement and (*c*) competition policy within the economic partnership agreements between the EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific countries; and if he will make a statement on the progress made in negotiations of these issues during the UK presidency of the EU. [49221]

Mr. Thomas: The UK position on investment, public procurement and competition policy in the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), as published in March 2005, is that these issues should be removed from the negotiations, unless specifically requested by any of the regional groups in the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP). It is for the ACP regional groups to judge the development benefits of any agreements on these issues and the EU should not push for them to be discussed. In addition, we believe that if included, any negotiations on Government procurement should be limited to transparency.

During the time of the UK presidency in 2005, the European Commission and the ACP did not negotiate on these issues. Some regions have requested to negotiate some of these issues. For example, the Pacific has requested to negotiate investment, while the Caribbean has requested to negotiate all three of the issues. However, while on their jointly agreed agendas, the negotiations on these issues are only just beginning.

EU Trust Fund (Africa)

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on progress towards the establishment of an EU trust fund for Africa. [49595]

Hilary Benn: We expect the European Investment Bank and the European Commission to shortly sign a Memorandum of Understanding establishing a Trust Fund to finance infrastructure in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Trust Fund is in support of the EU-Africa Infrastructure Partnership, which is part of the wider EU Africa Strategy, approved in December 2005. It will support water, energy, transport and telecommunications infrastructure, with a focus on cross border projects.

The Commission and the European Investment Bank will begin to discuss member state participation in the Trust Fund with member states.

Increased investment in infrastructure is needed to boost growth in Africa and help meet the Millennium Development Goals. The UK is therefore supportive of the EU-Africa Infrastructure Partnership, which is complementary to the new Infrastructure Consortium for Africa.

Food Shortages

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made on the scale of food shortages in Chechnya and Ingushetia; and if he will make a statement. [49669]

Mr. Thomas: DFID relies on the UN organisations working in Chechnya and Ingushetia to provide information on the humanitarian situation in both republics. We are informed by the World Food Programme (WFP) that thousands of vulnerable people are currently suffering from the extreme weather experienced in Russia and are in urgent need of food. WFP have therefore appealed for funds to resume food rations to the region.

In response to the WFP appeal, DFID will provide £200,000 through the WFP to support continued food distribution in the short-term and will maintain close contacts with the UN and the WFP to re-assess the situation over the coming months. At the same time, DFID will continue to push for better targeting of food for particularly vulnerable groups and continue efforts to move to more sustainable and recovery focused assistance to reduce dependency on food distributions.

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what total sum has been received by his Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48495]

Mr. Thomas: In 2005, DFID received no payments for requests which fell above the appropriate limit and received no payments for disbursements.

The Freedom of Information Act allows for public authorities to determine when the cost of processing a request will exceed the appropriate limit, which for central Government is set at £600 and for the wider public sector £450. In this instance the public authority may decide to either approach the applicant to help them refine their request and where possible to bring it under the appropriate limit. Alternatively, public authorities may charge the applicant the cost of processing the request. There is, however, no obligation for departments to provide information if the cost of processing the request exceeds the appropriate limit.

Public authorities may also charge for disbursements when handling requests where it is deemed appropriate. Further information on the Freedom of Information (FOI) fees regime can be found on the DCA website at http://www.foi.gov.uk/feesguide.htm.

Global Fund

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the withdrawal of the Global Fund to fight HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria from Myanmar. [48944]

Mr. Thomas: Burma is facing a generalised HIV and AIDS epidemic and has high Malaria and TB infection and mortality rates. On 18 August 2005, the Global Fund terminated its US$98 million grant to Burma, citing the Burmese authorities' tightening of restrictions on UN and international non-governmental

organisations (INGOs) (particularly on travel). Some but not all of these restrictions have subsequently been relaxed.

Although a phase-out plan has been adopted to mitigate the cancellation of the grants, the termination was a significant setback to work to combat the three diseases. DFID has provided technical assistance to the UN resident co-ordinator to help learn from the experience and consider alternative funding arrangements. Working with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), DFID has stressed to the authorities, the need to ensure access for the UN and INGO's. DFID and other donors are designing a replacement programme to respond to the three diseases. During design, we are consulting with a wide range of stakeholders and will ensure a focus on transparency, accountability, equity and effective monitoring.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what mechanisms are in place to ensure that money pledged to the global fund to fight HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria is spent where it is intended. [48945]

Mr. Thomas: The Global Fund has a number of fiduciary mechanisms in place to ensure that grant proceeds are used for their intended purpose. The country co-ordinating mechanism, a country-level partnership which includes representatives from both the public and private sectors, is responsible for submitting the initial grant proposal for approval and nominating the principal recipient(s). It also oversees and monitors the progress of the grant during implementation. The global fund and the principal recipient(s) for each grant negotiate a grant agreement which sets out specific, measurable results that will be tracked using a set of key indicators to assess performance against the agree objectives. Principal recipients are legally responsible for local implementation of the grant, including oversight of sub-recipients of grant funds.

The global fund does not have a country presence outside its offices in Geneva. It relies on independent financial advice from local fund agents which are local auditors. In the initial stage, the local fund agent assesses the financial and administrative capacity of the principal recipient. Over the life of the grant, the local fund agent will verify periodic disbursements based on demonstrated progress towards intended results. This performance-based system of grant-making is key to the glob fund's commitment to results. To ensure transparency and reduce fiduciary risks, the global fund compiles key information including results and financial accountability for each grant into a grant performance report which is posted in the global fund's website: www.theglobalfund.org.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on distributing the US$ 241 allocated by the global fund to fight HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria to schemes to fight HIV/AIDS in India. [48948]

Mr. Thomas: The Global Fund is supporting eight grants in India that are currently in their first two years of implementation (Phase 1) and the total approved for this phase is US$ 107.3 million. The progress of disbursements against these grants has been variable. Where disbursements have been slow, this has been due to several factors including institutional issues and procurement delays. The table provides a summary of the position on current disbursements and also takes account of additional disbursements expected in February and March (where these are known):

			Approved Proposals	
Country	*Rnd*	*Disease*	*Approved grant amount (USD)*	*Total lifetime budgets (USD)*
India	1	TB	8,655,033	8,655,033
	2	HIV AIDS	26,116,000	100,081,000
	2	TB	7,080,000	29,110,000
	3	HIVATB	2,667,346	14,819,773
	4	HIV AIDS	25,831,024	140,878,119
	4	Malaria	30,158,833	69,044,954
	4	TB	6,819,000	26,545,000
Total			107,327,236	389,133,879

			Grant Details	
Country	*Rnd*	*Grant number*	*Program start date*	*Total*
India	1	IDA-1 02-G01-T-00	1 April 2003	8,655,033
	2	IDA-202-G02-H-00	1 May 2004	26,116,000
	2	IDA-202- G03-T-00	1 April 2004	7,080,000
	3	IDA-304-G-4-C	1 November 2004	2,667,346
	4	IDA-405-G0-H	1 April 2005	4,158,465
		IDA-405-G06-H	1August 2005	21,672,559
	4	IDA-405- G07-M	1 July 2005	30,158,833
	4	IDA-405-G08-T	1 April 2005	6,819,000
Total				107,327,236

Country	Rnd	Total at end January 2006	Disbursements Expected in February–March 2006	Percentage disbursed of total grant
India	1	6,088,840	1,600,000	89
	2	8,301,000	5,000,000	43.4
	2	3,731,000	1,986,000	38.1
	3	165,428	0	6.2
	4	1,857,846	0	44.7
		2,972,000	8,500,000	52.9
	4	856,717	12,000,000	42.6
	4	397,000	0	5.8
Total		24,369,831	29,086,000	

The India Country Co-ordinating Mechanism responsible for overseeing implementation of the grants meets regularly to review their status and consider appropriate action. The Global Fund is also working with the Country Co-ordinating Mechanism to help speed up the disbursement process. In line with the Global Fund's performance-based funding approach, subsequent funding of these grants in Phase 2 (covering the next three years) will be subject to an assessment of their performance before additional funds totalling US$ 202.7 million can approved.

Haiti

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much (*a*) bilateral and (*b*) multilateral aid the UK has given to Haiti in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [49597]

Mr. Thomas: Our bilateral assistance between 2000 and 2005 was largely in the form of small grants provided through partnerships with UK international non-governmental organisations and their local partners in Haiti. However, in 2004–05, of the total amount provided in bilateral aid to Haiti, £1,913,000 was in the form of humanitarian assistance following the outbreak of violence, floods and landslides, and the passage of hurricane Ivan. DFID continues to provide support to Haiti through our partnership programme agreements with British non-governmental organisations (NGO)s working in Haiti, such as Oxfam and the Catholic Institute for International Relations (CIIR).

The following tables detail the bilateral and multilateral aid provided by the UK to Haiti over the last five year period.

	UK bilateral (£000)
2000–01	61
2001–02	130
2002–03	125
2003–04	130
2004–05	2027

The figures provided for multilateral aid reflect the UK's share of contributions to the European Commission, United Nations, World Bank, and others. For example, the UK's recent pledge to the soft loan window of the Caribbean Development Bank, includes close to £3 million for Haiti from 2005–08.

	Multilateral (£ million)
1999	3.2
2000	2.1
2001	2.6
2002	1.6
2003	1.0

Source:
Statistics on International Development 2005 and DFID Imputed UK multilateral shares.

Kashmir Earthquake

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions his Department has had with UK commercial airlines on the carriage of aid collected in the UK to Pakistan as part of the relief effort following the earthquake in Kashmir in October 2005. [49276]

Mr. Thomas: DFID uses an air brokering service for its relief flights arranged through commercial carriers. DFID contracted 15 flights to deliver relief items and 78 flights on behalf of the agencies of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC). DFID encouraged the DEC agencies to offer available space on the aircraft to non-DEC agencies where appropriate. DFID was also made aware of a number of organisations being offered free space on commercial airlines outside of this arrangement, for instance one of the DFID supported UK rescue teams received a free outward flight from British Airways.

Poverty Reduction

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact of remittances sent by migrants to their families in the developing world on reducing poverty; and if he will make a statement. [49665]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has a range of initiatives to enhance the development impact of remittances for developing countries, and this includes an analysis of the effects of migrant remittances in reducing poverty.

In general, evidence shows remittances reduce poverty in developing countries. For example:

New findings from Guatemala show that remittances reduce the level, depth and severity of poverty. Households receiving internal and international remittances spend around 50 per cent. more, respectively, than households with no remittances.

Recent World Bank research from the Philippines confirms that remittances reduce poverty for those that receive them;

In Bangladesh, remittances from internal migration can represent the majority of household income. Households receiving remittances have higher nutritional and health status.

higher levels of educational investment, and pools of money available for emergencies. There is clear evidence that without access to remittances, children's access to education would be severely limited. Remittance transfers can make up as much as 40 per cent. of the household budget for receiving poor families.

At the level of the economy, research suggests that remittances provide valuable foreign exchange for developing countries, and strengthen the balance of payments. Unlike other financial flows, remittances are counter cyclical, thus alleviating macroeconomic shocks. Remittances can also provide investment capital for economic activity, contributing to economic growth. Where remittance flows are saved rather than spent, they help improve the savings ratios and provide a higher deposit base for the banking system, which is necessary for economic growth.

DFID has a number of initiatives underway to reduce barriers to remittance flows and improve their developmental impact. In particular, DFID has initiated remittance country partnerships with Bangladesh, Nigeria and Ghana. These partnerships include work to extend access to remittances to poorer and more rural people, encourage greater competition and lower remittance prices, and improve data. DFID also works closely with economists in the World Bank that are researching in depth the impact of remittances on poverty reduction.

In terms of work in the UK, DFID has recently set up a task force comprising of banks and money transfer companies, in order to lower remittance prices and improve the services they provide to low income migrants. The task force will implement recommendations from a public/private sector working group report that DFID launched late last year.

DFID initiated a website (www.sendmoneyhome.org) for those wishing to send remittances to developing countries from the UK, which provides easily available comparative information on remittance prices and providers. The aim is to improve choice and stimulate competition, leading to lower prices and a better service for low income migrants. DFID funded a household survey in the UK among the Bangladeshi community which explores the impact on recipients of remittances to Bangladesh, and has recently commissioned a wider household survey to better quantify remittance flows from key ethnic minority communities within the UK.

Sierra Leone/Ivory Coast

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial and *(b)* food aid the United Kingdom has given to (i) Sierra Leone and (ii) the Ivory Coast since 1997. [49414]

Hilary Benn: DFID's total bilateral assistance to Sierra Leone has been £207 million since 1997. Of this, £14.4 million has been in the form of humanitarian assistance, comprising food aid and other humanitarian assistance. The remaining £192.5 million has been in the form of programme aid, direct budget support, technical assistance and other in-kind expenditure. In addition to this, the UK's imputed share of financial assistance to Sierra Leone through the EC is £14.4 million since 1997 (see Table 1 for details of assistance by year and type of assistance).

Table 1: UK Aid to Sierra Leone 1997–2005

£ million

Fiscal year	Total Bilateral Assistance	Humanitarian Assistance	Other Bilateral Assistance	Imputed Aid through EC[1]
1997–98	3.3		3.3	2.0
1998–99	9.1		9.1	1.4
1999–2000	29.8		29.8	0.6
2000–01	34.1	3.2	30.9	2.0
2001–02	36.7	5.2	31.5	4.7
2002–03	32.2	3.7	28.5	1.8
2003–04	34.3	1.5	32.8	1.8
2004–05	27.4	0.8	26.6	
Total 1997–2005	207.0	14.4	192.5	14.4

[1] Data for EC not available after 2003.

Source:
DFID SRSG Database

Regarding Cote d'Ivoire, DFID's total bilateral expenditure since 1997 is £45.9 million. This includes £1.6 million in the form of humanitarian assistance, and £44.3 million in technical cooperation, debt relief and other aid in kind. As its imputed share of EC expenditure, the UK has also provided an additional £18.1 million to Cote d'Ivoire since 1997 (see Table 2 for details of assistance by year and type of aid).

Table 2: UK Assistance to Cote d'Ivoire 1997–2005

£ million

Fiscal year	Bilateral Total Assistance	Humanitarian Assistance	Other Bilateral Assistance	Imputed Aid through EC[1]
1997–98	2.3	0.1	2.2	4.0
1998–99	13.6	0.0	13.6	3.8
1999–2000	12.1		12.1	0.7
2000–01	3.6		3.6	0.4
2001–02	1.0	0.3	0.8	8.5
2002–03	8.8	0.7	8.1	0.4
2003–04	1.0	0.2	0.8	0.4
2004–05	3.4	0.3	3.1	
Total 1997–2005	45.9	1.6	44.3	18.1

[1] Data for EC not available after 2003.

Source:
DFID SRSG Database.

TREASURY

Better Regulation Action Plan

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the Financial Services Authority's Better Regulation Action Plan. [50083]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Financial Service Authority's (FSA's) Better Regulation Action Plan, which sets out how the FSA is planning to continue improving the regulation of financial services, was published on 2 December. The Government welcome the FSA's Better Regulation Action Plan. On 1 February 2006 the FSA published its Business Plan for 2006–07, which includes further information on how it will deliver its better regulation initiatives. The Business Plan also commits the FSA to publish an update to its Better Regulation Action Plan in November 2006.

Condoms

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will reduce the current level of VAT on condoms to five per cent. [49239]

Dawn Primarolo: All taxes are kept under constant review and the Government are fully aware of the importance that has been attached to this issue by hon. Members and policy stakeholders.

Domestic Property Surveys

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether VAT is levied on a surveyor's report produced on a domestic property. [49812]

Dawn Primarolo: The supply of a surveyor's report on a domestic property is VAT standard-rated.

Employment Statistics

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* private sector jobs in (i) agriculture, (ii) manufacturing and (iii) the service sector and *(b)* public sector jobs there were in (A) Ribble Valley and (B) Lancashire in each of the last 10 years. [49795]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell dated 9 February 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your parliamentary question about private and public sector employment. (49795)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics for the United Kingdom of public sector employment from a quarterly survey of public sector organisations. However, estimates at local area level are not available.

Information at local area level is only available from the annual local area Labour Force Survey (LFS)/Annual Population Survey (APS) of individual people in households. However, in this source, the categorisation of employment in the public or private sector depends upon the responses from the individuals interviewed. As reported by ONS in October 2005 in the publication "Public Sector Employment Trends", some individuals tend to misreport private sector employment as being in the public sector hence leading to overestimates of the share of public sector employment.

With this reservation about the data quality, table 1 shows the number of persons in private sector and public sector employment for people resident in the Kibble Valley parliamentary constituency, as shown by the annual local area LFS for the 12 month periods ending February 1999 to February 2004, and from the APS for the 12 months ending December 2004. Table 2 shows data for people resident in Lancashire. Estimates are not available for earlier years.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Table 1: Persons in employment resident in the Ribble Valley parliamentary constituency by private-public sector split[1]

thousand

	Private Sector					
12 months ending	*Agriculture*	*Manufacturing*	*Services*	*Other industries*[2]	*Public Sector*	*Total*
February 1999	*	12	20	4	11	47
February 2000	1	13	20	4	12	49
February 2001	1	11	18	5	15	50
February 2002	1	8	24	5	14	51
February 2003	1	8	25	5	13	52
February 2004	1	10	20	5	12	47
December 2004	1	7	19	6	13	46

[1] Public/private sector split based on responses from individuals responding to the annual local area Labour Force Survey and the Annual Population Survey. This generally results in overestimates of public sector employment.
[2] Other industries are fishing, energy and water and construction.
Note:
Estimates are subject to sampling variability. Changes from year to year should be treated with particular caution.
Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey; Annual Population Survey

Table 2: Persons in employment resident in Lancashire by private-public sector split[1]

thousand

	Private Sector					
12 months ending	*Agriculture*	*Manufacturing*	*Services*	*Other industries*[2]	*Public Sector*	*Total*
February 1999	7	117	220	39	120	506
February 2000	8	114	229	38	124	517
February 2001	8	119	225	32	133	518
February 2002	7	112	227	30	138	516
February 2003	6	107	233	44	133	528
February 2004	6	100	255	42	138	544
December 2004	7	91	242	45	137	526

[1] Public/private sector split based on responses from individuals responding to the annual local area Labour Force Survey and the Annual Population Survey. This generally results in overestimates of public sector employment.
[2] Other industries are Fishing, Energy and Water and Construction.
Note:
Estimates are subject to sampling variability. Changes from year to year should be treated with particular caution.
Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey; Annual Population Survey.

Financial Services Authority

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many letters he has received from members of the public regarding the Financial Services Authority in each year since its creation. [50228]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: HM Treasury does not record this information. It could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

HM Revenue and Customs Estate

Mr. Francois: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his oral answer of 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1505, on HM Revenue and Customs Estate, what clawback clauses were included in the contract awarded to Mapeley in 2001 regarding properties included in his Department's estate. [46914]

Dawn Primarolo: The STEPS contract provides HMRC with rights to leave properties during the 20-year life of the deal. On leaving a property HMRC is entitled to share in certain gains in the value of the property. These are described as development gains.

The development gain is calculated by reference to the price obtained by Mapeley unless there is no disposal within two years at which point the gain is calculated by reference to the market value of the property.

Income Tax

Jim Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what additional rate of standard income tax would have been required to raise revenue of *(a)* £17.4 billion in 2004-05 and *(b)* £16.4 billion in 2003-04. [48821]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 8 February 2006]*: A basic rate of 27½ per cent. on earned income in both 2003-04 and 2004-05 would have raised an additional £16.2 billion and £17.0 billion respectively in each year.

These estimates assume the basic rate on savings and dividends remain unchanged at 20 per cent. and 10 per cent. respectively.

The 2003-04 estimates are based upon the 2003-04 Survey of Personal Incomes (SPI), and the 2004-05 estimates are based upon the 2003-04 SPI projected forward in line with December 2005 pre-Budget HM Treasury assumptions.

The figures exclude any estimate of behavioural response to the tax change, which could be significant given the scale of the changes.

Insurance Premium Tax

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received from organisations representing leaseholders with concerns about alleged fraud regarding the insurance premium tax. [49465]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Some allegations of underpayment of insurance premium tax have been received from one organisation and these have been investigated by HM Revenue and Customs.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Francois: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the *(a)* dates and *(b)* locations of his nationwide tour undertaken to date; and when he expects the tour to be completed. [50110]

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will visit Shrewsbury to discuss his main economic priorities with the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce and Shrewsbury Business Chamber. [41562]

Mr. Gordon Brown: As part of my official duties I have made a number of visits to the regions and nations of the United Kingdom and will be continuing to do so over the coming months.

Ports (Security)

Jim Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many whole-time equivalent staff of HM Revenue and Customs and its predecessors were employed in the investigation and surveillance of *(a)* ports and *(b)* airports in each year since 1999-2000; [49760]

(2) if he will list *(a)* ports and *(b)* airports which had a permanent HM Revenue and Customs presence in each year since 1999-2000. [49761]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer to the answer given on 8 June 2004, *Official Report*, column 370 by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to the hon. Member for South-East Cambridgeshire (Mr. Paice).

Prescriptions (VAT)

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria were used in deciding that *(a)* NHS hospital pharmacies would pay VAT on prescriptions and *(b)* other pharmaceutical outlets would not. [49675]

Dawn Primarolo: VAT is chargeable on all drugs, medicines and other pharmaceutical items that pharmacists purchase to dispense to patients. Neither a hospital nor a community pharmacy charges VAT on drugs and medicines dispensed by a pharmacist on the basis of a prescription issued by a medical practitioner.

While different VAT reclaim rules apply for the different types of pharmacies, these reflect how successive Governments have funded NHS VAT costs, and the fundamental difference for VAT purposes between NHS hospital pharmacies, which dispense prescribed drugs as a non-business activity, and community pharmacies, which make a 'business' supply when they dispense drugs.

Real Estate Investment Trusts

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the merits of establishing a regulatory framework for unlisted real estate investment trusts. [50436]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Lady to the answer she received from my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2265-2266W.

Revenue Help Lines

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the adequacy of Inland Revenue help lines *(a)* 01274 532007 and *(b)* 01274 539628 at busy times of the year for people with queries about paying their tax; whether he plans to improve the service; and if he will make a statement. [49594]

Dawn Primarolo: Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs is continually looking to improve services to customers especially around peak periods. Last year the department put considerable time and effort into trying to encourage people to file, and where necessary seek help, before the peak time at end of January and not leave things until the very last moment.

In anticipation of the Self Assessment filing peak in the last few days of January a substantial number of additional staff were made available on the telephone numbers quoted. In addition a telephone service was provided over the weekend prior to the filing date and up until 8.00 pm on 30 and 31 January. This was supported further by improvements to facilities for processing payment over the telephone.

Tax Credits

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families were sent *(a)* one, *(b)* two, *(c)* three, *(d)* four to seven and *(e)* eight or more different entitlement notices for a single application for tax credits in each year since the tax credit system was introduced. [47206]

Dawn Primarolo: This information could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* longest and *(b)* average time taken was for information relating to an application for tax credit to be updated on his Department's computer system in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05; and how many open cases on the system have waited more than four months to be updated. [47207]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not available.

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has service delivery agreement targets for deciding tax credit claims within five working days and 30 working days. The Department's annual report reported its progress against those targets. It reported that, for 2004–05, 95.9 percent of all new claims, renewals and changes of circumstances were decided within 30 working days of receipt.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when his Department expects to publish full results for the level of compliance in tax credits for 2003–04; and what research has been undertaken on compliance risk monitoring. [48442]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* HMRC is carrying out a random inquiry programme of a representative sample of finalised claims across the tax credit population to measure the level of fraud and claimant error in tax credits. Final results for the 2003–04 exercise will be published in spring 2006.

HMRC constantly monitors claim activity and acts to intercept potentially fraudulent claims before payments are made and adapts its methods in the light of evidence on attempted fraud. HMRC continuously reviews and updates their processes to ensure they provide a robust defence against the risk of organised fraud.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the total value has been of compensation payments made as a result of *(a)* delays and *(b)* mistakes in calculating tax credit awards; [48764]

(2) how many people have received compensation payments as a result of *(a)* delays and *(b)* mistakes in the calculation of tax credit awards. [48766]

Dawn Primarolo: The circumstances in which the former Inland Revenue and HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) will make compensation payments to its customers are explained in the Department's code of practice 1 "Putting things right" which is available at www.hmrc.gov.uk/leaflets/cop1.pdf

The Department will pay compensation for reasonable costs incurred as a direct result of their mistakes or delays and to recognise worry and distress caused by those mistakes and delays.

The Department will make a compensation payment if they believe it is justified even if the customer has not asked for compensation.

For the value and number of compensation payments made in relation to tax credits, by HMRC's Tax Credit Office and contact centres, to 30 September 2005, I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave the right hon. Member for Maidstone and The Weald (Miss Widdecombe) on 22 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1913W and the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1212W.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the annual cost to public funds of withdrawing tax credit as beneficiaries' income rises to the marginal income tax rate applicable. [49190]

Dawn Primarolo: No such assessment has been made.

Valuation Office Agency

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Valuation Office Agency has paid in *(a)* recruitment costs and *(b)* redundancy payments as a consequence of the postponement of the council tax revaluation in England. [47879]

Dawn Primarolo: Nothing.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Valuation Office Agency *(a)* has and *(b)* will have access to the local authority lettings continuous recording (LACORE) database. [49811]

Dawn Primarolo: The Valuation Office Agency has no current plans to seek access to LACORE data.

Vandalism

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of his Department's buildings in the last 12 months. [49511]

John Healey: There have been none.

Vehicle Excise Duty

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many vehicle excise duty payments were made in each of the last six weeks for which figures are available in each local authority area in North Wales. [46068]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

Figures according to local authority area are not available by Local authority. Information could be provided for the North Wales area, but only at disproportionate cost. Work is underway to gauge the level of vehicle re-licensing in the North Wales police force area during the period of their recent operation to tackle untaxed and uninsured vehicles.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what criteria he uses to judge the success of *(a)* the peacekeeping mission and *(b)* the counter-narcotics operation in Afghanistan. [42991]

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the key aims are of the deployment of troops in Afghanistan. [42792]

John Reid: Our aims in Afghanistan are: democratic government that can maintain the rule of law and deliver basic services; a sustainable security environment where the population is free from coercion; a viable legitimate market economy that is increasingly able to support basic social needs and reduce poverty; and a sustainable decrease in poppy cultivation and drug trafficking. The extent to which Afghanistan's own Ministries can meet these objectives themselves forms the basis of our criteria for success.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he expects the recent deployment of British troops to Afghanistan to result in reduced opium production in that country. [48797]

John Reid *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* Counter-narcotics (CN) operations are the responsibility of the Government of Afghanistan. UK forces deployed under the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) can provide training and operational support to Afghan counter-narcotics forces, and they contribute to the broader counter-narcotics effort by providing the secure environment in which the rule of law can be applied, reconstruction can take place and legal rural livelihoods can be developed.

While there remains a risk that opium cultivation may increase again this year, our goal is to ensure that the downward trend in cultivation seen in 2004–05 is maintained in the long term. We are working with the Government of Afghanistan and other international partners to ensure delivery of this goal.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what funds his Department has provided to support training of the Afghan army and police force in each year since 2002; and if he will make a statement; [45163]

(2) what preparations have been made by his Department to build Afghan national army and police capacity with a view to transferring responsibility for security in Afghanistan to the indigenous forces; and if he will make a statement. [45168]

John Reid: The US is the G8 lead nation for developing the Afghan national army (ANA), and 27,000 Afghan soldiers have been trained under their auspices. Over 60,000 policemen have been trained by the German-led police reform programme.

The UK has assisted training by providing resources and assisting ANA capacity building within the US-led effort, including NCO training for the ANA and, from April 2006, junior officer training for the ANA. The UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) has also provided two civilian advisers to work with the Afghan MOD to help build its capacity, and there are Afghan cadets at Sandhurst.

The UK Ministry of Defence does not contribute funds specifically to ANP training, although financial support has been provided by the global conflict prevention pool, which is jointly funded and administered by MOD, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development. This breaks down as follows:

£ million

	ANA	*ANP*
2002–03:	5	90,000
2003–04:	1.25	2.5
2004–05:	3.5	1.5

In addition, the UK has provided senior police advisers based at UK-led provincial reconstruction team and UK forces deployed under the NATO-led international security assistance force (ISAF) help provide the secure environment in which police reform can take place. The UK's provincial reconstruction team in Helmand will include police reform experts, and UK troops will work closely with the ANA as they take on an increasing responsibility for security in the Province.

The ISAF has a key role to play in facilitating the development of both the ANA and ANP, enabling them to operate with greater and more co-ordinated effect, thereby bringing security and stability to the entire country.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many NATO-trained and deployed Afghan combat troops there are; and if he will make a statement. [45162]

John Reid: So far 27,000 Afghan troops have been trained by the US-led programme for the development of the Afghan national army (ANA). This programme

is supported by the UK and other nations. The UK is providing NCO training and from April the UK will also support junior officer training in Kabul. The NATO-led international security assistance force (ISAF) is not part of this programme. However, British forces as part of the ISAF will assist with the training and mentoring of Afghan army units in Helmand Province. The Afghan Minister for Defence recently estimated there were now 34,000 soldiers, NCOs and officers in the ANA.

Chemical Defence Establishment

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which research programme at the Chemical Defence Establishment at Porton Down is designed to contribute to the understanding of Parkinson's disease. [48585]

Mr. Touhig: The remit of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, Dstl, at Porton Down is to provide the UK and its armed forces with safe and effective countermeasures against chemical and biological warfare agents. Thus, Dstl is not currently involved in research into Parkinson's disease, nor has any previous work been undertaken in this area.

However, the research that Dstl undertakes in the marmoset model for other applications could potentially have some relevance for research groups working on Parkinson's disease. The results of the research undertaken by Dstl are, wherever possible, submitted for publication in the open peer reviewed scientific literature and presented at open scientific conferences.

Commemorative Badges

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many 1945 55 commemorative badges have been issued in *(a)* each local authority area and *(b)* each constituency. [46072]

Mr. Touhig: This information is not held in the format requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Records prior to April 2000 have been archived and could not be obtained within a reasonable time scale, and may have been destroyed. I will write to the hon. Member to either provide the 1997 figures, or confirm their earlier destruction and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many residents of *(a)* each county and *(b)* each constituency in North Wales have received a veteran's badge. [47998]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* This information is not held in the format requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

523 residents from North Wales have received veterans badges since April 2005, but prior to this date records were not kept geographically.

Cruise Missiles

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Tomahawk cruise missiles have been *(a)* purchased for and *(b)* launched by the Royal Navy in each year since 1997; and how many Block IV Tomahawk cruise missiles are due to be purchased. [49648]

John Reid: The total number of Tomahawk Cruise Missiles purchased for the Royal Navy in each year since 1997 is shown in the table as follows:

	Total number of missiles purchased
1997	48
1998	17
1999	0
2000	0
2001	20
2002	0
2003	22

In addition, 64 Block IV Tomahawk cruise missiles are currently on order.

I am withholding the information on Tomahawk launches as this could enable deductions to be made on current stockpiles, which could be prejudicial to national security.

Defence Medical Service

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* required and *(b)* current strength levels of (i) trained anaesthetists, (ii) trained general surgeons, (iii) burns specialists and (iv) general medical practitioners in the Defence Medical Service was (A) on the last date for which figures are available and (B) in 1997. [48779]

Mr. Touhig: The following table shows the required and actual strength levels in the Defence Medical Services of the above four specialties as at January 2006 and April 2000:

Specialty	*January 2006*		*April 2000*	
	Required	*Actual*	*Required*	*Actual*
Anaesthetists	76	44	120	30
General Surgeons	36	21	44	19
Burns Consultants	6	5	10	2
General Medical Practitioners	270	260	440	210

Note:
Figures above 100 have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
DMSD

Disability (Armed Forces)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps the Government are taking to

support *(a)* former and *(b)* current members of the armed forces who are disabled; and if he will make a statement. [49142]

Mr. Touhig: The policies and procedures of the armed forces aim to avoid unnecessary threats to health; to provide the treatment and rehabilitation to ensure personnel can return, where possible, to normal service duties; or, where medical retirement becomes necessary, to provide proper resettlement and after-care services.

Personnel who become disabled but who are still able to contribute usefully to operational capacity, may be retained. Those who have to be medically retired are provided with advice on pay, allowances and pension compensation entitlements, housing and financial matters before returning to civilian life, including, if appropriate, resettlement advice and information to assist them to prepare for, and find, suitable employment.

The Veterans Agency provides a single point of contact within the MOD for veterans and their dependants seeking help and advice on a range of issues including health, housing, employment and financial matters. The War Pensioners' Welfare Service, a nationwide network administered by the Veterans Agency, provides help and advice on a wide range of welfare needs.

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many departmental employees have taken early retirement due to ill health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46749]

Mr. Touhig: The following table gives details of the number of Ministry of Defence civilian employees that took early retirement due to ill health in each of the financial years 2000–01 to 2004–05.

	Headcount
2000–01	500
2001–02	440
2002–03	365
2003–04	290
2004–05	250

Note:
This table used the revised definition of civilian personnel (www.dasa.mod.uk), but excludes Royal Fleet Auxiliary and Locally Engaged Civilian staff for whom no information on civilian ill health retirements is available.

Gulf War

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many individuals from the British armed forces served in the first Gulf war; and if he will make a statement. [49543]

Mr. Ingram: During the period of the first Gulf conflict, between 1 September 1990 and 30 June 1991, 53,462 UK armed forces personnel were deployed to the Gulf region.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans the Government have to conduct research into Gulf war syndrome; and if he will make a statement. [49545]

Mr. Touhig: It has been a key principle of this Government's approach to the health concerns of veterans of the 1990–91 Gulf conflict that there should be appropriate research into veterans' illnesses and into the factors that may have a bearing on them. Research already sponsored by the Ministry of Defence includes: epidemiological studies; clinical and laboratory tests; a programme of investigation into the possible adverse health effects of the medical countermeasures offered to troops; a systematic review of research literature; and a study of the social aspects of the issue. Most of this work has been completed and published. We have also maintained close contact with the US authorities to ensure visibility and understanding of the extensive programme of research that they have commissioned. The research has shown no evidence of a unique illness associated with service in the Gulf, nor has it identified a specific cause of the illnesses in question.

Independent advice on the direction of this research is provided by the Medical Research Council. The Ministry of Defence is currently considering with the council potential additional studies aimed at improving the long-term health of veterans with persistent symptoms and also of an enzyme involved in metabolising organophosphates. Announcements will be made in due course regarding the outcome of these considerations.

Gurkha Recruitment

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what effect developments in Nepal have had on Gurkha recruitment over the past 12 months. [49684]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence's ability to recruit Gurkhas over the past 12 months has not been diminished. In the most recent recruitment exercise some 15,000 applicants for selection competed for 230 available places. We have however adjusted and streamlined our recruitment process in recent years, partly in response to the situation in Nepal.

Iraq

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of *(a)* soldiers in the Army and *(b)* soldiers serving in Iraq have been diagnosed with a mental health condition. [48780]

Mr. Touhig: Between January 2003 and September 2005 inclusive, 1,333 United Kingdom service personnel who had served in Iraq were subsequently assessed as suffering from a mental health disorder,. This represents less than 1.5 per cent. of total UK service personnel deployed to the region during the same period. Of those 1,333 personnel, 182 were assessed as suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Figures are not held centrally on a tri-service or single service basis on the total number of service personnel who are suffering from any mental health condition and this could therefore be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Military Explosive Manufacturing

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the warheads carried by the United Kingdom's Trident nuclear deterrent will continue to contain high-explosives manufactured exclusively in the UK. [49650]

John Reid: We have previously withheld and are continuing to withhold the information requested as it relates to national security.

Parkinson's Disease

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department last discussed possible links between Parkinson's disease and Gulf War illnesses with US counterparts. [49667]

Mr. Touhig: I am aware of research undertaken by Robert Haley at University of Texas Southwestern Medical Centre raising the possibility of a link between Gulf war illnesses and Parkinson's disease. Defence Ministers have not held any formal discussions with US counterparts about this research. Officials keep abreast of research published in the US through a British liaison officer who is based permanently in Washington DC. He is tasked with ensuring that the UK has full visibility of US research into Gulf health issues and with providing a channel for communicating our own work to interested US parties.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what research projects related to possible links between Parkinson's disease and Gulf war illnesses are being undertaken by his Department; [49670]

(2) what funding his Department makes available towards research into possible links between Parkinson's disease and Gulf war illnesses in the US. [49671]

Mr. Touhig: It has been a key principle of this Government's approach to the health concerns of veterans of the 1990–91 Gulf conflict that there should be appropriate research into veterans' illnesses and into the factors that may have a bearing on them. Under the direction and guidance of the Medical Research Council, the Ministry of Defence has sponsored a broad programme of research. No research has been undertaken or sponsored by the United Kingdom Government into possible links between Parkinson's disease and the ill health reported by some Gulf veterans. However, we are aware of work undertaken in the United States suggesting the possibility of such a link and are following developments on this closely.

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many parliamentary questions tabled in the last 12 months for answer by him on a named day *(a)* were transferred and *(b)* received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named; [49887]

(2) how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by him in the last 12 months have been answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* between 14 and 28 days, *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if he will make a statement. [49906]

Mr. Touhig: The information is not held in the format requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

During the period 1 February 2005 to 31 January 2006, the Ministry of Defence received 637 parliamentary questions for answer on a named day and 2,729 ordinary written parliamentary questions for answer.

Defence Ministers aim to ensure that Members receive a substantive response to their named day question on the named day and to endeavour to answer ordinary written questions within a working week of being tabled.

Unfortunately, this is not always possible but the Department makes every effort to achieve these timescales.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Hemel Hempstead (Mike Penning) on 2 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1067–68W, in which I advised of our plans to introduce a new toolkit to better track and handle all parliamentary questions and correspondence later in the year; which should enable us to better monitor and report on our performance.

Pingat Jasa Medal

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the number of soldiers, sailors and airmen serving in Malaysia between 31 August 1957 and 31 December 1966 would be eligible for the Pingat Jasa medal if approval for wearing it were given. [48213]

Mr. Touhig: No centrally collated figures are available to show the total number of individual service personnel who served in the Federation of Malaya and subsequently in the Federation of Malaysia between 31 August 1957 and 31 December 1966 and such figures could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Further, as the Malaysian Government have not yet released a definitive qualification criterion for the Pingat Jasa medal, it would not be possible to estimate the numbers who might be eligible even if the overall figures for those who served in the area were available.

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

Jeremy Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the average annual amount spent by the Government in a year on the treatment of servicemen and ex-servicemen suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and related conditions over the last five years. [49471]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 7 February 2006]*: Figures are not held centrally on the total number of Service personnel who are suffering from post traumatic stress disorder and related conditions. Information on the amount spent could only therefore be provided at disproportionate cost.

Furthermore, we do not hold information on the treatment received by ex-Service personnel because the NHS has responsibility for the treatment of ex-Service personnel suffering from both mental and physical disorders.

For those ex-Service personnel whose condition is due to service and for whom it is appropriate, courses of remedial care are funded at facilities provided by the charity, Combat Stress. For the year ending December 2005, funding was some £2.8 million.

Press Coverage

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 he has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* his Department; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47091]

John Reid: Since 1 April 2003 the Ministry of Defence has made four complaints to the Press Complaints Commission; all by the then Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Member for Ashfield (Mr. Hoon). Three were upheld and one was not pursued.

Public Relations

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much was spent on his Department's public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [48962]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence engages in a range of public relations activities in order that the work of the MOD and armed forces is communicated to the general public. While the MOD, its Agencies and the Services employ full-time and part-time Communications staff, and who, on occasion, engage external PR consultancies to assist them, the Department does not centrally record overall expenditure on public relations. This information therefore could be supplied only at disproportionate cost.

Neither does the Department centrally record expenditure on information services, a broad term that could refer to a range of activities from press offices, to internal communications, to web services.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

1911 Census

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will authorise the early release to the Public Records Office of the 1911 census for England and Wales. [49704]

Bridget Prentice: The Government's policy is to make the decennial census returns publicly available after a period of 100 years, in order to honour assurances given about the confidentiality of personal information contained in census returns. The National Archives is, therefore, developing plans to release the 1911 census in 2012.

Freedom of Information Act

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether it is Government policy that civil servants routinely remove their names from documents before releasing them under the Freedom of Information Act 2000; and if she will make a statement. [49032]

Bridget Prentice: Disclosing or withholding officials' names in freedom of information releases is dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The names of many officials are already made public in a variety of ways, such as in the civil service yearbook or as speakers at conferences, therefore it is unnecessary to redact names. However, there may be cases in which it is necessary to remove officials' names, for example for health and safety purposes or because releasing their name into the public domain could cause disruption to their day-to-day work.

Road Traffic Claims

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment her Department has made of the effects of the introduction of predictable costs in road traffic claims where damages are under £10,000. [48629]

Bridget Prentice: Research on the operation of fixed recoverable costs for road traffic accident claims is underway, and it is expected that this will be completed in summer 2006.

Small Claims (Personal Injuries)

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 130W, on small claims (personal injuries), if she will list the organisations she plans to consult as part of the review of personal injuries limits for small claims. [48462]

Bridget Prentice: A list of consultees is not yet available. I will ensure that a copy is sent to the hon. Member when the consultation paper is published.

Unsafe Gravestones

Mr. Todd: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress has been made in discussions with *(a)* burial authorities and *(b)* other interested parties on the means of promoting best practice in dealing with unsafe gravestones. [49432]

Bridget Prentice: We expect to complete very shortly our assessment of existing guidance and then to discuss our findings with burial professionals and others. Subject to their views and any need to obtain any further technical advice, we aim to publish more comprehensive guidance later this year.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Education

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to improve education standards in Northern Ireland. [48315]

Angela E. Smith: We are committed to driving up performance in schools in Northern Ireland by taking forward a wide range of initiatives aimed at raising standards, tackling under achievement and targeting funding at those areas of greatest social need. These include:

the recognition of social deprivation and education underachievement in the formula used to determine schools' budgets;

the School Improvement Programme which is focussed on raising standards and encompasses interventions in under achieving schools and literacy and numeracy standards;

the implementation of the new post-primary arrangements which will provide all pupils with access to a much wider range of courses, including vocational courses;

the Key Stage 4 Flexibility Initiative, which allows schools to discontinue certain aspects of the statutory curriculum in favour of innovative work-related programmes;

the introduction of a revised statutory curriculum which has a reduced statutory element to give schools the flexibility to tailor their teaching to the needs of the individual; and,

the introduction, from 2006-07, of the Children and Young People's Package, the aim of which is to reduce underachievement and improve life chances of children and young people.

This is underpinned by an ongoing programme of monitoring and evaluation, including not only inspection activity but also self evaluation by schools.

A-Level Results

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what proportion of pupils making A-level entries in Northern Ireland obtained passes at (*a*) grade A level and (*b*) grades A and B level in each of the last 20 years. [50310]

Angela E. Smith: The requested information is as follows:

Percentage

Academic year	Entries achieving pass at Grade A	Grades A-B
1995-96	32	57
1996-97	33	59
1997-98	33	61
1998-99	37	64
1999-2000	39	67
2000-01	41	68
2001-02	44	72
2002-03	43	72
2003-04	44	73

Notes:

1. The latest available data relates to the 2003-04 academic year.
2. The earliest available data relates to the 1995-96 academic year.

Child Poverty

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children are living in poverty in Northern Ireland in each constituency; and what the equivalent figures were in each of the past five years. [47579]

Angela E. Smith: Information is not available for the period requested as the data source households below average income was introduced to Northern Ireland in 2002-03 whereas in GB the survey was introduced in 1994-95. Also to enable estimates for individual Northern Ireland constituencies as requested, it was necessary to combine data for years 2002-03 and 2003-04. The following table shows the numbers and percentages of children living in relative income poverty before housing costs and after housing costs across parliamentary constituencies in Northern Ireland for that period.

Number and percentage of children in relative poverty by parliamentary constituency for 2002-03 and 2003-04 combined

Parliamentary constituency	Relative poverty: Before housing costs Number	Before housing costs Percentage	After housing costs Number	After housing costs Percentage
Belfast East	3,500	23	4,200	29
Belfast North	5,300	29	5,200	28
Belfast South	2,100	17	2,900	24
Belfast West	5,900	24	6,900	28
East Antrim	2,900	16	3,700	20
East Londonderry	8,000	30	7,600	29
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	7,100	22	9,500	30
Foyle	9,200	32	9,200	32
Lagan Valley	2,900	13	3,300	15
Mid Ulster	5,600	34	7,300	44
Newry and Armagh	4,500	20	5,600	25
North Antrim	8,000	24	8,500	25
North Down	2,800	13	4,200	20
South Antrim	4,800	14	6,500	20
South Down	5,600	17	7,000	22
Strangford	2,400	12	2,600	13
Upper Bann	8,000	21	7,900	21
West Tyrone	6,600	30	8,500	38
All	95,000	22	110,500	25

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred and percentages to the nearest whole number, therefore individual numbers by parliamentary constituencies may not sum to Northern Ireland total.
2. As with any sample survey the numbers and percentages quoted in the table above are subject to a degree of sampling error.
3. A single year's data do not provide robust results at the level of parliamentary constituency. It was therefore necessary to combine two years data to allow robust analysis this level.

4 The data were sourced from Households Below Average Income Northern Ireland (HBAI NI). The HBAI NI is based on information collected from the Family Resources Survey (FRS). The FRS was first run in NI in 2002–03. Therefore data is not available prior to 2002–03. The NBAI was first introduced in Great Britain in 1994–95.

5 The HBAI is the main source of income poverty measures throughout the UK and is used to monitor the United Kingdom's child poverty targets.

6 Relative income poverty is defined as having an income less than 60 per cent. of the contemporary median income.

7 Income before housing costs (BHC) includes the following main components: usual net earnings from employment; profit or loss from self-employment (losses are treated as a negative income); all social security benefits (including housing benefit, social fund, maternity, funeral and community care grants but excluding social fund loans) and tax credits; income from occupational and private pensions; investment income; maintenance payments, if a person receives them directly; income from educational grants and scholarships (including, for students, top up loans and parental contributions); the cash value of certain forms of income in kind (free school meals, free welfare milk, free school milk and free TV licence for those aged 75 and over).

8 Income is net of the following items: income tax payments; national insurance contributions; domestic rates (this includes water and sewerage charges for Northern Ireland); contributions to occupational pension schemes (including all additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) to occupational pension schemes, and any contributions to personal pensions); all maintenance and child support payments, which are deducted from the income of the person making the payment and parental contributions to students living away from home.

9 Income after housing costs (AHC) is derived by deducting a measure of housing costs from BHC income measure. Housing costs include the following: rent (gross of housing benefit); water rates, mortgage interest payments (net of tax relief); structural insurance premiums (for owner occupiers); ground rent and service charges.

Source:
Households Below Average Income 2002–03 and 2003–04 Department for Social Development.

Children's Food Bill

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will take steps to introduce in Northern Ireland the measures contained in the Children's Food Bill. [49033]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Education, along with the Education and Library Boards and other school authorities, are already in the process of introducing many of the measures contained in the proposed Children's Food Bill.

New Nutritional Standards for school meals are presently being rolled-out to all schools in Northern Ireland. Around 500 schools are operating the standards at present and the remaining schools will be included as soon as possible. Additional funding has been provided to support the initiative which will address not only school meals but will also include other areas of food provision in schools such as tuck shops and vending machines. The Department will shortly be consulting on the timetable for introducing these changes.

In addition, from the 2006–07 school year the Education and Training Inspectorate will be evaluating the nutritional quality of meals in schools. It will also be examining schools' general approaches to promoting healthy eating.

Health education is a compulsory element of the curriculum for all pupils. It provides opportunities to learn about a healthy diet and to know and understand the contribution of food to growth, energy and health.

Civil Service

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps have been taken by the Civil Service to address the under-representation of Protestants in the general service grades of the Civil Service in 2005. [44804]

Angela E. Smith: In 2005 the Northern Ireland Civil Service included statements particularly welcoming applications from Protestants in the following recruitment competitions:

Administrative officer
Temporary administrative officer
Administrative assistant
Temporary administrative assistant

The Northern Ireland Civil Service has been aware that Protestants have been under-represented in applications for certain general service grades since 2002 when it last carried out a review as required under Article 55 of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. Since that time job advertisements for administrative assistant and administrative officer have carried messages particularly welcoming applications from the Protestant community. Appointments continue to be made strictly on merit from those who apply.

The Service's Article 55 review is currently in train and will examine the latest available figures. I expect to be in a position to provide this report to hon. Members in Northern Ireland later in the spring.

In addition, the Service is currently developing a new outreach strategy which will set out actions to be taken to promote Civil Service careers among under-represented groups.

Cognitive Therapy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to increase the number of cognitive therapists in the Province. [49387]

Mr. Woodward: There are no central plans to increase the number of cognitive therapists. The recruitment of staff, including cognitive therapists, is a matter for individual health and social services trusts taking into account factors such as service needs and available resources.

Domiciliary Carers

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people are on waiting lists for domiciliary carers; and what the average waiting time was in each health, social services and public safety board area in the last period for which figures are available. [49970]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of people on waiting lists for domiciliary carers, and average waiting times is not collected centrally. However, information is collected centrally on numbers of adults waiting in the community for domiciliary care packages.

The number of adults waiting in the community for domiciliary care packages at 30 September 2005 (the latest date for which information is available) was 767.

Information on waiting times is collected by time band and therefore average waiting times cannot be calculated. Information on waiting times by time band is shown in the following table for each health and social services board area, and for Northern Ireland, at 30 September 2005. At this date, 534 adults (70 per cent. of those waiting) had been waiting for 12 weeks or more, 59 (8 per cent.) had been waiting for between eight and 12 weeks, 63 (8 per cent.) for between five and eight weeks, 47 (6 per cent.) for between three and five weeks and 64 (8 per cent.) for less than three weeks. 403 (75 per cent.)of those waiting for 12 weeks or more were in the northern board area.

	Time from end of assessment to delivery of care					
Board area	*Less than three weeks*	*Three—under five weeks*	*Five—under eight weeks*	*Eight—under 12 weeks*	*12 weeks or more*	*Total*
Eastern	25	23	33	26	125	232
Northern	36	19	20	33	403	511
Southern	0	1	4	0	2	7
Western	3	4	6	0	4	17
Total	64	47	63	59	534	767

GCSE Results

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what proportion of pupils at (*a*) grammar schools, (*b*) secondary modern schools and (*c*) comprehensive schools in Northern Ireland obtained five A-C passes at GCSE in each of the last 20 years. [50309]

Angela E. Smith: In Northern Ireland the only distinction made by the Department of Education is between grammar schools and other secondary schools. The requested information for these types of school is as follows:

Percentage of pupils in Year 12 achieving five or more passes at grades A-C, by school type, 1992–93 to 2003–04*

Academic year	*Grammar*	*Other secondary schools*
1992–93	90	27
1993–94	91	27
1994–95	94	27
1995–96	94	28
1996–97	95	30
1997–98	94	31
1998–99	95	33
1999–2000	95	34
2000–01	95	34
2001–02	95	37
2002–03	96	37
2003–04	96	38

Notes:
1. The latest information available relates to the 2003–04 academic year.
2. The earliest available information relates to the 1992–93 academic year.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what proportion of pupils in Northern Ireland obtained (*a*) five GCSE passes at grade A to C, (*b*) GCSE passes at grades A to C in mathematics and English and (*c*) GCSE passes in mathematics, English, a science subject and a modern foreign language in each of the last 20 years. [50311]

Angela E. Smith: The requested information is as follows:

(a) Five or more GCSE passes at grades A to C*

Academic year	*Percentage achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grade A* to C*
1992–93	48
1993–94	49
1994–95	51
1995–96	52
1996–97	54
1997–98	55
1998–99	56
1999–2000	57
2000–01	57
2001–02	59
2002–03	59
2003–04	60

Notes:
1. The latest available information relates to the 2003–04 academic year.
2. The earliest available information relates to the 1992–93 academic year.

(b) and (c) GCSEs in maths and English, and GCSEs in maths, English, a science and a modern language, grades A to C.*

Academic year	*Percentage achieving GCSEs in mathematics and English at grade A* to C*	*Percentage achieving GCSEs passes at grades A* to C in mathematics, English, a science and a modern foreign language*
1995–96	46	64
1996–97	48	64
1997–98	49	66
1998–99	50	65
1999–2000	51	68
2000–01	51	68
2001–02	52	68
2002–03	52	66
2003–04	51	64

Notes:
1. The latest available information relates to the 2003–04 academic year.
2. The earliest available information relates to the 1995–96 academic year.

Hostel Closure

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the reasons for the closure of the Lee Hestia Association Ltd./Novas Ouvertures Group Ltd. Hostel at 3–7 Brunswick Street, Belfast. [49321]

Mr. Hanson: The Brunswick Street hostel was operated by the Lee Hestia Association Ltd. as a member organisation of the Novas-Ouvertures Group Ltd. Support services in the hostel were funded by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive under the Supporting People programme. The Novas-Ouvertures Group subsequently decided to withdraw its services from Northern Ireland and a number of other areas and the Brunswick Street hostel closed in July 2005. While this is entirely a matter for the Novas-Ouvertures Group, I understand that the decision was taken for business reasons.

Industrial Derating

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the Government's plans are for a phasing out of industrial de-rating in Northern Ireland; and what the average expected change in non-domestic rates is for an average industrial business as a consequence of the phasing-out. [49563]

Angela E. Smith: The phasing out of industrial derating, which was fully consulted on as part of the overall Review of Rating Policy, came into operation on 1 April 2005 when businesses entitled to industrial derating became liable for rates at 15 per cent. of their full rate assessment.

The percentage amount of the full rate liability payable in 2006–07 will be 25 per cent., in 20070–08 35 per cent., in 2008–09 50 per cent., 75 per cent. in 2009–10 and in 2010–11 with full rates becoming payable from 1 April 2011.

As with all new policies the Government will review the phasing out of industrial derating. In this case a reasonable period of time is considered to be two years from the date of implementation.

The average rate bill for properties entitled to industrial derating in 2005–06 is estimated at £2,290. Over the period of phasing out it is projected to be £3,990 in 2006–07, £5,840 in 2007–08, £8,710 in 2008–09, £13,660 in 2009–10, £14,270 in 2010–11 and £19, 890 in 2011–12.

Public Relations

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the value was of *(a)* public opinion research and *(b)* public relations contracts issued by his Department in 2004–05. [36005]

Mr. Hain: In the Northern Ireland Office during 2004–05 the value of:

(a) public opinion research was £250,698.16[1] and

(b) public relations contracts was £9,517.

[1] Some of this expenditure was incurred over financial years 2005–06.

Pupil Profile Report

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will place in the Library a copy of the report produced by Durham university on the pilot of the proposed pupil profile. [49623]

Angela E. Smith: Neither the Department, nor the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) are aware of any report by Durham university about the pilot for the proposed pupil profile. Any evaluation information on the pupil profile pilot is available on CCEA' s website www.ccea.org.uk.

Rates Revaluation

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate the Government have made of the *(a)* number and *(b)* proportion of households in Northern Ireland whose bills will (i) increase, (ii) decrease and (iii) not change under the planned rates revaluation and shift to discrete capital values. [49562]

Angela E. Smith: This cannot be determined until the Valuation and Lands Agency completes the revaluation process in the spring of 2006. A study published by the university of Ulster in 2003, using sales information, suggested that the proportion whose bills would decrease following the move to discrete capital based rating would be 61 per cent., while 39 per cent. would face an increased bill. The Department's own analysis supports these estimates and indicates that the proportion of properties which will experience a decrease in bill of more-than 5 per cent. is 52 per cent., the proportion that will face an increase in bill of more than 5 per cent. is 35 per cent. and the proportion with no change in bill (that is, between + /- 5 per cent.) is 13 per cent.

This assumes overall revenues remain static. Furthermore the estimates do not allow for households which may qualify for housing benefit nor does it take into account the moderating impact of a three year transition scheme and any interim arrangements that may be considered for the treatment of district rates.

Road Accident Prevention

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent in each of the last 10 years on measures to prevent road traffic accidents in the Province. [49386]

Mr. Woodward: The chief executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Lady in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 9 February 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question regarding how much has been spent in each of the last 10 years on measures to prevent road traffic accidents in the Province.

I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

Improving road safety is a significant factor in developing the vast majority of schemes that are funded from Roads Service's capital budget. Within that budget the programmes that are specifically targeted at reducing road traffic collisions are the collision remedial and traffic calming programmes.

Expenditure in each of the last 10 financial years on collision remedial and traffic calming across Northern Ireland was:

£000

	Collision Remedial	Traffic Calming
1996-97	1,376	570
1997-98	1,514	1,161
1998-99	1,423	1,352
1999-2000	1,557	1,179
2000-01	1,595	1,027
2001-02	1,658	1,545
2002-03	1,589	1,859
2003-04	1,976	2,011
2004-05	2,605	2,549
2005-06[1]	2,410	2,715
Total	17,703	15,968

[1] Anticipated expenditure in this financial year

I hope this information is helpful.

Unemployment

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the percentage unemployment rates are for each ward in Northern Ireland listed in descending order and indicating in which constituency each ward lies. [44601]

Angela E. Smith: A copy of this information has been placed in the Library of the House.

WALES

Objective One

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales whether the total Welsh block figures set out in annex 1 of the Wales Office annual report 2005 (Cm 6545) include the above Barnett formula additions for objective one in Wales. [45353]

Mr. Hain: Yes.

Statutory Instruments

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the statutory instruments introduced by his Department since 6 May 2005. [46202]

Mr. Hain: One.

The Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 (Relaxation of Restriction on Disclosure) Order 2004.

Tourism Accommodation

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what assessment he has made of the costs of introducing a statutory registration scheme for providers of tourism accommodation in Wales. [47645]

Mr. Hain: The Welsh Assembly Government are committed to ensuring that regulatory approaches conform to the best principles of proportionality, and will seek to ensure that the benefits of statutory registration should be achieved whilst minimising and, if possible, reducing the overall regulatory burden and compliance costs.

The Welsh Assembly Government have, however, decided that further work is required to ensure that its policy of driving up the overall quality of tourism facilities in Wales is taken forward in a fully collaborative way, so is no longer seeking to introduce a draft Bill in this session as was originally planned.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what assessment he has made of the economic impact of introducing a statutory registration scheme for providers of tourism accommodation in Wales. [47646]

Mr. Hain: The clear policy aim is to generate a positive economic impact for the tourism industry in Wales. Boosting quality standards should ensure that visitors to Wales enjoy good standards of accommodation and service, hopefully increasing the number of repeat visits, and greatly assisting in marketing Wales as a tourist destination.

The Welsh Assembly Government have decided that further work is required to ensure that its policy of driving up the overall quality of tourism facilities in Wales is taken forward in a fully collaborative way, so is no longer seeking to introduce a draft Bill in this session as was originally planned.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent representations he has received about a statutory registration scheme for providers of tourism accommodation in Wales. [47647]

Mr. Hain: I have regular meetings with representatives of the business community to discuss various issues of interest to them, including tourism.

Vandalism

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list the acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of his Department's buildings in the last 12 months. [49512]

Mr. Hain: None.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Building Regulations

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps the Government plan to take to amend building regulations to take account of further environmental initiatives. [49757]

Yvette Cooper: On 13 September 2005, I announced improvements to the energy efficiency standards set out in part L of the Building Regulations. The part L changes come into effect in April 2006 and will make a major contribution to the UK's commitment to combat climate change delivering increased energy standards of up to 27 per cent. for new buildings. In total this all means an increase of 40 per cent. since 2000.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps his Department is taking to encourage the construction of more energy efficient buildings above minimum Part L building regulations requirements; and if he will make a statement. [49535]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently proposing a new Code for Sustainable Homes, which goes further than building regulations. Building Regulations will continue to set

out the minimum legal standards for buildings. The Code could also provide an indication of the future direction of standards in building regulations.

Council Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1500W, on council tax revaluation, when the collection of value significant codes is forecast to be complete. [47452]

Mr. Woolas: The collection of value significant codes is an ongoing task, as it has been since the onset of the council tax.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what has been the annual expenditure on vehicles for *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39982]

Mr. Woolas: Expenditure on vehicles purchased for ODPM and bodies where information is available is as follows. No vehicles are provided by the ODPM in Northern Ireland or Scotland. The Department also supports specialist vehicles engaged in the transportation of resilience equipment in England and Wales and these figures are shown in the total. The Department does not maintain a record of expenditure broken down by region.

£ million

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*[1]2005–06*
ODPM				
England	6.9	8.245	8.17	5.642
Agencies	0	0.441	0.030	0.848
Other bodies	0.596	0.659	0.672	0.751
Total	7.496	8.904	8.842	6.092

[1] To date

Departmental Groups

Mr. Weir: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many staff work in his Department's Regional Development Group; how many are based in *(a)* London and *(b)* each region and what the total salary costs were of the group in each area in the last year for which figures are available. [48834]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has 120.94 staff on full-time equivalent (FTE) basis working in the Regional Development Group, of these 102.27 (FTE) staff are based in London. The total salary costs for the 2005–06 financial year currently stands at £3.782 million.

The above figures are as at 2 February 2006.

The ODPM does not hold data regarding the regions; such a breakdown could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many staff work in his Department's *(a)* Ministerial Group, *(b)* Legal Directorate and *(c)* Tackling Disadvantage Group; how many in each category are based in (i) London and (ii) each region; and what the total salary costs were of each group in each area in the last year for which figures are available. [48852]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is tabled as follows:

	Total (FTE)	*London based (FTE)*	*Total salary costs 2005–06 (million)*
Ministerial Group	61.94	61.94	3.187
Legal Directorate	61.93	61.93	3.231
Tackling Disadvantage Group	228.76	221.26	8.756

Note:
The figures are as at 2 February 2006.
Source:
ODPM (Central) Finance and HR IS.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold data regarding the regions; such a breakdown could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental IT Systems

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department has spent on IT systems in each year since 1997; what the purpose of each system is; what the outturn against planned expenditure of each system was; and what the *(a)* planned and *(b)* actual date of completion was of each system. [41311]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established in May 2002. For IT projects completed between May 2002 and 2004 I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Tatton (Mr. Osborne) on 19 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 998–99W. The following tables identify the IT systems completed since that date.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister HQ 2005

System	*Purpose*	*Planned expenditure (£000)*	*Outturn (£000)*	*Planned time*	*Outturn time*
The Supporting People Directory Services	To provide information about the housing-related support services available across England, including their referral route details	1,622	1,763	January 2005	August 2005
Planning Portal Upgrade	To provide a one-stop-shop for the planning system in England and Wales, with the aim of improving the planning system and adding value to the related services. In 2004–05 the project				

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister HQ 2005

System	Purpose	Planned expenditure (£000)	Outturn (£000)	Planned time	Outturn time
	upgraded the hardware and software of the Planning Portal to reflect growing demand and usage	1,441	1,441	February 2005	February 2005
Thames Gateway Programme Management	Effective management of the Thames Gateway programme, with the purpose of: Providing timely and up to date information on programmes and projects. Being better able to challenge delivery partnership performance and financial management. Enabling more efficient working practices and less dependence on ad-hoc requests	557	549	August 2005	September 2005
Total (£ million)		3.62	3.75		

Government offices in the regions

System	Purpose of each system	Planned expenditure (£000)	Outturn (£000)	Planned time	Outturn time
Web Rationalisation Project	Delivery of unified government office websites based upon a common look, feel, navigation and content housed on central resilient architecture which also allows authoring of content to be devolved to those responsible for its production and maintenance	1,500	1,500	March 2005	Completed in June 2005 due to suspension of information activities during the general election.
Human Resources Database	Delivery of unified cross Government office HR database	355	355	March 2005	March 2005
Government Office Contacts database	Delivery of a cross Government office database to record and manage all external contacts.	300	300	March 2005	March 2005
Online Performance Management System	Delivery of a single on- line Business and Resource Planning and Reporting system enabling Government offices to plan manage and report on their performance against PSAs and GO high level priorities, and which supports raised performance across the network	95	95	March 2005	March 2005
GOGIS1	Implementation of first stage of a Graphical Information System throughout the Government offices to allow geospatial data sharing and presentation	20	20	May 2002	May 2002
GOGIS2	Second stage of the above	50	50	April 2003	October 2003
Total (£ million)		2.32	2.32		

Disabled Facilities Grants

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how long it has taken on average to approve an application for the disabled facilities grant in each year since 1997. [49791]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Local authorities are responsible for administering their disabled facilities grant schemes and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not request this information from them. A good practice guidance—Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People—has been issued to the local authorities on indicative time targets for assessments. The targets depend on the complexity and urgency of the case, from 65 working days/three months up to 179 working days/nine months.

Fire Service

Jeremy Wright: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many employees of the fire service on long-term sick leave are claiming incapacity benefit. [49988]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he plans to take to encourage fire authorities to retain firefighters in an administrative role who are forced to retire from front-line duties due to ill health. [49765]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Fire and rescue authorities, as employers, are responsible for issues relating to the redeployment of firefighters in their employ who are no longer able to undertake operational duties due to ill health. Formerly such employees normally took medical retirement, but in September 2004, in order to enable and encourage fire and rescue authorities to consider such redeployment, amendments to the firefighters' pension scheme were made to allow regular firefighters to remain in active employment of fire and rescue authorities performing duties appropriate to the role of a firefighter other than, or in addition to, engaging in firefighting.

In addition The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 extended the functions of fire and rescue authorities to include fire safety, consequently giving wider scope for the employment of staff with experience of firefighting on other role-related duties.

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what total sum has been received by his Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation.[48472]

Jim Fitzpatrick: No fees have been received by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, its agencies or the Government Office network, for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations since 1 January 2005.

Fuel Costs

Mr. Olner: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what additional financial assistance he plans to give to local authorities to fund increases in gas and electricity costs; and if he will make a statement. [48910]

Mr. Woolas: None. On 31 January 2006, I laid before the House the Government's plans for local government financial settlements for 2006–07 and 2007–08. The management of cost pressures within their budgets is a matter for each local authority.

Growth Location Business Plans

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, to question 37947, what steps he is taking to encourage each growth location to secure local agreement on *(a)* priorities and *(b)* funding of growth location business plans. [41894]

Yvette Cooper: The answer to question reference 37947 referred to providers of private sector funding in the growth areas and it stated that Government are encouraging growth locations to follow the principles demonstrated by the Milton Keynes Partnership in securing local agreement on priorities and using both public and private funding to best effect to support their growth location business plans.

This work is being led by local delivery vehicles in each major growth location, to ensure local agreement and buy-in.

Each delivery vehicle includes local authority members as well as other key stakeholders. Work on a similar approach to that achieved in Milton Keynes has begun in North and West Northampton, in Ashford, Aylesbury and Cambridge.

Housing

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 681–82W, on housing, how many empty private sector dwellings there were in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04; and what percentage were returned to occupation in each year. [39336]

Yvette Cooper: The total numbers of vacant private sector dwellings in England based on snap-shot data, for 2002 to 2004, are given in the following table:

	Number of vacant private sector dwellings
2002	631,200
2003	633,300
2004	609,800

Information on the percentage of vacant dwellings that were returned to occupation is not collected centrally. This question is pursuant to the answer to parliamentary question 2104, which is related to the monitoring of local authorities' delivery of empty homes strategies. For this, the centrally held information on the percentage of vacant private sector dwellings that were returned to occupation or demolished as a direct result of local authority action by each district was provided.

The same information for England is 2.9 per cent. for 2004 and 3.4 per cent. for 2003. Data for 2002 cannot be derived because the figures collected at local authority level were in percentages rather than total numbers.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to enable first-time home buyers in Coventry to buy a home locally. [45657]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* In December 2005 details of the open market homebuy scheme were announced that an additional 20,000 households will be helped into homeownership by 2010. Nationally the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has made available over £5 billion funding for investment by local authorities and housing associations in 2006–07 and 2007–08 to support key housing priorities, including support for low cost home ownership (LCHO). The homebuy programme offers shared equity to help first time buyers to buy a share of the council or housing association home they rent, or of a newly built home. Allocations for the region will be announced in the next few weeks.

Local Government Finance

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what access private sector firms have to the business rating list for individual business premises; and what the costs are for such access. [47867]

Mr. Woolas: Local non-domestic rating lists compiled and maintained by valuation officers can be accessed free of charge through the Valuation Office Agency website at: www.voa.gov.uk

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total Government grant per capita to each local authority in England, including fire and police authorities, was in each year since 1998–99; and what the estimate is for 2006–07. [47871]

Mr. Woolas: The information available has been made available in the Library of the House.

Government grant information for 2006–07 is not currently available centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Information for 2006–07 is obtained from local authorities' Revenue Account Budget (RA) forms. These data are expected to be available by the end of June 2006.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what preparatory work his Department conducted before the decision to postpone the council tax revaluation in England. [47876]

Mr. Woolas: My right hon. Friend the Minister of Communities and Local Government set out the Government's reasons for the decision to postpone council tax revaluation on 20 September 2005.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many households are in each council tax band in each local authority area in London. [48041]

Mr. Woolas: The numbers of dwellings liable for council tax in each local authority area in London as at 19 September 2005 and in each council tax band are tabled as follows.

Council tax band

	A-	A	B	C	D
City of London	0	10	232	622	772
Inner London					
Camden	2	1,790	9,189	17,928	22,472
Greenwich	5	11,673	17,019	32,208	18,552
Hackney	2	4,188	29,812	27,344	13,965
Hammersmith and Fulham	0	2,588	5,084	12,291	20,866
Islington	0	638	5,440	26,245	26,166
Kensington and Chelsea	0	652	3,169	8,623	12,671
Lambeth	3	4,457	30,771	34,385	24,997
Lewisham	13	6,529	28,437	37,733	24,037
Southwark	6	11,304	35,050	28,963	16,622
Tower Hamlets	4	1,457	24,236	29,180	12,632
Wandsworth	1	5,806	11,535	33,901	28,726
Westminster	0	1,351	5,766	14,925	20,850
Outer London					
Barking and Dagenham	3	6,912	9,921	40,210	7,687
Barnet	1	1,655	8,442	24,678	28,777
Bexley	1	4,681	9,521	26,855	25,753
Brent	1	2,088	10,742	29,725	28,354
Bromley	0	1,642	8,824	25,845	33,482
Croydon	0	1,790	18,158	40,161	35,750
Baling	3	2,319	11,418	27,161	39,041
Enfield	1	4,722	10,460	29,740	34,260
Haringey	4	4,589	15,334	29,271	24,365
Harrow	0	250	2,833	16,506	26,318
Havering	4	5,244	9,393	23,365	32,653
Hillingdon	0	591	4,974	19,711	41,783
Hounslow	0	1,337	7,897	21,464	34,103
Kingston upon Thames	0	159	2,475	13,258	18,456
Merton	4	1,014	7,417	18,963	25,957
Newham	1	4,465	28,654	43,552	13,924
Redbridge	0	1,517	10,406	22,404	29,742
Richmond upon Thames	1	572	1,908	11,167	18,896
Sutton	2	578	6,399	24,006	22,409
Waltham Forest	3	3,399	24,665	31,581	21,751

	E	F	G	H	Total
City of London	2,044	907	821	94	5,502
Inner London					
Camden	15,237	9,457	11,056	3,800	90,931
Greenwich	9,838	2,730	1,797	264	94,086
Hackney	8,589	3,795	1,095	39	88,829
Hammersmith and Fulham	13,371	8,349	9,922	1,795	74,266
Islington	12,471	6,556	6,262	811	84,589
Kensington and Chelsea	12,558	11,259	18,901	13,253	81,086
Lambeth	12,401	8,360	5,073	539	120,986
Lewisham	7,026	2,721	1,267	153	107,916
Southwark	10,650	4,938	3,654	464	111,651
Tower Hamlets	10,815	5,324	2,489	346	86,483
Wandsworth	17,957	12,196	10,870	2,030	123,022
Westminster	20,022	14,575	19,552	12,806	109,847
Outer London					
Barking and Dagenham	1,699	311	53	6	66,802
Barnet	28,091	18,111	14,951	3,556	128,262
Bexley	18,909	4,455	1,659	39	91,873
Brent	20,561	5,926	3,237	231	100,865

	E	F	G	H	Total
Bromley	27,512	16,661	12,920	1,018	127,904
Croydon	21,007	11,236	7,192	568	135,862
Ealing	20,789	8,897	6,382	845	116,855
Enfield	19,983	8,601	5,687	770	114,224
Haringey	10,507	5,311	4,506	575	94,462
Harrow	21,121	7,198	5,611	1,011	80,848
Havering	14,504	6,035	2,943	221	94,362
Hillingdon	16,675	8,720	4,168	323	96,945
Hounslow	13,560	5,080	3,590	748	87,779
Kingston upon Thames	13,690	7,425	3,756	822	60,041
Merton	12,597	4,566	3,749	1,371	75,638
Newham	2,398	361	32	21	93,408
Redbridge	18,812	7,089	2,999	171	93,140
Richmond upon Thames	19,109	11,067	11,650	2,672	77,042
Sutton	11,667	6,537	3,579	237	75,414
Waltham Forest	7,966	1,773	422	24	91,584

The data are as reported by local authorities on the annual CTB1 return. Dwellings that are subject to the Council Tax (Reductions for Disabilities) Regulations 1992 (as amended), are charged council tax at the rate of one band lower than that on the Valuation Office valuation list. Council tax for a Band A- dwelling is charged at 5/9 of the council tax of a Band D dwelling; Band A dwellings are charged at 6/9 of the council tax of a Band D dwelling.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many households in each council tax band in London were eligible in 2004–05 for *(a)* single person's discount and *(b)* empty home discount. [48043]

Mr. Woolas: The number of dwellings liable for council tax in each council tax band in London that were eligible at 11 October 2004 for *(a)* single person's discount and *(b)* long-term empty property discount is tabled as follows.

Council tax band	*Single adult discount*	*Long-term empty property discount*
A-	235	0
A	62,054	3,153
B	243,392	7,029
C	369,503	11,713
D	264,740	8,615
E	130,596	5,150
F	53,950	2,876
G	35,645	2,792
H	6,421	1,272
Total	1,166,336	42,600

The data are as reported by local authorities on the annual CTB1 return.

Dwellings that are subject to the Council Tax (Reductions for Disabilities) Regulations 1992 (as amended), are charged council tax at the rate of one band lower than that on the Valuation Office valuation list. Council tax for a Band A- dwelling is charged at 5/9 of the council tax of a Band D dwelling; Band A dwellings are charged at 6/9 of the council tax of a Band D dwelling.

Long-term empty homes can be subject to a discount of between 0 per cent. and 50 per cent.

Local Government Reorganisation

Tony Baldry: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions officials in his Department have had with chief executives of local authorities on possible future legislation on the reorganisation of local government. [49085]

Mr. Woolas: Officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have held meetings with chief executives of local authorities to discuss local authority restructuring on six separate occasions since December 2005.

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many parliamentary questions tabled in the last 12 months for answer by him on a named day *(a)* were transferred and *(b)* received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named; [49888]

(2) how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by him in the last 12 months have been answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* between 14 and 28 days, *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if he will make a statement. [49905]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Ministers in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) aim to ensure that hon. Members receive a substantive response to their named day question on the named day and to endeavour to answer ordinary written questions within a working week of being tabled. Unfortunately, this is not always possible but ODPM makes every effort to achieve these timescales.

In the period 7 February 2005 to 6 February 2006, 480 named day parliamentary questions were tabled to my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister. Of those, 351 (73 per cent.) received a substantive answer on the day named and 101 (21 per cent.) were answered by ODPM Ministers after the day named. The remaining 28 named day questions (6 per cent.) were transferred to another Department and the ODPM does not hold information on when those questions were answered.

In the same period, 2,986 ordinary written parliamentary questions were tabled to my right hon. Friend. Information on the length of time taken to answer those questions is not available in the form requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

However, of the 2,986 ordinary written questions tabled to my right hon. Friend, 2,284 (76 per cent.) were answered within a working week.

Supermarkets (Planning Permission)

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent representations the Government have received on planning permission for new supermarkets. [49673]

Yvette Cooper: My right. hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has decided nine planning cases involving supermarkets since 1 January 2005. There is one retail case involving a supermarket currently before my right. hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister for decision. Representations received by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are set out in the decision letter of each case and are made available to the public on written request.

Sustainable Building Task Group

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the members of the Sustainable Building Task Group; and to whom this group is responsible within his Department. [45139]

Yvette Cooper: Following the better building summit in October 2003, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and the Department of Trade and Industry agreed that a working group should be established which would bring together key representatives from the construction sector, green technology companies, local authorities, the housing corporation and others, to consider how best to improve the sustainability of all aspects of construction and design, including off-site construction and low carbon technologies.

This task group was a short-life group set up to identify specific, cost-effective, improvements in the quality and environmental performance of buildings which industry can deliver in both the short and long term, together with further actions that Government could take to facilitate faster progress.

The Secretaries of State asked Sir John Harman (chair, Environment Agency) and Victor Benjamin (deputy chair, English Partnerships) to co-chair the Sustainable Buildings Task Group, and invited the following to serve on the task group:

Michael Ankers, chief executive, The Construction Products Association

Julian Barwick, joint managing director, Development Securities

Sheila Button, board member, The Housing Corporation

John Calcutt, chief executive, Crest Nicholson

Ian Coull, chairman designate, The Sustainable Construction Task Force

Robert Napier, chief executive, WWF-UK

Paul Noon, co-chairman, Trade Union Sustainable Development Advisory Committee

Jennie Price, chief executive, The Waste and Resources Action Programme

Philip Sellwood, chief executive, The Energy Saving Trust

Peter Studdart, head of environment and planning, Cambridge city council

Lynne Sullivan, sustainability director, Broadway Malyan

Pamela Taylor, chief executive, Water UK

Bryan Woodley, UK Timber Frame Association

Terry Wyatt, president, CIBSE (The Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers

The task group presented their recommendations to Government on 17 May 2004.

The Government response was issued on 27 July 2004. The task group was then disbanded.

Sustainable Buildings

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received from private sector developers on his Department's proposed code for sustainable buildings; and if he will make a statement. [49536]

Yvette Cooper: The proposal for introducing the code for sustainable homes went out on consultation on 5 December 2005. This will last until 6 March 2006. A small number of responses have been received so far. All these will be analysed once the consultation period is over.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders were made in Wales in each of the last five years. [48562]

Hazel Blears: The available information is given in the following table.

The number of antisocial behaviour orders issued at all courts within Wales, as notified to the Home Office, from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2005 (latest available)

Period	*Total issued*
1 July 2000 to 31 December 2000	2
1 January 2001 to 31 December 2001	5
1 January 2002 to 31 December 2002	12
1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003	59
1 January 2004 to 31 December 2004	94
1 January 2005 to 30 June 2005	98
Total	270

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been imposed in *(a)* England and *(b)* Wales in each year since their introduction. [48720]

Hazel Blears: The available information is given in the following table.

The number of antisocial behaviour orders issued at all courts within England and Wales, as notified to the Home Office, from 1 April 1999 to 30 June 2005 (latest available)

Period	*England*	*Wales*	*Total*
1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000[1]	104	-	104
1 June to 31 December 2000	133	2	135
1 January to 31 December 2001	318	5	323
1 January to 31 December 2002	392	12	404

The number of antisocial behaviour orders issued at all courts within England and Wales, as notified to the Home Office, from 1 April 1999 to 30 June 2005 (latest available)

Period	England	Wales	Total
1 January to 31 December 2003	984	59	1,043
1 January to 31 December 2004	2,566	94	2,660
1 January to 30 June 2005	1,730	98	1,828
Total	6,227	270	6,497

[1] During this period ASBO data were collected on aggregate numbers only by police force area.

Basic Command Units

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 29 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 428W, on the basic command unit boundaries, whether the table is based upon *(a)* 2003-04 and *(b)* 2004-05 basic command units. [48152]

Hazel Blears: The table relates to those boundaries in use for *(b)* 2004-05. Basic command unit and ward boundaries are subject to change and in the absence of any current requirement for such data this table has not been updated. Any such updating could only be undertaken at disproportionate cost.

Paragraph two, schedule two of the Police and Justice Bill amends the Police Act 1996 to place basic command units on a statutory footing and mandate co-terminosity with local authority boundaries.

Christmas Cards

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will estimate the cost to his Department of sending Christmas cards in 2005. [45917]

Mr. Charles Clarke: For 2005 the Home Office sponsored an official Christmas card produced by, and in support of, the charity Victim Support.

The cost of the design and production of the 20,000 copies of the card was £11,641.

The Department does not hold separate costs of postage from its overall postage costs.

All expenditure incurred in the purchase and postage of the official Christmas card was made in accordance with the departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in Government Accounting.

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions his Department consulted citizens juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens' jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens' jury. [46236]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office has no central policy for consulting citizens' juries on departmental policy and therefore this information is not stored in one place. To check practice over the last five years with every policy area would incur a disproportionate cost.

The Home Office consults the public on policy using a wide range of other methods, including policy consultation papers. A list of current open consultations is available on the departmental website.

Crime Statistics

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many violent crimes were committed *(a)* in Romford, *(b)* in Havering and *(c)* by illegal immigrants in (i) Romford and (ii) Havering in each of the last five years. [48551]

Hazel Blears: It is not possible to identify violent crimes committed by illegal immigrants from the recorded crime statistics. The available data are at basic command unit (BCD) level and are provided for the London borough of Havering only in the following table.

Recorded offences of violent crime for Havering basic command unit

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Violence against the person	2,787	3,225	3,901	3,922	4,191
Sexual offences	158	173	178	181	159
Robbery	392	549	479	512	442

Notes:
1. The National Crime Recording Standard was introduced on 1 April 2002.
2. Figures are therefore not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by his Department in Forest of Dean constituency. [47254]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not own land or property in the constituency of Forest of Dean.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from Home Office buildings in the past 12 months. [43436]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The items valued at over £100 stolen from Home Office buildings relate specifically to a robbery from Graeme House, Liverpool on 9 December.

The items stolen were (i) right of abode receipts totalling £120, (ii) citizenship ceremonies receipts totalling £14,288 and (iii) nationality receipts totalling £35,991.

Total items recovered were (i) right of abode receipts—none, (ii) citizenship ceremonies receipts—£12,036 and (iii) nationality receipts—£30,494.

The net loss stands at £7,869.

Departmental Staff (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff employed by his Department live in Castle Point. [42818]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office (including the Immigration and Nationality Department) has no staff residing in Castle Point. However, Her Majesty's Prison Service has thirty staff living in the area (rounded to the nearest ten staff).

Drug Classification

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to reclassify methamphetamine as a class A drug pending further report of the Advisory Committee on the Misuse of Drugs; and if he will make a statement. [49352]

Paul Goggins: I asked the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) to keep the classification of methylamphetamine under close review when accepting its recommendation, in November 2005, that it should remain a class B drug. I will await the Council's further advice, which I requested within 12 months, before making any further decisions on classification.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will refer methylamphetamine to the Advisory Committee on the Misuse of Drugs for review as a matter of urgency. [49353]

Paul Goggins: The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) recently reviewed the classification of Methylamphetamine under the 1971 Misuse of Drugs Act and published its report in November 2005. I accepted its recommendations that it should remain classified as a class B drug, but I have asked the Council to keep the matter under close review and report back to me within 12 months.

Drug Treatment Programmes

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the waiting time is for access to residential drug treatment for heroin addicts in Plymouth. [48405]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* I have been asked to reply.

The waiting time, provided by the Plymouth drug action team, for access to residential drug treatment for drug users accessing rehabilitation is three weeks. Waiting time data is not collected for patients in terms of an addiction to a specific drug.

In December 2001, there was an overall average waiting time of 9.1 weeks in England. This had reduced to 2.4 weeks in September 2005.

Forensic Science

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which body is responsible for ensuring standards in forensic science laboratories; and if he will make a statement on its work. [49164]

Andy Burnham: There is currently no national body responsible for the setting of national standards for forensic science laboratories. However, forensic science organisations can be accredited to the international standards for general testing of laboratory processes, such as ISO 9001: 17025. The United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) is the body available to the government for assessment and verification audits against these standards.

UKAS is a commercial non-profit distributing company limited by guarantee, and operates under a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Trade and Industry. UKAS employ 130 technical professionals and contract the services of an additional 260 external assessors and technical experts as required. UKAS have an explicit duty to act in the public interest.

Drug Offences

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been convicted of possession of *(a)* a Class A drug, *(b)* a Class B drug and *(c)* a Class C drug in each of the last five years; and what percentage received a custodial sentence in each case. [44140]

Hazel Blears: The number of people who have been convicted for possession of class A, B and C drugs in the last five years is shown in the table. The table includes the percentage of people given a custodial sentence for the possession offences.

The number of people found guilty or cautioned for drug possession offences

Type of offence	*2004*[1]	*Percentage of custodial sentences*	*2003*	*Percentage of custodial Sentences*	*2002*	*Percentage of custodial sentences*
Offences under Drugs Acts						
A	45500	3	5,450	8	20,900	13
B	5230	8	82,950	3	83,540	3
C	45,500	3	560	4	630	3

Type of offence				
Offences under Drugs Acts.	*2001*	*Percentage of custodial sentences*	*2000*	*Percentage of custodial sentences*
A	18,520	16	19,990	14
B	73,180	3	75,976	4
C	410	15	14	<0.5

Cannabis was reclassified in January 2004. There were 45,390 cannabis possession offences in 2004 where the offenders were found guilty of cautioned as compared with 77,500 in 2003. However, there were 27,520 street warnings for cannabis possession since the street warnings were introduced nationally in April 2004 and this is likely to have reduced cautioning figures for cannabis possession.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were convicted of possession of *(a)* a Class A, *(b)* a Class B and *(c)* a Class C drug with intent to supply in each of the last five years; and what percentage received a custodial sentence in each case. [44143]

Hazel Blears: The number of people who have been convicted for possession with intent to supply a class A, B and C drugs in the last five years is shown in the table. The table includes the percentage of people given a custodial sentence for the possession offences.

The number of people found guilty or cautioned for drug possession with intent to supply offences

Class	2004	Percent receiving custodial sentences	2003	Percentage of custodial sentences	2002	Percentage of custodial sentences
A	2,200	39	440	66	3,730	77
B	520	63	2,940	43	2,900	45
C	2,200	39	0	0	10	0

Class	2001	Percentage of custodial sentences	2000	Percentage of custodial sentences
A	3,230	77	3,634	68
B	3,020	49	4,365	44
C	0	0	0	0

Note:
Cannabis was reclassified in January 2004. There were 2,200 possession with intent to supply cannabis offences in 2004 and 2,500 in 2003.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the percentage of police time spent on drug-related crime in the last period for which figures are available. [44645]

Hazel Blears: This information is not collected centrally.

Identity Cards

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 594W, on Identity Cards, whether the Identity Cards Programme has now mapped the impact of the proposed scheme on efforts to defeat money laundering and organised crime. [50318]

Andy Burnham: As noted in the answer of the 8 of December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1527W, work to identify benefits to fight organised crime and money laundering with law enforcement agencies and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs as well as with organisations like the Financial Services Authority will be ongoing up to and beyond the launch of the Identity Cards Scheme so that, along with planned activities, its potential to assist any emerging threats can be assessed.

Thus, there is no definitive end date for this work. However, as stated in the answer of the 30 of November 2005, *Official Report*, column 594A, the results of this work feeds into the development of the Identity Cards benefits case, an overview of which was published on 27 June 2005.

In general, the work continues to show that the Identity Cards Scheme can disrupt and impede the activities of criminals, improve the intelligence picture available to the law enforcement agencies, establish greater certainty in establishing the identity of individuals involved in large cash transactions, will have an additional deterrent effect in terms of money laundering and will assist in investigations.

London Bombers (Surveillance)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the nature was of surveillance carried out in relation to *(a)* Sidique Khan and *(b)* Shahzad Tanweer before 7 July 2005; when any such surveillance commenced; and when it finished.

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has been the established policy of successive Governments to neither confirm nor deny speculation about covert operations or to comment on on-going police investigations.

National Identity Register

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 21 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1755W, on the National Identity Register, whether a decision has been taken on the type and quantity of biometric data to be held for each person on the National Identity Register on the basis of the Bill as it stands following amendment in the House of Lords. [50319]

Andy Burnham: It is currently envisaged that 10 fingerprints, two irises and a facial image will be recorded on each person's entry in the National Identity Register, subject to personal circumstances. There have been no amendments to the Identity Cards Bill in the Lords that have affected that assumption. Final decisions will depend on the outcome of the procurement stage and will be constrained by the legal framework set out in the Bill.

Police National Computer

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals have access to the Police National Computer (PNC); what safeguards exist to prevent unlawful access to the PNC; what audit arrangements are in place to monitor inappropriate access to the PNC; what penalties exist for unlawful use

of the PNC; and what guidance has been issued on the appropriate course of action if officers are found to have misused the system. [47570]

Hazel Blears: We take the security of the Police National Computer (PNC) very seriously. Ownership of all the police data rest with chief constables. Each force's security and access protocols must be in accordance with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) Information Systems Community Security Policy that also governs usage of the Police National Computer (PNC). Security of the PNC is also governed by an Accreditation Document Set, which contains security countermeasures specifically relating to the PNC. Similar arrangements are also in place for the agencies that have been given authorised access to the PNC.

For security reasons I am not in a position to describe the arrangements that are in place to prevent or detect unauthorised access to the PNC but I am satisfied that these arrangements are adequate.

Misuse of the PNC is controlled by legislation and it is for the chief officer to determine the action for redress through the courts or by internal police disciplinary procedures via the police discipline regulations.

The fact that forces control PNC access locally means that I am unable to provide you with information on the number of people authorised to have access.

Police Officers

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers resigned from police forces in England and Wales in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [47789]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is provided in the following table. More resignations are to be expected as there has been record growth in police service staffing over the last five years.

Total number (headcount) of voluntary resignations from police forces (2001-05)

	Police officers
As at 31 March 2001[1]	1,468
As at 31 March 2002[1]	1,674
As at 31 March 2003[2]	1,969
As at 31 March 2004	2,187
As at 31 March 2005	2,109

[1] In 2001 and 2002 these data were collected by HMIC
[2] Total excludes one force

Public Appointments

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the former hon. Members who left Parliament in 2005 who have since been appointed to public bodies by his Department, broken down by party; and who is responsible for making each appointment. [36686]

Mr. Charles Clarke: There were no Members of Parliament who left Parliament in 2005 and who have since been appointed to public bodies by the Home Department.

Race-related Crime

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to tackle race-related crime; and if he will make a statement. [48557]

Paul Goggins: In recent years the Government have strengthened the criminal penalties for offences such as incitement to racial hatred. The Government have also introduced racially aggravated and religiously aggravated offences. The Racial and Religious Hatred Bill introduces an offence of using threatening words or behaviour with the intent to stir up religious hatred.

In May 2005, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Home Office published a Hate Crime Manual: "Hate Crime: Delivering a Quality Service." The manual aims to provide tactical and practical guidance to police forces and authorities on the handling and investigation of hate crime including racially and religiously motivated offences.

In July 2003 the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) published a policy statement which made a clear commitment to prosecute racist and religious crime fairly, firmly and robustly. The publication of the CPS Racist Incident Monitoring Annual Report 2004–2005 shows the achievements of the CPS in bringing offenders to justice.

Under the terms of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime on reporting and recording racist incidents, victims of racially or religiously motivated offences are defined as vulnerable and will receive an enhanced service.

The Race Relations Act places a statutory general duty on public authorities to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups and in July 2005 the Commission for Racial Equality produced "Promoting Good Race Relations: A Guide for Public Authorities."

Additionally, in 2002, the Home Office issued guidance to crime reduction partnerships on tackling racist antisocial behaviour. This included a Racist Crime and Harassment Toolkit.

Home Office officials are currently working with a small number of key stakeholders to take forward a range of work to tackle race, faith and homophobic hate crime more effectively. It is envisaged that this work will include projects to improve the local response to hate crime, increase victim confidence in the criminal justice system, increase the proportion of victims who report hate crimes and the proportion of those crimes that are brought to justice, and improve the evidence base on hate crime.

Raoul Wallenberg

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received about including Raoul Wallenberg in Holocaust Memorial Day. [48881]

Paul Goggins: I have not received any representations about including Raoul Wallenberg in Holocaust Memorial Day, an event which, from this year onwards, is arranged under the auspices of the Holocaust Memorial Trust.

Photographs of Raoul Wallenberg were included in the trust's information pack that provided guidelines for local activities. Also, prior to the main event, which took place on 26 January in Cardiff, First Minister of Wales, Rhodri Morgan and Cardiff Council Leader Rodney Berman signed a Book of Commitment to Holocaust Memorial Day, at a special ceremony on Wednesday 18 January. Chair of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust Dr. Stephen Smith and Chief Executive Nick Joseph presented the book at the ceremony, which took place at the Raoul Wallenberg Memorial in Cathays Park, Cardiff.

The Chair of the Trust, Stephen Smith, spoke about Raoul Wallenberg, when he signed the book of commemoration in Cardiff saying pointing out it was particularly fitting that the ceremony should take place at the memorial to Raoul Wallenberg, who was instrumental in saving thousands of lives during the war and at considerable risk to himself.

Respect Agenda

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the Government's Respect agenda will affect Romford; and whether the implementation of that agenda will include increasing funding for law enforcement in Romford. [48552]

Hazel Blears: The Respect Action Plan sets out the Government's plans for a renewed and broader drive against antisocial behaviour. The measures include: plans to develop neighbourhood policing and increase the number of police community support officers; measures to build stronger communities and empower local people including the community call for action to deal with antisocial behaviour; increasing the accountability of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships; and a range of new powers to help police and local authorities take action against unacceptable behaviour.

I announced the final details of the 2006–07 grant settlement for all police authorities in England and Wales on 31 January. On a like for like basis Government grant and central spending on services for the police will have increased by nearly 50 per cent. or around £3.5 billion between 2000–01 and 2006–07.

The Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) will receive an increase in general grant of 3.1 per cent. (£54.7 million) over the comparable figure for 2005–06. This is in line with the broadly flat rate increase of 3.1 per cent. for all forces in England and Wales. The MPA also gains £4.3 million and £1 million from the Amending Reports for 2004–05 and 2005–06, bringing its overall increase in 2006–07 to 3.4 per cent.

In addition to general grant the MPA will receive £54.72 million in special formula grant and £339.76 million in specific grant and capital provision.

Allocation of these resources and appropriate budget management are matters for the MPA and the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

Secondments

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people from science and technology backgrounds have been seconded into the civil service in his Department in each of the last three years. [48407]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Secondments are part of the interchange initiative, which promotes the exchange of people and good practice between the civil service and other organisations—public, private and voluntary. Interchange provides opportunities for civil servants to learn new skills, widen their experience and develop ideas. It also brings in skills and experiences from other sectors.

During the period 1 April 2002 to 31 December 2005, 208 staff were seconded into the Home Office from outside the civil service. The Home Office records data on inward secondees according to their originating sector—i.e. private, voluntary, academic and public service—but it does not specifically collate data on secondees with a science and technology background.

The annual number of inward secondments to the Home Office from outside the civil service for each of the past three years was:

	Number of inward secondments
2002–03	78
2003–04	64
2004–05	66

Sex Offenders

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 30 January to Question 44622, on sex offenders, what information is supplied to the police regarding the relevant conviction in court to enable enforcement of the requirement of the offender to notify the police; how many relevant offenders were required to make an initial notification to the police in 2005; and how many did so. [48890]

Hazel Blears: The courts will provide the police with an offender's name, address and date of birth; the offence(s), sentence(s) and date of the conviction(s); any ancillary orders made by the court and the duration of the notification period (the period of time the individual will spend "on the sex offenders register"). Figures for the number of offenders who become subject to the notification requirements in any 12 month period are not held centrally. In 2001 we introduced the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and the requirement on each police and probation area to produce annual reports detailing the work undertaken to safeguard the public and manage dangerous offenders in the community. The MAPPA reports include statistics on the number of offenders who are subject to the notification requirements. The 2004–05 reports state that on 31 March 2005 there were 28,994 registered sex offenders living in the community.

Terrorism

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been arrested in (*a*) Romford, (*b*) Havering and (*c*) Greater London under anti-terrorism legislation in the last five years. [48558]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Statistics on Terrorism Act 2000 arrests and outcomes of those arrests are published on the Home Office website on the following link: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/security/terrorism-and-the-law/terrorism-act/

Figures are not currently broken down into specific areas because they are not collated in this way. The statistics have instead been collated nationally from 11 September 2005 and are updated quarterly.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrests linked with terrorism have been made in Wales in each of the last five years. [48566]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Statistics on Terrorism Act 2000 arrests and outcomes of those arrests are published on the Home Office website on the following link: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/security/terrorism-and-the-law/terrorism-act/

Figures are not currently broken down into force areas because they are not collated in this way. The statistics have instead been collated nationally from 11 September 2001 and are updated quarterly.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what meetings have been held in the last six months of the pilot group tasked with taking forward the recommendation adopted at the EU Justice and Home Affairs Council in Brussels on 28 and 29 November 2002 in relation to terrorist profiling; and what was discussed at those meetings. [47574]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Following the last meeting of the pilot group, held in November 2003, the task of developing terrorist profiles has been taken forward by Europol's Counter-Terrorism Task Force. The pilot group itself has therefore not met again since November 2003. Europol hosted a project workshop, with UK representation, on 28 and 29 June 2005, and another meeting is planned for early February 2006. This is an ongoing project which continues to receive member states' contributions and share its interim results. However, you will understand that it would not be appropriate for me to disclose the specific details of these discussions.

Vehicle Thefts

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many thefts have been recorded by the Metropolitan police of (*a*) cars, (*b*) motorcycles, (*c*) vans and (*d*) heavy goods vehicles in each of the past five years. [47151]

Hazel Blears: The available information relates to the offence of theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle and is given in the following table. A more detailed breakdown of type of motor vehicle is not collected centrally.

Theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle

Financial year	*Metropolitan police*
2000-01	62,452
2001-02	62,112
2002-03	58,405
2003-04	55,158
2004-05	48,026

Note:
The National Crime Recording Standard was introduced on 1 April 2002. Figures are therefore not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Young Offenders (Record Retention)

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances the police are permitted to retain records on juveniles who have been accused of an offence but against whom no further proceedings have been taken. [47023]

Hazel Blears: Section 64 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984 provides that fingerprints, footwear impressions and samples taken from persons suspected, at the time of taking, of having committed a recordable offence may be retained and used in connection with the prevention and detection of crime, the investigation of an offence, the conduct of a prosecution, or the identification of a deceased person or body part.

Section 64A(4) of PACE, provides that photographs of persons suspected, at the time of taking, of having committed a recordable offence may be retained and used in connection with the prevention and detection of crime, the investigation of an offence, the conduct of a prosecution, or the enforcement of a sentence.

Fingerprints, footwear impressions and samples taken with consent for elimination purposes from someone not suspected of having committed an offence must be destroyed after they have fulfilled the purpose for which they were taken, unless the person gives written consent for their samples to be used as above.

These provisions apply to both adults and juveniles and are irrespective of the outcome of the investigation. Chief officers of police have discretion on the retention of fingerprints, footwear impressions, samples and photographs.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how his Department is liaising with the Afghanistan Government to deal with the opium problem in Afghanistan. [48915]

Dr. Howells: The UK, as designated partner nation for counter narcotics, has worked closely with the Government of Afghanistan since 2002. Recently, we supported the Government of Afghanistan in reviewing and updating its National Drugs Control Strategy. The strategy was endorsed by the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Counter Narcotics, at which HM Ambassador is an observer, and approved by President Karzai in January 2006. The strategy was launched during the Counter

Narcotics (CN) session of the London Conference on Afghanistan on 31 January. It sets out four key priorities, which we believe will help make a greater impact on the trade and sustain the reduction in cultivation we have seen in 2005. These are: targeting traffickers; strengthening and diversifying legal rural livelihoods; developing institutions; and demand reduction.

The UK is working very closely with the Government of Afghanistan to help build Afghan capacity to tackle the drugs problem. We are funding a £12.5 million Institution Development project to strengthen the Ministry of Counter Narcotics, established at the end of 2004, and other institutions in Afghanistan.

We have helped to establish and provide training for the Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA)—the lead drugs law enforcement agency, headquartered in Kabul with seven provincial offices. The CNPA is currently around 500 strong, but will be expanded further to give it the capacity to operate nationwide. The UK is also providing training for the Afghan Special Narcotics Force (ASNF), an elite and highly trained force equipped to tackle high value targets across the country. Since January 2004, the CNPA and ASNF have seized approximately 165 tonnes of opiates, destroyed over 264 drugs labs and made a significant number of arrests.

We are also working with the international community to recruit and train a counter narcotics Criminal Justice Task Force of Afghan investigators, prosecutors and judges to work with the CNPA, to be able to push through successful drugs investigations and prosecutions. The Criminal Justice Task Force is currently around 80 strong and made its first convictions in May this year for drug trafficking in Kabul. A new drugs law was also passed in December 2005.

As partner nation, the UK is also responsible for co-ordinating international assistance and encouraging the international community to increase their support to counter narcotics activity. To this end, we helped design the Counter Narcotics Trust Fund which was officially launched at the Afghan Ministry of Finance on 29 October 2005. The fund will enable the Government of Afghanistan to raise funds from donors specifically for the CN effort and gives them a greater say over how this money is spent.

In support of the Government of Afghanistan's efforts, the UK will spend £270 million over this and the next two financial years, including some £130 million on legal rural livelihoods and institutional development from the Department for International Development.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in identifying the opium supply route in Afghanistan. [48916]

Dr. Howells: The identification of opium supply routes out of Afghanistan is based on seizure rates of opiates along the heroin trafficking routes. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's 2004 Afghanistan Opium Survey showed that of Afghanistan's total opiate exports (500 metric tons of morphine and heroin and close to 100 metric tons of opium), about a quarter is exported via Central Asia (the "Northern" or "Silk" Route), but the bulk is still exported via Pakistan and Iran to Turkey and into the Balkans, (the "Balkan Route"). 90 per cent. of the drugs exported on the "Northern Route" are for the Russian market. Most of the opiates exported on the "Balkan Route" are destined for Europe. There is some evidence that the "Caspian Route", from Turkmenistan across the Caspian Sea into the Caucasus, is increasingly being used to traffic drugs into Europe.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the estimated time scale is for eradicating poppy production in each region of Afghanistan; and what methods are being deployed to that end. [48924]

Dr. Howells: Afghanistan has been the world's major supplier of illicit opium for a decade. It will take a long time to uproot something so deeply entrenched in Afghanistan's culture and economy. Without a strong state, a fully functioning judiciary or a properly trained and manned police force, Afghan capability to date has been limited.

There is no simple answer to how long the Afghan counter narcotics effort will take. At the opening of the London Conference, President Karzai said

> "In my view, and in the view of the United Nations that shares it with me, perhaps Afghanistan will need at least 10 years of a strong systematic consistent effort in eradication, in law enforcement and in the provision to the Afghan farmer of an alternative economy in order for us to be free of poppies by that time. So I would give it a decade, at least."

It will certainly require a sustained effort by the Afghan Government and the international community.

But progress is being made. Last year, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reported a 21 per cent. reduction in poppy cultivation from 131,000 hectares (ha) in 2003–04 to 104,000 ha in 2004–05. These overall percentages, however, mask significant variations between provinces. For example, Nangarhar (-96 per cent.), Badakshan (-53 per cent.) and Helmand (-10 per cent.) saw the most significant decreases, while other provinces, such as Balkh and Farah, saw increases. Progress was also made in 2005 with the establishment of a Ministry for Counter Narcotics in Afghanistan, the passage of vital counter narcotics legislation, the conviction of over 90 drug traffickers and the seizure of some 160 tonnes of opiates.

The Government of Afghanistan has, with the support of the UK as designated partner nation for counter narcotics, recently reviewed and updated its National Drugs Control Strategy to ensure its policy approach is the right one. The strategy, which was launched at the London Conference, focuses on four key priorities: targeting the trafficker; building institutions; strengthening rural livelihoods; and reducing domestic demand. The strategy also sets out the basis for a targeted ground based eradication policy and highlights the importance of raising

public awareness and improving international and regional co-operation on counter narcotics. The UK is spending over £270 million over the next three years in support of the strategy.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the estimated size is of the area dedicated to poppy production in each region of Afghanistan. [48925]

Dr. Howells: The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) conducts an annual survey into the level of opium poppy cultivation and production in Afghanistan. In 2005, UNODC estimated a total of 104,000 hectares of land were under opium poppy cultivation, with the highest levels of cultivation seen in Helmand, Kandahar, Balkh, Farah and Badakshan provinces. Total production was estimated at 4,100 tonnes. These figures represent a 21 percent. reduction on cultivation and a 2.5 percent. reduction on production over 2004 figures. The smaller scale of the decrease in total production resulted from higher yields per hectare arising from good weather conditions and less disease. Full details, including the level of opium cultivation by province from 2002–05, can be found in the UNODC Afghanistan opium survey, November 2005, or on UNODC's website http://www.unodc.org.

A final assessment of opium cultivation and production for the 2005–06 growing season will not be available until the end of the year.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the UK took over responsibility for controlling opium production in Afghanistan; and what progress has been made since then. [48926]

Dr. Howells: The Government of Afghanistan is responsible for controlling opium production in Afghanistan. In April 2002, the UK took on G8 lead nation status for counter narcotics with responsibility for coordinating international activity in support of the Government of Afghanistan's counter-narcotics campaign. Following endorsement of the Afghanistan compact at the London conference on 31 January–1 February, the UK remains fully committed to this work. We are spending £270 million over this and the next two financial years, including some £130 million on legal rural livelihoods and institutional development from the Department for International Development.

While we do not underestimate the scale of the challenge, progress is being made. Since the end of 2004, we have seen the establishment of a Ministry for counter narcotics; a 21 percent. reduction in the area of land under opium poppy cultivation; the passage of vital counter narcotics legislation; the conviction of over 90 drug traffickers and an increase in drug related seizures. The UK has also supported the Government of Afghanistan's work to update its national drug control strategy (NDCS) which was approved by President Karzai in January 2006. We believe the updated NDCS represents a more sophisticated approach to tackling the drugs problem which will help the Government of Afghanistan make a greater impact on the trade.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government prefers destruction, licensing or substitution by other crops to tackle poppy production in Afghanistan; and what budget his Department has allocated to each of these alternatives. [48927]

Dr. Howells: The UK believes that the Government of Afghanistan's recently updated national drug control strategy represents the best means of securing a sustainable reduction on the production and trafficking of opiates in Afghanistan. The strategy highlights four key priorities. These are: disrupting the drugs trade by targeting traffickers and their backers; strengthening and diversifying legal rural livelihoods; developing effective state institutions to combat drugs at the central and provincial level; reducing the demand for illicit drugs and treatment for problem drug users. The strategy also states that there is a role for targeted ground-based eradication where alternative livelihoods exist, in order to incentivise the shift away from poppy cultivation.

The UK does not carry out eradication, but we do support Afghan eradication activity where alternative livelihoods exist. We have therefore provided support to the planning, monitoring and targeting work of the Government of Afghanistan's central eradication planning and monitoring cell. We have also funded a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime project to verify governor-led eradication and provided funding to support targeted eradication by the Afghan national police.

On licensing of opium production, the Afghan Minister for counter narcotics has said:

> "The poor security situation in the country means there can simply be no guarantee that opium will not be smuggled out of the country for the illicit narcotics trade abroad. Without an effective control mechanism, a lot of opium will still be refined into heroin for illicit markets in the West and elsewhere. We could not accept this."

The UK agrees with and supports the Government of Afghanistan's position.

We do not believe that licensing opium cultivation in Afghanistan is a realistic solution to the problems of the opium economy in Afghanistan. In the absence of a strong state presence throughout the country there is currently too high a risk of diversion of legally produced opium into illegal channels, and overall levels of illicit cultivation could increase as a result.

Helping Afghan farmers develop viable commercial crops as feasible economic alternatives to poppy is an important part of the UK's support. But farmers also need access to credit, land and markets, alternative employment opportunities (on and off the farm) infrastructure such as irrigation and roads to help grow and transport produce; and government emergency mechanisms to ensure food security. The UK is supporting the Government of Afghanistan to deliver in all of these areas, to enforce the Afghan law against growing poppy and inject risk into the system through a credible drugs law enforcement and manual poppy field eradication threat. Only in this way will we make a sustainable impact on cultivation and production.

The UK will spend over £270 million over this and the next two financial years in support of the national drugs control strategy. During this period, £130 million will be spent on legal rural livelihoods (including research into alternative crops) and institutional development by the

Department for International Development. In 2005–06 the UK spent £6 million in support of Afghan eradication and related activity and £30 million in support of activity to target the trafficker (for law enforcement and criminal justice action) and the top end of the trade. We envisage that similar budgets will be allocated to these activities in 2006–08. The UK does not support licensing and no budget was allocated to this as a result.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much opium has been confiscated in Afghanistan in each of the last three years. [48928]

Dr. Howells: There are no reliable records of opium seizures in Afghanistan before November 2004. The counter narcotics police of Afghanistan and the Afghan special narcotics force have seized approximately 165 tonnes of opium since this date.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in tackling and destroying opium processing facilities in Afghanistan. [48929]

Dr. Howells: According to counter narcotics police of Afghanistan and Afghan special narcotics force figures, an estimated 317 drugs laboratories/sites in Afghanistan were destroyed between October 2004 and November 2005. There are no reliable records of the number of drugs laboratories/sites destroyed in Afghanistan before this time.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what financial assistance his Department *(a)* is providing and *(b)* plans to provide to the Afghan Government to tackle the problem of heroin production. [49444]

Dr. Howells: On 5 September last year, I announced new UK funding for Afghan counter narcotics activity in a joint press conference with Afghan Counter Narcotics Minister Qaderi. In total, we will provide more than £270 million over the next three years (financial years 2005–06, 2006–07 and 2007–08). £130 million of the funding will be provided by the Department for International Development with the rest coming from other Government Departments including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Ministry of Defence and the Home Office. Of the £270 million, the UK will contribute at least £30 million to the Counter Narcotics Trust Fund, which was set up specifically to support the National Drugs Control Strategy. We announced this contribution at the London Conference on Afghanistan, along with several other partner nations. The fund will bring counter narcotics funding on budget; give the Afghans greater ownership over this important agenda; and ensure that assistance is targeted as effectively as possible.

The funding will be spent on counter narcotics activity supporting the Government of Afghanistan in delivering their National Drugs Control Strategy. The strategy focuses on four key priorities: disrupting the drugs trade by targeting traffickers and their backers; strengthening and diversifying legal rural livelihoods; developing effective state institutions to combat drugs at the central and provincial level; and reducing the demand for illicit drugs and treatment of problem drug users.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what arrangements are in place for liaison between his Department and *(a)* UN Stabilisation forces and *(b)* Operation Enduring Freedom to deal with the opium problem in Afghanistan. [49458]

Dr. Howells: There are no United Nations Stabilisation Forces in Afghanistan. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is a UN-authorised NATO force designed to assist the Government of Afghanistan with the maintenance of security. ISAF's role in support of the Government of Afghanistan's counter narcotics campaign is set out in the counter narcotics annex of the NATO Operations Plan (OPLAN). NATO Ministers approved the revised OPLAN in December 2005. ISAF forces will be able to help with the provision of training to Afghan counter-narcotics forces and will when necessary provide support to their operations. They will also help the Afghan Government explain their policies to the Afghan people. ISAF forces will not take part in the eradication of opium poppy or in pre-planned and direct military action against the drugs trade. The British Embassy Drugs Team (BEDT) in Kabul works closely with HQ ISAF in deconflicting and informing the international military forces about counter narcotics activity.

Military forces operating under Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) are also authorised to provide support to the Afghan counter narcotics campaign. BEDT again works closely with the US OEF military headquarters, CFC-A, based in Kabul, to encourage coalition forces, as well as ISAF, within means and capabilities, to support the Afghan Government's National Drug Control Strategy. Liaison is particularly close on support for the counter narcotics information campaign and for day-to-day support provided to Afghan counter narcotics forces through the thirteen coalition Provincial Reconstruction Teams based around the country.

There is also a regular Afghan Government/UN/US sponsored forum in Kabul at which the five key pillars of Security Sector Reform (SSR) are discussed with representatives from the US (reform of the military), Germany (Police Reform), Italy (Judicial reform), Japan (disarmament and demobilisation) and the UK (counter narcotics). All five pillars of SSR are inter-connected and are significant in dealing holistically with the opium problem.

Belarus

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the British ambassador in Minsk about UK relations with Belarus. [49089]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and the British ambassador in Minsk have not had a recent discussion. However, our ambassador keeps the Department up-to-date with developments, is in constant touch with our embassies in

neighbouring countries and our missions to the EU, OSCE and Council of Europe. He liaises closely with other EU missions in Minsk and meets regularly with officials in the Belarusian Government, outlining our disappointment at the deteriorating situation in Belarus at every opportunity. In line with our policy of supporting the democratic process and engaging with civil society we maintain good contacts with the opposition and I had a worthwhile bilateral discussion with Mr. Milinkevich, leader of the official opposition, at the last General Affairs and External Relations Council in Brussels.

Burma

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will assess the implications of the decision of the Burmese authorities to move the capital from Rangoon to Pyinmana with particular reference to *(a)* the implications for the governance of that country and *(b)* its relations with (i) the UK and (ii) the rest of the world; and if he will make a statement. [49489]

Ian Pearson: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave the hon. Member for Buckingham (John Bercow) on 15 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1180–81W, and the hon. Member for Hertsmere (James Clappison) on 17 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1479W.

Cyprus

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the plans of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to designate 3,000 donums of land in occupied Morphou for tourist development and to grant 1,500 donums of Greek-Cypriot-owned land in Morphou to Turkish settlers. [48898]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We are aware of plans to develop the Morphou district of northern Cyprus but not of plans to transfer 1,500 donums of land. While we maintain a dialogue with the Turkish Cypriot community on all aspects of the Cyprus settlement, we cannot control property development in the north. I continue to believe that the many difficult and complex property issues in Cyprus are likely only to be resolved as part of a comprehensive settlement.

Elections

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the merits of citizens of British overseas territories being able to take part in *(a)* Westminster and *(b)* European parliamentary elections. [49037]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government have made no assessment of this kind.

As the overseas territories are constitutionally not part of the United Kingdom, unlike the position between France and some of the French territories, British overseas territories citizens resident in a territory are not eligible to have representation in the Westminster Parliament or in the European Parliament. The only exception is Gibraltar, which is part of the European Union by virtue of article 299(4) of the EC treaty. Gibraltarians have the right to vote in the elections for the European Parliament as part of, and on the same terms as, the electorate of the South West England European parliamentary electoral region.

Extraordinary Rendition

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it is the Government's policy to permit US flights to land and refuel in the UK without being required to *(a)* submit and *(b)* verify a list of passengers. [48292]

Dr. Howells: The Immigration Service may require passenger information in respect of any person arriving in the United Kingdom by aircraft of any nationality, including transit passengers, members of the crew and others not seeking to enter the United Kingdom, in order to determine whether they are eligible for leave to enter. However it is not the practice of the Immigration Service to require the details of passengers unless they intend to disembark in the UK.

Falkland Islands/Argentina

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on relations between the Falkland Islands and Argentina. [49114]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Falkland Islands are a United Kingdom overseas territory and as such the United Kingdom Government are responsible for their international relations. The United Kingdom values its relationship with Argentina and wants it to be as constructive and as positive as possible. Argentine co-operation on important South Atlantic issues has an effect on the bilateral relationship as a whole.

Father Wenceslas Munyeshyaka

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the French Government to assist the Rwandan Government in its request for the extradition of Father Wenceslas Munyeshyaka. [49195]

Ian Pearson: None. The Rwandan Government has not asked the Government to make representations to the French Government with regard to the extradition of Father Wenceslas Munyeshyaka.

Iceland (Whaling Programme)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his discussions with the Icelandic Foreign Minister on 18 January on Iceland's whaling programme. [49272]

Ian Pearson: The UK's opposition to Iceland's whaling programme has been consistent and strong. In May 2005, the UK-led protests against Iceland's decision to take 39 minke whales for "scientific" reasons and we will continue to oppose any future whaling activities. The focus of the recent meeting between my right. hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and his Icelandic counterpart was Afghanistan and the Middle East. Whaling was not discussed.

India

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the attitude towards *(a)* Christian and *(b)* other minority religions by extremist Hindus in India; and if he will seek to use the EU-India Strategic Partnership to impress upon the Indian Government the need (i) for greater religious tolerance and (ii) to give equal rights to the Dalit community. [49588]

Dr. Howells: We are aware of the alleged involvement of Hindu Extremist organisations in attacks against Christians and other minority religions in India and we condemn all instances where individuals are persecuted because of their beliefs. In January this year, Mr. V. V Augustine of the National Commission for Minorities visited Dang District where many attacks on minorities have occurred. Police officials assured him that they would uphold law and order during upcoming festivals and maintain a strict vigilance in all 312 villages of the district at all times. The Indian Minister of Home Affairs, Shivraj Patil, has written to Mr. Augustine to confirm that the Home Ministry will provide additional forces if required. Our High Commission will continue to follow this issue closely.

As President of the EU, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister signed an EU-India Joint Action Plan during his visit to New Delhi in September. This identified areas where the EU and India agreed to co-operate and work together. One of these areas was human rights. The first meeting with the Indian side under the EU-India Joint Action Plan took place on 1 December 2005 in New Delhi. During the meeting, the issues of religious minorities and Dalits were raised. It is for the current EU presidency and the Indian Government to agree when the next formal set of dialogue will take place but we hope that this initial meeting might lead to a further, ad hoc dialogue between minorities experts from the EU and India.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Indian Government to end the practice of using dancing bears for entertainment; and if he will make a statement. [49863]

Dr. Howells: This is an internal issue for the Indian Government to address. We welcome Indian Government initiatives to tackle the problem, in particular further implementation of The Indian Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, which prohibits anyone from possessing any animal listed as being at risk of extinction. We will continue to monitor the situation through our high commission in New Delhi.

Iran

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his meeting of 30 January 2006 with the Foreign Ministers of China, France, Germany, Russia, the US and the High Representative of the EU, how long he expects the extensive period of confidence-building required of Iran to be; what assurances are being sought from Iran; and if he will make a statement. [48751]

Dr. Howells: The nature of Iran's nuclear activities; its long record of concealment and failure to be fully transparent with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); its many breaches of its obligations; and its refusal to take and sustain confidence building steps requested by the IAEA Board of Governors have all contributed to a lack of confidence among the international community that Iran's nuclear programme is, as it claims, for exclusively peaceful purposes.

In August 2005, the E3/EU presented proposals covering long-term arrangements for Iran's nuclear programme. These stated that continued confidence building would be required over a significant period of time, and outlined ways in which Iran could build confidence, including by making a binding commitment not to pursue fuel cycle activities other than the construction and operation of light water power and research reactors. They suggested that a final agreement could be reviewed every 10 years.

Iran left the negotiations in August 2005 when it unilaterally decided to restart uranium conversion activities, contrary to repeated requests by the IAEA board and in violation of the Paris Agreement, which had set out the framework for talks. E3/EU officials held an exploratory meeting with Iran in December 2005 to see if it would be possible to agree a basis for resuming negotiations. The E3/EU stated that it would be essential, inter alia, for Iran not to renege further on its commitment to suspend all enrichment related and reprocessing activities. Iran's subsequent decision to restart enrichment related activity was a further rejection of efforts to seek a diplomatic solution, and has aroused further suspicion of Iran's intentions. We hope that Iran will reinstate a full suspension of enrichment related and reprocessing activities, address in full the outstanding requests of the IAEA Board of Governors and return to negotiations on a long-term agreement.

We welcome the resolution adopted by the IAEA Board of Governors on 4 February. At the board's request, the United Nations Security Council will now become involved, to reinforce the IAEA's authority. The decision was made necessary by Iran's failure to comply with requests made in previous board resolutions and its failure to take steps that would build confidence that its nuclear programme is for exclusively peaceful purposes. The resolution was backed by the great majority of the board's 35 members, and demonstrates the strength of the international community's determination to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on Iran's nuclear programme. [49416]

Dr. Howells: We welcome the resolution adopted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) board of governors on 4 February. The resolution was supported by the large majority of the board's 35 members, from across the regional groupings, and demonstrates the strength of the international community's determination to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

At the board's request, the United Nations Security Council will now become involved, to reinforce the IAEA's authority. The board's decision was made necessary by Iran's failure to comply with requests made in previous board resolutions and its failure to take steps that would build confidence that its nuclear programme is for exclusively peaceful purposes.

We hope that Iran will take this opportunity to comply immediately and in full with the board's requests, including by reinstating a full suspension of all uranium enrichment related and reprocessing activities and addressing all outstanding questions about its nuclear programme.

Iraq

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2852W, on Iraq, whether *(a)* the Intelligence and Security Committee in 2003 and *(b)* the Butler Review had access to the same intelligence material on the Government's claim that Iraq sought to procure uranium from Niger. [49257]

Mr. Straw: Both the Intelligence and Security Committee and Lord Butler's Review investigated this issue thoroughly and put their findings, and the basis on which they were made, in the public domain.

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46758]

Mr. Straw: It is left to individual staff members to decide how to mark religious festivals. In line with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Diversity Policy, all line managers are encouraged to be flexible when considering leave requests for staff wishing to take time off to mark religious festivals.

Kosovo

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his EU counterparts concerning the final status of Kosovo. [49608]

Ian Pearson: We are in regular contact with other EU partners on Kosovo. Kosovo was discussed at the General Affairs External Relations Council on 30 January following the death of President Rugova of Kosovo.

The EU was represented at the contact group plus ministerial which my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary chaired on 31 January. That meeting issued a statement which I am placing in the Library of the House.

Madagascar

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effect on UK *(a)* trade with and *(b)* investment in Madagascar of the closure of the British Embassy. [47937]

Ian Pearson: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is not aware of any significant change in the pattern of British trade with or investment in Madagascar since the closure of the British embassy. The former embassy had only two British diplomatic staff, neither of whom had a specific commercial role.

Nuclear Weapons

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment the Government have made of the implications of Dr. A. Q. Kahn's visits to Myanmar for the proliferation of nuclear weapons; and what assessment he has made of the risk of transfer of Pakistani nuclear technology to the Myanmar regime. [49394]

Dr. Howells: We have no evidence that Dr. A. Q. Khan visited Burma, but we are aware that Dr. A. Q. Khan's weapons of mass destruction proliferation network involved a wide range of businesses in a number of countries, acting outside both national and international controls. We are not aware of any transfer of Pakistani nuclear technology to Burma.

President Paul Kagame

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to invite His Excellency President Paul Kagame to visit the UK. [49193]

Ian Pearson: There are currently no plans for an official visit to the UK by President Paul Kagame. Ministers and senior British officials meet President Kagame on a regular basis in Rwanda to discuss matters of bilateral and regional interest. His last official visit was in November 2004.

Republic of Yemen

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of *(a)* the security situation and *(b)* the democratic process in the Republic of Yemen. [49071]

Dr. Howells: We continuously monitor the security situation in Yemen, and review our assessment of it in response to developments. Our full assessment is set out in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) travel advice on the FCO website (www.fco.gov.uk). During my recent visit to Yemen, I discussed security with the Yemeni Government, and emphasised the importance of determined action against security threats.

Yemen's presidential elections this year will be a test of its democratic system. We hope that it will be possible for independent monitors, including from the EU, to observe the electoral process. It is vital for the future of Yemen that the elections meet international standards.

Russia

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the implications of President Putin's recent warning of foreign Governments against trying to exert influence via non-governmental organisations in Russia. [49609]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Our relationship with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Russia has consistently been one of partnership, not control. We have supported their work with total openness and transparency, in line with publicly stated objectives. We welcomed President Putin's comments last week when he acknowledged the importance for Russia of effective NGOs independent of Governments.

Sierra Leone

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the political situation in Sierra Leone. [49413]

Ian Pearson: Sierra Leone is a fragile post-conflict society that is making progress, with the assistance of the international community, towards consolidating security and governance reforms to lay the foundations of a more secure future.

The political climate is set to intensify in the run-up to presidential and legislative elections in 2007. The ruling Sierra Leone Peoples party and the main opposition party, the All Peoples Congress, have been joined in the contest by a new political force, the Popular Movement for Democratic Change. The UK is assisting in preparations for the elections, to ensure that they are free, fair and credible. For instance, we are giving £3 million to assist with strengthening of the national electoral commission, and electoral boundary delimitation.

But after 11 years of civil war, Sierra Leone's institutions and governance remain weak. The UK is helping to develop democratic political institutions, including support to the judiciary and police through a £25 million project, as well as assistance to the civil service reform programme, and further wide-ranging governance and anti- corruption support.

Uzbekistan

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent arrest and trial of the Uzbekistan opposition leader Sanjar Umarov for alleged economic crimes. [49610]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Sanjar Umarov was detained on 22 October 2005. He is being held in Tashkent city prison on charges of large scale embezzlement related to his business affairs. On 26 October, when Umarov's lawyer first gained access to his client, he reported that Umarov was naked in his cell and incoherent. On subsequent visits Umarov was able to talk to his lawyer in the presence of the investigation team. Umarov had requested medical treatment for high blood pressure, but has not had an independent medical assessment to date.

Umarov's trial began on 30 January. He faces nine charges. He is accused of misappropriating around $3 million worth of oil between 2003–04 through his company, Neftgaztrans, stealing nearly $240,000 worth of petrol from a Tashkent garage, and tax evasion to the tune of $2.9 million. Umarov denied each of the charges and said that he could not remember anything between 23 October and 1 November. He has denied statements which the prosecution said he made during that period.

Our embassy in Tashkent is monitoring the trial and remains in close touch with Umarov's family and lawyer.

WORK AND PENSIONS

"We Can Help"

Sir Malcolm Rifkind: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total cost of the production and distribution of the "We Can Help" DVD has been to date. [27872]

Mrs. McGuire: The total cost is £156,579, including VAT (£133,259 excluding VAT).

The DVD was produced to promote Jobcentre Plus disability services. The product is flexible to allow information to be given in Welsh, ethnic minority languages, British Sign Language and sub-titles. It also provides audio-description for those with visual impairments.

Benefit Agencies (Staff Redundancies)

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many *(a)* Disability and Carers Service, *(b)* Child Support Agency, *(c)* Pensions Service and *(d)* JobCentre Plus staff have been made redundant under the Government's latest spending review in (i) Wales and (ii) each constituency in Wales; and if he will make a statement; [39549]

(2) how many *(a)* Disability and Carers Service, *(b)* Pensions Service, *(c)* Jobcentre Plus and *(d)* Child Support Agency staff in (i) Wales and (ii) each constituency in Wales are expected to be made redundant under the Government's latest spending review in (A) 2005–06 and (B) 2006–07; and if he will make a statement. [39535]

Mrs. McGuire: There have been no compulsory redundancies in any of the Department's businesses in Wales as a result of the efficiency programme announced in the 2004 Spending Review. While detailed work force plans continue to be developed, at this time, no compulsory redundancies are planned to be made in Wales.

The planned reduction in staff numbers is being largely managed through normal staff turnover, controlling recruitment and promotions, and re-deploying staff to fill vacancies. Compulsory redundancy will only be used as a last resort when all other measures have been considered.

The Department has and will continue to run a limited number of voluntary early release and voluntary retirement schemes where these are shown to support operational requirements and be cost effective. Over the

spending review period to date, 302 members of staff (equating to 270 Full Time Equivalents) have left under these schemes in Wales.

Benefit Fraud

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what estimate he has made of the cost of *(a)* fraud and *(b)* error in (i) incapacity benefit and (ii) severe disability allowance since 1997; [42546]

(2) how many staff are employed by his Department to investigate incapacity benefit and severe disability allowance fraud *(a)* in total and *(b)* per 100,000 recipients of that allowance; and what his latest estimate is of the total level of incapacity benefit and severe disability allowance fraud in each of the last six years. [42760]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department's benefit fraud investigators deal with allegations of fraud relating to all benefits administered by The Department for Work and Pensions. We do not employ a specific number of staff to investigate incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance fraud.

The available information on the level of fraud in incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance is in the following table.

Results of incapacity benefit review 2001: overpayments

Category of overpayment	*Monetary value (£ million)*	*Percentage of incapacity benefit expenditure*
Fraud	[1][2]19	[1][2]0.3
Customer error	16	0.3
Official error	22	0.4

[1] Up to.

[2] This is an upper limit, as insufficient cases of fraud were uncovered in the review to enable a robust central estimate to be made.

Results of incapacity benefit review 2001: underpayments

Category of overpayment	*Monetary value (£ million)*	*Percentage of expenditure*
Customer error	15	0.2
Official error	9	0.1

Notes:

1. Results from a national benefit review of fraud and error in incapacity benefit were published in 2001. The estimates made relate to the period April 2000 to March 2001.
2. There has been no equivalent review of fraud and customer error in severe disablement allowance.

Estimates of official error in incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance are produced each year. Previous results were carried out using a different methodology and are not comparable. The available information is in the following table.

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance: official error overpayments

	Total	*IB*	*£ million SDA*
April 2001 to March 2002	43	32	11
April 2002 to March 2003	43	39	4
April 2003 to March 2004	53	52	2
April 2004 to March 2005	104	[1]100	5

[1] These estimates are subject to wide margins of error. Our best estimate of IB overpayments for 2004–05 includes a further amount of around £20 million due to incorrectness types not captured under methodology in earlier years. The components may not add up to the total as all figures have been rounded to the nearest million.

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance: official error underpayments

	Total	*IB*	*IB credits*	*£ million SDA*
April 2002 to March 2003	26	16	9	1
April 2003 to March 2004	23	13	6	4
April 2004 to March 2005	36	21	10	5

Note:
These estimates are subject to wide margins of error. The components may not add up to the total as all figures have been rounded to the nearest million.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what sanctions are faced by individuals from other EU member states who are found to be fraudulently claiming *(a)* jobseeker's allowance and *(b)* housing benefit. [45324]

Mr. Plaskitt: Anyone committing benefit fraud in the UK is subject to the relevant legislation and criminal laws governing action that can be taken against them. Individuals from EU member states are subject to the same sanctions as British citizens found to be committing benefit fraud involving jobseeker's allowance, housing benefits and any other benefits administered by the Department for Work and Pensions.

The sanctions that anyone committing benefit fraud can face will range from administrative caution, administrative penalty or prosecution.

Benefits

Helen Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many home visits his staff made to benefit *(a)* claimants and *(b)* recipients in (i) 2003–04 and (ii) 2004–05; and how many such visits his staff expect to make in each of the next two years. [48445]

Margaret Hodge: The available information is on the tables.

Jobcentre Plus home visits made by staff to claimant/recipients

	2003–04	*2004–05*	*2005–06*	*2006–07*	*2007–08*
Gateway intervention[1]	131,040	75,406	18,232	—	—
Caseload intervention[1]	209,421	176,971	85,196	—	—
Customer compliance[2]	—	—	—	299,699	305,693

Jobcentre Plus home visits made by staff to claimant recipients

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Core visits[3]	169,963	143,130	145,850	149,243	151,199
Total	510,424	395,507	249,278	448,942	456,892

[1] Gateway and caseload interventions are performed as part of customer compliance activity from 2006-07.
[2] Customer compliance figures for 2007-08 are forecasted based on 2006-07 calculations and the trend of claims caseload for income support jobseeker's allowance. Approx 200,000 cases per annum previously handled by Fraud Investigation Service will be actioned by customer compliance officers from 2006-07. Customer compliance activity is always intended to take place face-to-face with the customer, although not necessarily via a home visit. An assumption has been made for these figures that 50 percent will take place in a Jobcentre Plus office while the remaining 50 percent will be carried out by visit.
[3] Core visits figures for 2006-07 and 2007-08 are forecasted based on the previous three years actual data and the volume trend of claims for income support jobseeker's allowance.

Notes:
1. Figures are not kept on the number of home visits made by Fraud Investigation Service investigators.
2. Gateway interventions are visits made before benefit paid based on a risk priority list.
3. Caseload interventions are visits made during the lifetime of a claim based on a risk priority list.
4. Customer compliance visits are made to a customer where there is alleged fraud/error but a sanction prosecution is unlikely.
5. Core visits usually have a customer service angle. Examples are appointee visits and delivery of overpayment letters.

Pension service effective home visits

April 2003—March2004	420,237
April 2004—March 2005	582,790
April 2005—December 2005	661,808

Note:
Figures for future years are not available but the projected forecast is that the current visit volumes will be maintained.

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Wales are *(a)* entitled to council tax benefits and *(b)* receiving council tax benefits; and if he will make a statement. [49747]

Mr. Plaskitt: The latest available information on unclaimed council tax benefit is in "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take Up in 2003/2004", a copy of which is in the Library.

As at August 2005 there were 277,000 households in Wales receiving council tax benefit.

Child Support

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the 10 largest total *(a)* compensation and *(b)* maladministration payments made by the Child Support Agency to a single individual, including separate payments made in relation to a single case requiring compensation, have been since May 1997; and if he will make a statement. [33435]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 5 December 2005]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what ten largest total *(a)* compensation and *(b)* maladministration payments made by the Child Support Agency to a single individual including separate payments made in relation to a single case requiring compensation are since May 1997; and if he will make a statement.

The Agency does not hold sufficiently robust information to give you precisely the information you requested. I apologise for this but can give you information on the ten highest financial redress payments awarded due to maladministration between the period 1 December 2001 to 10 November 2005.

The table below contains the available information:

	Amount (£)
1.	41,000.00
2.	27,961.66
3.	22,160.08
4.	19,965.36
5.	19,056.49
6.	18,980.90
7.	16,000.00
8.	14,905.97
9.	14,732.40
10.	14,648.55

As I explained in a previous response to you, in the Answer of 15th November Official Report column 1152W on the Child Support Agency, maladministration and compensatory payments in excess of £10,000 represent only a small fraction (just over 0.1%) of the total number of such payments made by the Agency:

	Number
Total number of payments made since 1 December 2001	35,558
Under £1,000	33,227
Between £1,000 and £9,999	2,289
Between £10,000 and £49,999	42
Over £50,000	0

I hope you find this helpful.

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on how many occasions his Department consulted citizens juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens' jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens' jury. [46228]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the Department of Social Security and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment including the Employment Service.

Since its inception, the Department for Work and Pensions has not used the citizen's jury method to consult on its departmental policies.

Civil Partnership (Benefits)

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many single people receiving (*a*) income support and (*b*) pension credit live with another single person of the same sex; whether all such benefit recipients have been informed of their obligation under the Civil Partnership Act 2004 to inform the appropriate benefit office if they are living together as if they were civil partners; what guidance has been promulgated on the meaning of that term; and if he will ensure that those who fail to report their relationship are not subject to penalties or recovery of consequent overpayment of benefits. [36307]

Mrs. McGuire: There is very little information about same-sex couples in this country. The labour force survey suggests that there are about 50,000 cohabiting same-sex couples in the UK. The Department does not have any statistical information about individuals currently receiving income related benefits who are living with someone of the same sex as though they were civil partners.

The Department has conducted a targeted publicity campaign intended to ensure that all benefit recipients are aware of the need to advise the relevant benefit office as soon as they can on or after 5 December 2005 if they are living together as if they were civil partners. This has included publication of a leaflet 'Getting it right' which has been distributed to all Jobcentre Plus offices, pension centres, pension local services and Citizens Advice Bureaux. Additionally it has been sent to Doctors' surgeries and other organisations including the Terrence Higgins Trust, the Department for Constitutional Affairs, libraries and local councils. The leaflet has also been placed on the DWP internet site.

Our policy is not to ask for repayments from someone who has acted reasonably but has failed to appreciate that, although they have not entered into a civil partnership, their benefit is affected because they now form a same-sex couple. Departmental guidance has been amended to reflect this policy and the changes in the law. However, if a customer who is a civil partner or who lives with another person as though they were civil partners knows that this could affect their benefit they must tell the office that deals with their claim. If they fail to do so and they receive too much benefit they may be required to refund the amount that has been overpaid to them.

Departmental Staff (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff employed by his Department live in Castle Point. [42819]

Mrs. McGuire: There are currently 91 staff employed by the Department for Work and Pensions living in Castle Point.

Equity

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions he has had with Equity Trade Union about the deficit in the opera singers' pension scheme; and what plans he has to assist in rescuing the scheme. [49425]

Mr. Timms: My right hon. Friend Secretary of State and I have not had any discussions, though I have been in correspondence with Equity about the opera singers' pension scheme.

The Government are committed to protecting the pension funds of individual workers. We have put in place a framework to protect members of final salary pension schemes, and a major part in this has been to establish the Pension Protection Fund (PPF) to protect the members of eligible final salary pension scheme where, after April 2005, a sponsoring employer becomes insolvent and the scheme is under funded to the extent that it cannot afford to pay at PPF compensation levels.

It is not our policy to provide financial support to individual pension schemes on an ad hoc basis.

Financial Assistance Scheme

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will review the current rules of eligibility for the Financial Assistance Scheme before 2007–08. [49336]

Mr. Timms: As Government funding is fixed for the current spending review period up to and including 2007–08, current plans only cover those who were within three years of their scheme's normal retirement age, or above, on 14 May 2004. As with all our spending plans, funding for FAS will need to be reviewed in the next spending review, alongside other spending priorities.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the effects of changes in annuity returns on the ability of the financial assistance scheme to achieve the best outcomes for members of eligible schemes. [49337]

Mr. Timms: These will have no effect on assistance levels as qualifying members of eligible schemes will receive assistance that will top up their scheme pension to a level broadly equivalent to 80 percent. of their core pensions benefits, subject to a cap and a de minimis rule.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the status is of the guaranteed minimum pension rights of those individuals covered by the Financial Assistance Scheme. [49338]

Mr. Timms: Qualifying members of qualifying schemes will receive assistance that will top up their scheme pension to a level broadly equivalent to 80 per cent. of their core pension benefits, subject to a cap and a de minimis rule. Qualifying members' core pension benefits include any GMP rights accrued during pensionable service in relation to the qualifying scheme.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his most recent estimate is of the numbers of people that will be eligible for the Financial Assistance Scheme under the existing rules. [49339]

Mr. Timms: We estimate that up to 15,000 members within three years of their scheme pension age, or above their scheme pension age at 14 May 2004, may benefit from the Financial Assistance Scheme topping up their pensions to around 80 per cent. of their core pension benefits.

Fraud (Benefits/Pensions)

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the change in the levels of fraudulent transactions involving benefits and pensions in each year since the removal of order books. [48729]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not yet available from which to make such an estimate, as payment of benefit by order book ceased on 31 May 2005.

Housing

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to encourage the London borough of Haringey to make use of its discretionary housing payment funding to help those facing significant housing benefit shortfalls, rent arrears, eviction and homelessness in the borough. [50278]

Mr. Plaskitt: The purpose of the discretionary housing payment scheme is to assist those entitled to housing benefit who have a shortfall in meeting their rent and who the local authority consider are in need of further financial assistance. Any award is entirely at the discretion of individual local authorities and must be considered on a case by case basis. Guidance was issued at the introduction of the scheme to all local authorities.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much discretionary housing payment funding the London borough of Haringey was granted in each year since 2001–02; and how much of each year's grant was returned unused. [50279]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is in the table.

Discretionary housing payment funding granted to the London borough of Haringey

	Granted(£)	*Unused(£)*
2001–02	152,896.00	119,763.00
2002–03	164,456.00	101,291.00
2003–04	142,970.00	22,756.00
2004–05[1]	172,751.00	Nil

[1] 2004–05 is the latest year on which data is available.

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions he had with the London borough of Islington on making use of discretionary housing payment funding available in 2004–05. [48590]

Mr. Plaskitt: No discussions took place as the award of discretionary housing payments in 2004–05 was entirely at the discretion of the London borough of Islington.

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the *(a)* average and *(b)* maximum wait was for customers to be called back by Jobcentre Plus contact centres when trying to make a benefit application in each (i) week and (ii) month since 1 May; and if he will make a statement; [32505]

(2) what the average waiting time for processing a jobseeker's allowance application was in each *(a)* week and *(b)* month since 1 May; how many applications have taken more than 20 days to process; and if he will make a statement. [32506]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 9 February 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your two questions. Firstly, what the *(a)* average and *(b)* maximum wait was for customers to be called back by Jobcentre Plus contact centres when trying to make a benefit application in each (i) week and (ii) month since 1 May 2005; and if he will make a statement. Secondly, what the average waiting time for processing a Jobseeker's Allowance application was in each *(a)* week and *(b)* month since 1 May 2005; how many applications have taken more than 20 days to process; and if he will make a statement. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

In answer to your first question please see the table below. The average number of days referred to is the average number across the whole Contact Centre network, and the maximum is the longest time from any Contact Centre within the network. This data is only available from August, and is recorded as actual days.

2005 (W/C)	*Average number of days booking ahead (call-back wait time)*	*Maximum number of days booking ahead (call-back wait time)*
15 August	4.2	8
22 August	4.2	9
29 August	4.2	11
5 September	5.0	11
12 September	5.2	14
19 September	4.8	13
26 September	4.8	14
03 October	4.8	22
10 October	4.4	13
17 October	3.3	7
24 October	3.1	6
31 October	2.3	5
7 November	2.4	5
14 November	1.6	4
21 November	0.8	4
28 November	1.2	4
5 December	0.9	3
12 December	1.2	3
19 December	1.0	2
26 December	0.7	2

In answer to your second question, the measuring system for Jobseeker's Allowance claims is based on monthly average clearance times. The table below contains the available data.

2005

	Actual average clearance time
May	12.9
June	13.1
July	13.5
August	14.1
September	14.7
October	15.4
November	15.6
December	14.7
Year to Date	14.1

We do not record weekly clearance times, nor the number of applications which have taken more than 20 days to process and it is not possible to obtain this information.

The roll out of Jobcentre Plus and, in particular the new claims process supported by the Customer Management System (CMS), is a major undertaking. Inevitably this has impacted on JSA clearance times. Whilst the precise nature and degree of the issue varies according to geographical location and stage of roll out, the major issues are as follows:

End to end business processes: the new process we have introduced represents a transformation to the way we deliver our services and require our staff to operate;

Staff recruitment and training: contact centres in particular have faced the difficult task of recruiting and training a new workforce, often with little or no prior experience in the business and, therefore, of benefit issues. This is taking time to develop although underpinning learning and development products are in place;

IT system performance: CMS has been implemented in tandem with Jobcentre Plus rollout and initially some problems were encountered in terms of speed, capacity and reliability of the system. A series of technical releases earlier this year addressed these issues and CMS now performs well and to agreed service levels;

Efficiency challenge: at the same time as we are introducing significant change to the way we deliver our services we are we are implementing a major efficiency programme to deliver the required headcount savings in the Spending Review 2004 settlement.

With any change of this size there are always difficulties as the systems and processes bed in. This has led to some backlogs building up and a lengthening in the average time it takes to process claims.

Because clearance times have been rising in some areas, a task force has been set up to develop a national action plan that coordinates and builds on action that has been taking place locally. The plan will cover a number of issues.

The task force will use the plan to monitor progress and improvements in performance and to ensure the best possible practice.

I hope this is helpful.

New Deal

Mr. Andrew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average cost is per person helped into a job by the new deal for disabled people *(a)* through Jobcentre Plus and *(b)* through other providers. [44952]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 23 January 2006]:* The new deal for disabled people services are supplied by private and voluntary organisations who provide support for disabled people. Individuals can be referred to the programme through a range of sources including Jobcentre Plus.

The average cost of helping a person into work through new deal for disabled people is £2,180[1].

[1] Source: Department for Work and Pensions Finance Division

Notes:

1. Expenditure data excludes administrative costs.

2. Information is provided to March 2005 as this is the latest available date for confirmed expenditure figures.

Pensions

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of people who would claim one per cent. tax relief in *(a)* the initial year and *(b)* subsequent years if the proposed National Pension Savings Scheme were implemented. [49579]

Mr. Timms: The Government are in the process of examining the recommendations made by the Pensions Commission in detail. This includes recommendations on the National Pension Savings Scheme (NPSS). At this stage, nothing is ruled in and nothing is ruled out. The Pensions Commission made an assumption in their report that approximately seven million people would be in the NPSS, based on an 80 per cent. participation rate for those earning above the Lower Earnings Threshold (£12,100 in 2005–06), and a 65 per cent. participation rate for those earning between the Primary Threshold (£4,888 in 2005–06) and the Lower Earnings Threshold. In developing our proposals we will be evaluating those assumptions.

Sunbeds

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on Health and Safety Executive guidelines to *(a)* operators and *(b)* users of sunbed tanning equipment. [48741]

Mrs. McGuire: HSE guidance on use of tanning equipment is contained in leaflet INDG209, Controlling Health Risks from the use of UV Tanning Equipment, issued in 1995. It was produced in conjunction with the Department of Health after wide consultation and remains very relevant. It is available either as a free leaflet or from the HSE website. It contains advice for both operators and users of tanning equipment.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complaints the Health and Safety Executive received about *(a)* staffed and *(b)* non-staffed sunbed tanning salons in 2004–05; and what the nature of the complaints was. [48744]

Mrs. McGuire: HSE has received no complaints as enforcement responsibility for sunbed tanning salons is allocated to local authorities to whom any complaints would be directed. HSE does not have direct access to local authority records and so cannot determine how many such complaints have been made to them.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many accidents involving sunbeds have been reported to the Health and Safety Executive in each year since 1995. [48746]

Mrs. McGuire: HSE recording systems do not allow these data to be extracted from our records. Local authorities are allocated enforcement responsibility for the great majority of sunbeds.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many inspections the Health and Safety Executive has made of *(a)* staffed and *(b)* unstaffed sunbed tanning retail outlets in each year since 1995; and what the average interval between inspections has been over the period. [48748]

Mrs. McGuire: The Health and Safety Executive is not responsible for the inspection of sunbed retail tanning outlets. This is a local authority responsibility.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what guidance has been issued by the Health and Safety Executive to unstaffed coin-operated sunbed tanning salons on appropriate levels of customer *(a)* security and *(b)* privacy. [48757]

Mrs. McGuire: HSE guidance focuses on the health impact of exposure to radiation, and does not cover appropriate levels of customer security or privacy.

Winter Fuel Payments

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of eligible pensioners have received the winter fuel payment in each year since 2003. [49049]

Mr. Timms: We cannot provide an exact estimate of the number of people eligible for a winter fuel payment without establishing their circumstances. A person may be ineligible for various reasons such as serving a custodial sentence, in hospital receiving free in-patient treatment for more than 52 weeks, or subject to immigration control. The vast majority of people entitled to a winter fuel payment are paid automatically as we hold their details on our benefit systems. In the winters of 2003-04 and 2004-05 we made over 11.4 million payments and expect to make around 11.5 million payments this winter.

HEALTH

3G Mobile Telephones

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research her Department has evaluated on the effects on health of 3G mobile telephones. [49604]

Caroline Flint: The Health Protection Agency's radiation protection division (HPA-RPD) periodically evaluates the scientific research relating to mobile phone technology and health including that relevant to third generation (3G) mobile phones. The Stewart report in 2000 comprehensively reviewed the scientific literature and concluded that

> "the balance of evidence to date suggests that exposures below [international] guidelines do not cause health effects to the general population".

More recently, Mobile Phones and Health 2004, reiterated the Stewart report's conclusions noting that

> "there is a lack of hard information showing that the mobile phone systems in use are damaging to health".

Both the above reports recommended a precautionary approach to the use of mobile phone technology pending the availability of more robust scientific research results. The reports are available on the HPA's website at www.hpa.org.uk/radiation.

The widespread use of mobile phones and the development of newer technologies mean that the possibility of health effects should be continually monitored. Following the results in 2003 of research on 3G base station exposures apparently showing a health effect, the mobile telecommunications and health research (MTHR) programme in this country is now supporting a study at the university of Essex into the symptoms experienced by 3G signals on volunteers (www.mthr.org.uk).

All mobile phones and base stations in this country comply with the international guidelines. Measurements undertaken both by the HPA and by Ofcom (www.ofcom.org.uk) have consistently shown that exposures to radio signals from base stations, including those from 3G stations, are lower than the international guidelines.

Accident and Emergency Departments

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many accident and emergency departments are *(a)* scheduled and *(b)* proposed for closure; and if she will make a statement. [48349]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not routinely collect and hold centrally operational management information on proposals to close wards or capacity.

National health service bodies are under a duty to consult local authority overview and scrutiny committees on any plans to make substantial changes to NHS services. Currently there is one referral from overview and scrutiny committees being considered by the Secretary of State. This referral is not connected to accident and emergency services.

Alcohol Misuse

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1055W, on alcohol misuse, when she expects to award the contract to run a programme of pilots for alcohol screening and brief interventions. [46561]

Caroline Flint: The screening and brief intervention trailblazers are part of our active policy work in the area of alcohol misuse. No decision on the award of contracts is expected until the 2006-07 financial year.

Ambulance Services

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received regarding plans to regionalise ambulance services provision in East Sussex; and if she will make a statement. [49463]

Caroline Flint: The consultation for the proposed configuration of national health service ambulance trusts in England is being led by strategic health authorities (SHAs). SHAs will coordinate consultation locally and ensure that relevant authorities and interested parties are able to express their views. A full analysis of the responses received by the SHAs and the Department will be undertaken at the end of the consultation. The consultation will conclude on 22 March 2006.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on plans to regionalise ambulance services in East Sussex. [49468]

Caroline Flint: "Configuration of NHS Ambulance Trusts in England: Consultation Document" sets out the proposed new ambulance trusts on which we are currently consulting. This includes the proposal for a new trust (referred to in the document as South East A) which would comprise the areas covered by the current Sussex, Kent and Surrey ambulance trusts, if the proposals are agreed. However, no decision has been made, or will be, until the consultation has concluded.

A copy of "Configuration of NHS Ambulance Trusts in England: Consultation Document" is available in the Library. A copy of my ministerial statement on this consultation, dated 14 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 152WS is also available in the Library.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact that the merger of Gloucestershire Ambulance Service NHS Trust with Avon and Wiltshire ambulance trusts will have on emergency coverage in Forest of Dean constituency. [48785]

Caroline Flint: The merger of Gloucestershire Ambulance Service National Health Service Trust with Avon and Wiltshire ambulance trusts is part of wider process to create fewer, larger ambulance trusts across England. This is intended to reduce management costs and divert savings to front-line services. This is also intended to create teams capable of meeting rising demands by developing new ways of working for community paramedic and emergency care practitioner services which could be particularly beneficial for rural areas such as the Forest of Dean.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on Gloucestershire Ambulance Service NHS Trust's co-responder scheme. [48786]

Caroline Flint: The Department acknowledges the valuable support that community responders offer to ambulance services locally. Clinical evidence proves conclusively that early defibrillation and resuscitation saves more lives, and therefore co-responders trained in life support, first aid and equipped with defibrillators help to ensure that patients receive advanced life support as soon as possible, improving outcomes for those patients.

It is a local matter for ambulance trusts to decide whether or how they use community volunteer responders or other schemes such as community paramedics, in conjunction with the range of ambulance vehicles to ensure all patients get the most appropriate and timely response.

Ashford Hospital

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the progress of negotiations between Capio Health Care and the Ashford and St. Peters hospitals NHS trust for an independent treatment centre at Ashford hospital (Middlesex). [48623]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 6 February 2006]*: Agreement in principle has been reached between Capio Healthcare UK and sponsors regarding the provision of an independent sector treatment centre at the Ashford hospital. Legal negotiations are now taking place to proceed towards financial close expected by the end of March 2006.

Bedside Telephones/Entertainment Systems

Mrs. Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact on NHS patients on low incomes of charged-for bedside telephone and entertainment systems; and if she will make a statement. [47825]

Jane Kennedy: The new bedside telephone and entertainment systems represent an additional and enhanced service to what already exists, and consequently attract a charge. Access to free televisions in day rooms and hospital payphones still exist as an alternative.

Discounts apply for some patient groups, such as the elderly and long-term sick, some of whom are patients on low incomes. However, there are no automatic exemption arrangements for patients on low incomes.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will reduce call charges to patients for the use of hospital bedside telephones by providing for the NHS to pay for some or all of the service; [48395]

(2) if she will take steps to reduce the cost of using bedside telephones in hospitals. [48394]

Jane Kennedy: I refer my hon. Friend to the ministerial statement made on 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 33WS.

Blood Transfusions

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate she has made of the cost to the NHS of *(a)* an autologous blood transfusion and *(b)* an ordinary blood transfusion; [48378]

(2) how many operations have been performed in which an autologous blood transfusion was carried out in each region in each of the last three years. [48383]

Caroline Flint: The Chief Medical Officer's national blood transfusion committee (NBTC) promotes and encourages the safe and appropriate use of blood. This includes looking at alternatives to blood transfusions using techniques such as intra-operative cell salvage. The NBTC does not recommend pre-deposit autologous donation except in special circumstances, for example where a patient has multiple rare or multiple antibodies.

We do not have data on the cost of intra-operative cell salvage to the national health service. The National Blood Service, part of NHS Blood and Transplant currently charges hospitals £114.71 for a pre-deposit autologous donation. This charge reflects the cost associated with the collection and testing of the blood and not any costs a hospital may incur through using pre-deposit autologous donation.

The Department does not collect information on the number of autologous blood transfusion carried out in hospitals.

In this current financial year, 2005–06, the cost to hospitals of a standard unit of red cells is £131.80.

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many units of blood were obtained by the blood transfusion service in the last three years. [48382]

Caroline Flint: The National Blood Service (NBS), part of NHS Blood and Transplant, is responsible for the collection and supply of blood in England and north Wales. The NBS collected the following amount of blood in the last three financial years:

Financial year	Units of blood collected
2002-03	2,332,099
2003-04	2,295,869
2004-05	2,155,409

This reduction in blood collection reflects a reduction in the amount of blood required, largely due to better blood transfusion practices.

Breast Cancer

Mrs. Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking to ensure that every woman newly diagnosed in England with early stage breast cancer is tested for HER2 status. [47424]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Professor Mike Richards, the National Cancer director, is working with cancer networks to ensure that testing arrangements are put in place to enable women who require it to be tested for HER2 status. This work is ongoing.

Mrs. Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of newly diagnosed women with early stage breast cancer *(a)* in England and *(b)* living in the Northern Cancer Network area were prospectively tested for HER2 positivity in the latest period for which figures are available. [47426]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not centrally collected.

Breastfeeding

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has for a breastfeeding awareness week in England in 2006. [48384]

Caroline Flint: The Department is committed to supporting and promoting breastfeeding as the best form of nutrition for infants. National breastfeeding awareness week will be held from 14 to 20 May 2006.

Catalytic Converters

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment she has made of the possible health implications arising from the use of monomolecular layers of platinum, with particular reference to catalytic converters. [48456]

Caroline Flint: The possible effects of platinum compounds emitted by vehicles fitted with catalytic converters have been considered by both the Committee on the Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT) and the Committee on Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP). Both committees concluded that emissions of allergenic platinum compounds were unlikely. COMEAP commented that adverse reactions might conceivably arise in those already sensitised by other, higher exposures. Details are available in the COT/COC/COM annual report for 1996 and in the COMEAP annual report for 1994.

Cervical Smear Tests

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she has received the formal options appraisal of reducing waiting times for the results of cervical smear tests from the university of Sheffield; if she will place a copy of the appraisal in the Library; and if she will make a statement. [43563]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A draft version of the options appraisal for reducing waiting times for the results of cervical screening tests was delivered to the Department on 16 January 2006. The advisory committee on cervical screening met on 18 January to discuss the report, and their views have been passed to the authors of the report to consider. A copy of the final version of the options appraisal will be placed in the Library.

Crack Cocaine

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that frontline staff in *(a)* health care and *(b)* social services have adequate education and training concerning crack cocaine use and treatment. [47695]

Caroline Flint: The National Treatment Agency (NTA) has produced a resource pack for treatment providers on crack cocaine treatment, in collaboration with COCA, a stimulant-specialist organisation. The NTA also commissioned training to accompany the resource.

The drugs and alcohol national occupational standards (DANOS) specify the standards of performance that people in the drugs and alcohol field should be working to. They also describe the knowledge and skills workers need in order to perform to the required standard. The DANOS standards on service delivery give guidance on the scope of what competence-based training should cover, including crack, cocaine and other stimulant use.

Diabetics (Eye Tests)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions her Department has had with *(a)* patient groups and *(b)* clinicians on regular eye tests for diabetics. [46250]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national service framework for diabetes has a specific target of screening everyone at risk of diabetic retinopathy, and ensuring they are treated, by the end of 2007. Patient representatives and clinicians have played an important role on the national diabetic retinopathy screening project advisory group set up to steer the development of the screening programme.

Free sight tests on the national health service are available to people with diabetes and we recommend people with diabetes have their eyes tested every year.

Drug Treatment Programmes

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many problem drug users have participated in drug treatment programmes in each of the last five years. [47702]

Caroline Flint: The numbers in treatment figures for the past two years are shown on the table.

	Number
2003-04	125,545
2004-05	160,450

The 1998-99 baseline against which these figures are calculated is 85,000. The Department's public service agreement is to double the numbers in treatment between 1998 and 2008.

The National Treatment Agency introduced a revised and more accurate methodology for counting the numbers in treatment, in October 2004. Figures are not available for the years 1999-2000, 2000-01, 2001-02, 2002-03 although the potential for providing estimates based on data collecting using the earlier methodology is being explored.

Food Labelling

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health why the labelling information on foodstuffs uses 100 g as the standard unit. [44617]

Caroline Flint: The United Kingdom labelling regulations implement, among other pieces of legislation, a European Community Directive (90/496/EEC) which lays down harmonised rules about how nutritional information should be presented on food packaging. One such rule in the directive is that the nutrient amounts should be given per 100 g of the food. Manufacturers may also provide nutritional information on a per quantified serving or per portion basis, provided the total number of portions per pack is stated.

General Medical Council

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the annual renewal fee for registration with the General Medical Council was in each year since 2000. [48138]

Jane Kennedy: The annual renewal fee for registration with the General Medical Council in the year 2000 was £135. In 2001, the fee was £170. In 2002, this was set at £290 and has remained at this amount in subsequent years.

GM Food

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent research findings she has assessed on the health implications of *(a)* GM soya and *(b)* the introduction of genes from bean varieties into GM peas. [36424]

Caroline Flint: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has sought advice from the advisory committee on novel food and processes (ACNFP) regarding what conclusions may be drawn from the results of a preliminary study conducted in Russia on the offspring of rats given flour from genetically modified soya beans. The ACNFP discussed this study on 24 November 2005 and a statement detailing its comments has been published on the ACNFP's website along with the draft minutes of the meeting.

At the same meeting, the FSA also sought advice from the ACNFP on a paper published by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, which details the immunological effects in mice exposed to peas genetically modified to contain a bean protein. The ACNFP's comments will be finalised when the minutes are formally adopted at the following meeting in January 2006. The draft minutes are available on the ACNFP's website at: www.acnfp.gov.uk/meetings/acnfpmeet2006/acnfpmeet25jan06/acnfpagendapapers25jan06.

General Practitioner Appointments

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have *(a)* requested and *(b)* received an appointment to see a GP within 48 hours in (i) Uxbridge constituency and (ii) Greater London; broken down by London borough, in each year since 1997. [48517]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not hold this information in the format requested.

However, the table shows the percentage of patients that were able to be offered a consultation with a general practitioner within two working days by London primary care trusts for March 2003 to December 2005.

Percentage

					March 2003	March 2004	March 2005[1]	December 2005[1]
Uxbridge								
Q04	5AT	5AT	5AT	Hillingdon PCT	88.38	97.63	100.00	100.00
London borough PCTs								
Q05	5A9	5A9	5A9	Barnet PCT	79.75	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q05	5K7	5K7	5K7	Camden PCT	87.05	96.38	100.00	100.00
Q05	5C1	5C1	5C1	Enfield PCT	70.71	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q05	5C9	5C9	5C9	Haringey Teaching PCT	92.98	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q05	5K8	5K8	5K8	Islington PCT	69.67	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q06	5C2	5C2	5C2	Barking & Dagenham PCT	86.17	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q06	5C3	5C3	5C3	City & Hackney PCT	84.03	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q06	5A4	5A4	5A4	Havering PCT	90.25	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q06	5C5	5C5	5C5	Newham PCT	90.31	96.33	100.00	100.00
Q06	5C4	5C4	5C4	Tower Hamlets PCT	67.38	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q06	—	5NC	5NC	Waltham Forest PCT[2]	—	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q06	—	5NA	5NA	Redbridge PCT[2]	—	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q06	5C6	—	—	Walthamstow, Leyton & Leytonstone PCT[2]	79.58	—	—	—
Q06	5C7	—	—	Chingford, Wanstead & Woodford PCT[2]	55.57	—	—	—

Percentage

					March 2003	March 2004	March 2005[1]	December 2005[1]
Q04	5K5	5K5	5K5	Brent PCT	81.88	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q04	5HX	5HX	5HX	Ealing PCT	68.13	97.19	100.00	100.00
Q04	5H1	5H1	5H1	Hammersmith & Fulham PCT	95.92	97.12	100.00	100.00
Q04	5K6	5K6	5K6	Harrow PCT	90.53	98.73	100.00	100.00
Q04	5AT	5AT	5AT	Hillingdon PCT	88.38	97.63	100.00	100.00
Q04	5HY	5HY	5HY	Hounslow PCT	62.77	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q04	5LA	5LA	5LA	Kensington & Chelsea PCT	86.84	90.40	100.00	100.00
Q04	5LC	5LC	5LC	Westminster PCT	78.90	91.35	100.00	100.00
Q07	5AX	5AX	5TAK	Bexley Care Trust	95.96	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q07	5A7	5A7	5A7	Bromley PCT	90.83	93.55	100.00	100.00
Q07	5A8	5A8	5A8	Greenwich Teaching PCT	80.40	93.36	100.00	100.00
Q07	5LD	5LD	5LD	Lambeth PCT	92.11	96.75	100.00	100.00
Q07	5LF	5LF	5LF	Lewisham PCT	95.59	92.74	97.36	100.00
Q07	5LE	5LE	5LE	Southwark PCT	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q08	5K9	5K9	5K9	Croydon PCT	95.41	98.92	100.00	100.00
Q08	5A5	5A5	5A5	Kingston PCT	93.30	93.93	100.00	100.00
Q08	5M6	5M6	5M6	Richmond & Twickenham PCT	98.50	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q08	5M7	5M7	5M7	Sutton & Merton PCT	83.63	100.00	100.00	100.00
Q08	5LG	5LG	5LG	Wandsworth PCT	85.04	98.52	100.00	100.00

[1] From April 2004, access to a GP at a local NHS Walk-in Centre may count towards the 48 hour primary care access target, but only for practices that have an agreement with an NHS Walk-in Centre, which offers GP services, that includes referring and/or diverting practice patients.

[2] From April 2003 Walthamstow, Leyton & Leytonstone PCT, Chingford, Wanstead & Woodford PCT and Redbridge PCT merged into the two new PCTs, Waltham Forest PCT and Redbridge PCT.

Source:
Primary Care Access Survey-Percentage of patients able to be offered a consultation with a general practitioner within two working days.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines she has *(a)* given to primary care staff on equitable and high quality treatment for patients living with HIV and *(b)* provided to GPs on best practice on HIV testing, referrals and information. [48476]

Caroline Flint: We endorsed the publication of the 'Recommended standards for NHS HIV' services in 2003, which includes a chapter on primary health care for people with HIV. This document was produced by the Medical Foundation for AIDS and Sexual Health, which has also produced the booklet 'HIV in Primary Care'—an essential guide to HIV for general practitioners, practice nurses and other members of the primary health care team.

The British Association of Sexual Health and HIV also have guidelines on HIV testing in primary care.

The National HIV Nurses Association is due to publish a set of HIV nursing competencies in 2006.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will increase resources for HIV testing in England; and if she will bring forward proposals to enable and regulate home testing for the infection. [49234]

Caroline Flint: Resources for HIV testing in England are not centrally allocated, and are included in primary care trust (PCT) baselines. It is for PCTs to determine the level of resources to meet the needs of their populations.

We have no current plans to update the HIV Testing Kits and Services Regulations 1992. We do, however, keep policy on HIV testing under ongoing review.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she plans to launch a new advertising campaign on the transmission of HIV/AIDS. [49797]

Caroline Flint: Awareness of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, will be addressed through a new sexual health media campaign, announced as part of the "Choosing Health" White Paper to modernise and transform sexual health in England. The campaign will focus on the risks of unprotected sex and the benefits of using condoms to avoid the risk of sexually transmitted infections including HIV.

A major aim for the new sexual health campaign is normalising condom use and implicitly this will contribute to reducing the risk of HIV. The proposed new campaign is additional and complementary to, existing HIV awareness campaigns for those most at risk, in partnership with key voluntary sector organisations.

Hospital Beds

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many hospital beds there were per capita in each health authority area in England for each year for which records are available; [47396]

(2) what the average bed occupancy rate was in each health authority area in England for each year for which records are available. [47397]

Jane Kennedy: Data for the years 2000–01 and 2001–02 are shown in the table. Health authorities (HA) were abolished in 2002 and, therefore, data after 2001–02 are not available on an HA basis.

Data prior to 2000–01 could be provided only at a disproportionate cost. However, trust level data on bed occupancy are available on the Department's website at: www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity. Data prior to 1996–97 are not available.

Influenza

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on which groups deemed at-risk by the Chief Medical Officer for the purposes of the influenza immunisation programme the Health Protection Agency does not require reports on uptake rates. [39362]

Caroline Flint: Uptake data are not collected by residential care home or those who are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill.

Mrs. Lait: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 4 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 136W, to question 32905 on influenza vaccination, if she will include in the groups recommended to receive influenza vaccination those people who are at greater risk of dying from respiratory disease because they are severely mentally ill with psychosis. [42038]

Caroline Flint: The groups recommended to receive influenza vaccination are based on clinical risk and are kept under review by the joint committee for vaccination and immunisation (JCVI). JCVI concluded in 2004 that there was insufficient evidence to show that people with mental illness were at an increased risk from flu.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what support she has offered to the Royal College of General Practitioners' Influenza Surveillance Unit beyond April. [43560]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department intends to continue provide funding for surveillance of influenza by the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) Birmingham Research Unit in 2006–07 and 2007–08. The level of funding to be provided has not yet been determined and will be subject of a forthcoming meeting between Departmental officials and the RCGP.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of possible levels of sickness absence and absenteeism in *(a)* the NHS and *(b)* other key services during an influenza pandemic. [43561]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As with many factors during a pandemic, the level of absenteeism will depend significantly on the nature of the pandemic virus and this cannot be known until after the virus emerges.

Over the period of a pandemic, which could be around three to four months, the proportion of the workforce who will take time off due to illness will be similar to the overall clinical attack rate. For example, if the overall clinical attack rate is 25 per cent., then a quarter of the workforce is likely to be ill over the three to four month period. The number absent at any particular time will be less, but will probably peak over two to three weeks.

The absenteeism rate is unlikely to be uniform across all sectors nor is it likely to occur at the same time in each company, sector or region. The level of absenteeism is likely to be dependent on the size of the organisation, the type of industry and the personal circumstances of the workforce.

On the national health service in particular, there is ongoing modelling work in this area to take account of the special circumstances of health care workers. Preliminary results indicate that the picture would be broadly the same as for other organisations, however, work is still in progress.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 729W, on influenza, when her Department's research to which she refers began; which bodies are conducting the research; when she expects the research to be completed; if she will place a copy of the research in the Library when completed; whether she expects to take a decision on the routine immunisation of those aged 50 and over in time for the 2006–07 winter flu immunisation programme; and if she will make a statement. [44243]

Caroline Flint: The Health Protection Agency's (HPA) centre for infections has carried out studies to provide estimates of the burden of disease associated with flu in all age groups. These studies included estimates of the impact of vaccinating young children against flu on the burden of disease associated with flu in all age groups.

These estimates have been obtained by developing an age-structured deterministic transmission dynamic model. This work will be published in a peer-reviewed journal in due course.

The main findings were presented at a meeting of the influenza subgroup of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation on 8 September 2005, the minutes of which is available on the Department's website at: www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/jcvi/mins-flu-080905.htm.

A paper about the effects of universal vaccination of children against influenza, written by a group that includes HPA staff, local and regional services, has been published recently in a peer-reviewed journal [1].

Reference:

[1] R. Jordan, M. Connock, E. Albon, A. Fry-Smith, B. Olowokure, J. Hawker, A. Burls. Universal vaccination of children against influenza: Are there indirect benefits to the community? A systematic review of the evidence.

Vaccine 2005.09.017 [email publication—ahead of print]

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received on the effectiveness of stockpiling *(a)* Relenza and *(b)* M2 inhibitors to prepare the NHS for tackling an influenza pandemic. [45516]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Departmental officials are actively reviewing the antiviral strategy in the context of emerging data and we are looking carefully at other antivirals as a possible back-up to oseltamivir.

The Department has been approached by the manufacturer of Relenza in relation to supply of that product for pandemic preparedness. There are practical issues to consider concerning use of Relenza during a pandemic, notably that the product is not licensed for prevention of influenza or for use in children and has to be administered via inhalation.

No decision has been made on whether to stockpile alternative antivirals, including M2 inhibitors, however, the Department is keeping its pandemic antiviral strategy under constant review and this remains an option.

Jentle Service

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much revenue has been raised by the Jentle Service at the maternity department of the Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital; and what the service offers to expectant mothers; [48074]

(2) how many women have so far subscribed to the Jentle Service provided by the maternity department at the Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital. [48073]

Jane Kennedy: The Hammersmith Hospitals Trust's scheme is called "Birth— the Jentle Midwifery Scheme". The scheme only applies to the Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea hospital.

The scheme provides for two options. The first is for private patients. The second option is a midwifery-led scheme for national health service patients, which offers continuity for the woman and ensures she has a named midwife throughout her pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period. The scheme incorporates antenatal care, the birth and postnatal care. The trust bills the woman £4,000 for this scheme. The option does not include any other services or facilities except that a single amenity room is included in the package for the first night, if one is available.

The number of women that have used the scheme including those delivered and those still pregnant is 74. The number of babies delivered so far is 51.

The total amount invoiced to date for the Jentle Midwifery Scheme is £164,998.

LIFT Scheme

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether the issues set out in the letter dated 13 December to a director of development of a primary care trust from the NHS LIFT Policy Lead of the Capital Investment Branch of her Department outlining mandatory changes to the Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) scheme were previously discussed with the chairman and members of the LIFT Liaison Organisation for Business Investors (LIFT LOBI); and what plans *(a)* she and *(b)* officials of her Department have to meet with LIFT LOBI to discuss these issues; [40119]

(2) whether the contents of the letter dated 13 December to a director of development of a primary care trust from the NHS Lift Policy Lead of the Capital Investment Branch of her Department outlining mandatory changes to the Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) scheme represent the policy of her Department; what consultations were undertaken with *(a)* primary care trusts, *(b)* LIFT companies, *(c)* Partnerships for Health, *(d)* business investors and *(e)* other stakeholders about the matters contained in that letter; and whether those consultations were in accordance with the Code of Practice on Consultations issued by the Cabinet Office; [40120]

(3) whether the issues set out in the letter dated 13 December to a director of development of a primary care trust from the NHS Lift Policy Lead of the Capital Investment Branch of her Department outlining mandatory changes to the Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) scheme were previously raised by the representatives of the Capital Investment Branch at the Lift in Action Steering Group on 4 November; [40121]

(4) what assessment she has made of whether the policy developments set out in the letter dated 13 December 2005 to a Director of Development of a Primary Care Trust from the NHS LIFT Policy Lead of the Capital Investment Branch of her Department outlining mandatory changes to the Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) scheme are consistent with *(a)* the findings of the recent National Audit Office Report on the LIFT scheme and *(b)* the letter from the chief executive of the national health service to the chair of the LIFT Liaison Organisation for Business Investors dated 25 October 2005; and if she will make a statement. [41914]

Mr. Byrne: The letter of 13 December, to the director of development for Bristol South and West Primary Care Trust, confirmed the Department's decision to require the standard private finance initiative contract to be used in future for complex individual Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) facilities with a capital value of over £25 million. This decision was taken to ensure appropriate risk transfer for these very large LIFT facilities, which are much larger and cover additional services than those originally intended to be undertaken under LIFT. The decision simply involves the use of a different contract for the limited number of LIFT facilities where it is more appropriate. It does not represent a major policy, financial or service change, and for this reason, no formal consultations were undertaken with stakeholders including the LIFT Liaison Organisation for Business Investors (LIFT LOBI). This is in line with the Cabinet Office's "Code of Practice on Consultation". The Department's national health service LIFT policy lead met representatives of LIFT LOBI on 9 January to discuss and explain the decision, and is also holding a series of meetings with the primary care trusts affected. I have no plans to meet members of LIFT LOBI.

The issues set out in the letter of 13 December were not raised by officials at the LIFT in action steering group meeting on 4 November as the policy was still under internal departmental development.

The policy developments set out in the letter are consistent with the National Audit Office report on the LIFT scheme, which endorses LIFT as an initiative to support the redevelopment of the primary care estate. They are also consistent with the letter from the chief executive of the NHS to the chair of the LIFT LOBI dated 25 October 2005.

Lyme Disease

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations she has received about the treatment of Lyme disease in England; and if she will make a statement. [46385]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* Three representations have been received concerning the diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease. Two

alleged that Lyme disease was not being correctly diagnosed or treated within the national health service and one was additionally concerned about risks of transmission via blood transfusion. A parliamentary question has also been asked about the use of intravenous ceftriaxone for Lyme disease.

The inspector of microbiology and infection control has confirmed that the internationally recognised criteria for the diagnosis of Lyme borreliosis are routinely used for diagnosis within the NHS through the Health Protection Agency's Lyme borreliosis specialist diagnostic service. These are based upon stringent interpretation of serological tests for specific antibodies to the causative organism, Borrelia burgdorferi and are recommended in the United States of America, Europe and the United Kingdom. The Inspector is concerned that some medical practitioners base their diagnosis on positive results from unsuitable and unvalidated tests performed in non-accredited laboratories. A warning was published in the American journal Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 11 February 2005, advising caution regarding many commercially promoted tests for Lyme borreliosis and restating the internationally accepted diagnostic criteria.

Treatment is with antibiotics. Detailed studies have shown excellent long term outcomes for most people who receive appropriate treatment. Repeated or prolonged courses of antibiotics have been shown not to help the small proportion of patients with post infection syndrome.

Macular Degeneration

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding has been committed in 2005-06 to research into ways of reducing the cost of curing age-related macular degeneration. [40604]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is investing £1 million in a study to gather evidence on the clinical and cost effectiveness of photodynamic therapy for people with the predominantly classic form of age-related macular degeneration. This study will inform the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence when its guidance on photodynamic therapy is reviewed in September 2006.

The Department is not looking specifically at ways of reducing the cost of curing age-related macular degeneration.

Medical Staff (Tooting)

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in the constituency of Tooting in (i) 1997 and (ii) the last year for which figures are available. [47755]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS) Staff, General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers), Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting staff and GP Practice Nurses, All Doctors and Nurses for selected organisations, 1997-2004, England

Number (headcount)

1997

			All Doctors	*HCHS Doctors*[1]	*Of which: General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)*[2]	*Nurses*	*Of which: Nursing, Midwifery and Health visiting staff*	*GP Practice Nurses*
Q08	South West London		2,541	1,762	779	8,231	7,725	506
	Of which:							
	RHF	Merton & Sutton Community Healthcare NHS Trust	68	68	n/a	523	523	n/a
	RHG	Richmond, Twickenham & Roehampton NHS Trust	152	152	n/a	990	990	n/a
	RQY	South West London & St. George's Mental Health NHS Trust	96	96	n/a	387	387	n/a
	RVM	South West London Community NHS Trust	—	—	n/a	—	—	n/a
	Q08	South West London SHA	—	—	n/a	—	—	n/a
	RJ7	St. George's Group NHS Trust	475	475	n/a	1,371	1,371	n/a
	RPP	Wandsworth Community Health NHS Trust	18	18	n/a	277	277	n/a
	5LG	Wandsworth PCT	—	—	n/a	—	—	n/a

2001

Number (headcount)

			All Doctors	*HCHS Doctors*[1]	*Of which: General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)*[2]	*Nurses*	*Of which: Nursing, Midwifery and Health visiting staff*	*GP Practice Nurses*
Q08	South West London		2,823	2,035	788	8,974	8530	444
	Of which:							
	RHF	Merton & Sutton Community Healthcare NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	RHG	Richmond, Twickenham & Roehampton NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

2001

						Number (headcount)	
			Of which:			Of which:	
		All Doctors	HCHS Doctors[1]	General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)[2]	Nurses	Nursing, Midwifery and Health visiting staff	GP Practice Nurses
RQY	South West London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust	220	220		907	907	
RVM	South West London Community NHS Trust	55	55		893	893	
Q08	South West London SHA						
RJ7	St. George's Group NHS Trust	619	619		1,765	1,765	
RPP	Wandsworth Community Health NHS Trust						
5LG	Wandsworth PCT	196		196	90		90

2004

						Number (headcount)	
			Of which:			Of which:	
		All Doctors	HCHS Doctors[1]	General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)[2]	Nurses	Nursing, Midwifery and Health visiting staff	GP Practice Nurses
Q08	South West London	3,558	2,619	939	10,735	10,241	494
	Of which						
RHF	Merton & Sutton Community Healthcare NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
RHG	Richmond, Twickenham & Roehampton NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
RQY	South West London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust	267	267		1,033	1,033	
RVM	South West London Community NHS Trust	4	4				
Q08	South West London SHA						
RJ7	St. George's Group NHS Trust	759	759		2,556	2,556	
RPP	Wandsworth Community Health NHS Trust						
5LG	Wandsworth PCT	241	47	194	600	483	117

n/a = Not available.
— = Denotes zero.
[1] Excludes Hospital Medical Hospital Practitioners and Hospital Medical Clinical Assistants, most of whom are GPs working part time in hospitals.
[2] General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers and registrars) includes Contracted GPs , GMS Others and PMS Others. Prior to September 2004 this group included GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs, PMS Salaried GPs, Restricted Principals, Assistants, Salaried Doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS Other, Flexible Career Scheme GPs and GP Returners.
Note:
Data as at 30 September each year except GP and Practice Nurse data as at 1 October 1997.
Sources:
Health and Social Care Information Centre General and Personal Medical Services Statistics
Health and Social Care Information Centre Medical and Dental Workforce Statistics
Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census

Mental Health

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of mental health care provision in Hertfordshire; and if she will make a statement. [48350]

Ms Rosie Winterton: An annual assessment if undertaken by mental health strategies on behalf of the Department. The latest published report is autumn 2005, "Assessment of Mental Health 2005" which is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/84/54/04118454.pdf and

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/84/55/04118455.pdf.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she intends to bring forward the Mental Health Bill in this session of Parliament. [47841]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We intend to bring forward a Mental Health Bill into Parliament when the legislative timetable permits.

MRSA

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many MRSA infections were recorded in NHS hospitals for *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004 and *(c)* 2005 and which of these (i) were in and (ii) were related to renal units by disease area. [45588]

Jane Kennedy: National surveillance covers methicillin resistant Staphylococcus "auerus" (MRSA) blood stream infections (bacteraemias), not all MRSA infections. National data is shown in the table and data

for individual trusts is available on the Departments website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/40/15/04114015.pdf.

	Number of MRSA bacteraemias
April 2002-March 2003	7,373
April 2003-March 2004	7,684
April 2004-March 2005	7,212

Source:
Health Protection Agency

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many MRSA cases have occurred in *(a)* Uxbridge constituency and *(b)* each London borough in each year since 1997. [48516]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not hold the information in the format requested.

However, a table showing the number of reported methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) cases by national health service trusts for the years 2001 to 2005 is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/40/15/04114015.pdf.

Tackling MRSA and other healthcare associated infections remains a priority for Government and the NHS. Staff across the NHS are working hard to reduce infections, though not all can be avoided. Considerable good work is under way in pursuit of our key target to reduce by half the annual bacteraemia cases by April 2008.

Multiple Sclerosis Centres

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what representations she has received on the impact of inspection fees on the viability of multiple sclerosis treatment centres run on a charity basis; [48263]

(2) what assessment she has made of the merits of waiving inspection fees for multiple sclerosis centres. [49204]

Jane Kennedy: Revised regulatory fees payable to the Healthcare Commission by private and voluntary health care providers in 2005-06 were announced in February 2005. Since then I have received representations from more than 30 hon. and right hon. Members about the fees payable by multiple sclerosis therapy centres. I have also received several representations from members of the public and therapy centre staff. I met therapy centre representatives in July. I have concluded that these centres should continue to be subject to regulation by the Healthcare Commission.

The Healthcare Commission is currently consulting on the regulatory fee structure for 2006-07; the consultation document seeks views on whether establishments that are substantially reliant on voluntary donations for their income should be subject to a subsidised fee and, if so, the size of that subsidy and how it might be funded. The consultation period ends on 24 February.

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many meetings Ministers in her Department have had with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence in the last 12 months; and what the reasons for the meetings were in each case. [45365]

Jane Kennedy: In the past 12 months there have been five meetings between departmental Ministers and the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE). Those meeting and their purposes are as follows:

Meeting between the chair and chief executive of NICE with myself and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health, my hon. Friend the Member for Don Valley (Caroline Flint) on 9 June 2005 as an introduction to NICE'S work;

Annual accountability review of NICE attended by myself, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health, my hon. Friend the Member for Don Valley (Caroline Flint) and Brian Gibbons AM, the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Health and Social Services, on 13 October 2005;

Meeting between Professor Sir Michael Rawlins and Lord Warner on 9 January 2006 to discuss the potential contribution of NICE to the quality and outcomes framework;

Meeting between Professor Sir Michael Rawlins and the Secretary of State on 12 January 2006 to discuss NICE'S citizens council, and

Meeting between the chair and chief executive of NICE and myself on 30 January 2006 to have an informal general discussion on issues concerning NICE.

NHS Cancer Plan

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to review the NHS Cancer Plan. [43527]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We are constantly reviewing how best to take account of changes in the national health service and developments in cancer. The NHS Cancer Plan is a 10-year strategy to improve cancer services in England and raise the level of our cancer services to the best in Europe. We are now five years into the NHS Cancer Plan and are focused on delivering its commitments. Once these have been delivered we will give further consideration to whether an updated cancer plan is needed.

NHS Database

Mr. Ian Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding her Department will make available to general practitioners for entry of patients' records onto the central NHS database by 2010; and what contingency plans she will put in place for errors in code conversions from general practitioners' records to the database. [44109]

Mr. Byrne: Under the terms of their contract, contractors receive a global sum which is a contribution towards the contractor's costs in delivering essential and additional services, including maintaining adequate patient records. In addition, contractors can obtain points within the quality and outcomes framework on a number of areas relating to the maintenance of patient records. The relevant indicators are outlined in annex D of the statement of financial entitlements, which is available in the Library. There are no current plans to

provide additional financial support to general practitioners specifically for entry of patients' records on the national health service care records service (NHS CRS).

The transfer of local records to the NHS CRS requires compliance with NHS Connecting for Health's stringent data migration quality standards. However, good practice guidelines for general practice electronic patient records developed by the General Practitioners Committee and the Royal College of General Practitioners, and issued by the Department, make it clear that responsibility for the quality of the necessary transfer processes, and for ensuring information is accurate and up-to-date, lies with the individual practice. This includes the putting in place of procedures to identify and resolve where an error occurs in code conversion. That could be as simple as reviewing and verifying the relevant record with the patient at the next consultation.

NHS Sites (Crimes)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many crimes have been committed at *(a)* NHS hospitals and *(b)* other NHS sites in each year since 1997, broken down by type of crime. [48837]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available in the format requested.

Obesity

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the obesity levels were for *(a)* children and *(b)* adults in (i) each health authority area and (ii) each local authority area for the past 30 years in descending order according to the most recent figures. [45565]

Caroline Flint: The data are not available in the format requested. The main source of data on the prevalence of obesity is the Health Survey for England (HSE).

Data on obesity prevalence in children are available at a national level from the Health Survey for England 2002. This survey is available on the Department's website at: www.archive2.official-documents.co.uk/document/deps/doh/survey02/hse02.htm. The children's sample size of the HSE does not allow figures to be produced at the level of strategic health authority (SHA) or local authority area.

Data on obesity in adults are shown in table 1. The table provides the proportion of adults, aged 16 and over, who are obese (mean body mass index (BMI) over 30) for each SHA between 1994 and 2002. Data for earlier years are not available. The results from the table are taken from the Health Survey for England: Health and lifestyles indicators for Strategic Health Authorities 1994–2002 report. The data shows BMI as a three-year moving average, with the latest data available in this format being 2000–2002. The sample size of the HSE does not allow figures to be produced at the level of local health authority areas.

Table 1: Age standardised proportion of adults who are obese (BMI over 30), by year (three-year moving average) and sex, England, 1994–2002

Persons

Area Code	*Name*	*1994–96* %	*SI*	*1995–97* %	*SI*	*1996–98* %	*SI*	*1997–99* %	*SI*
Q10	County Durham and Tees Valley	16.5		18.9		19.2		19.1	
Q09	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	16.3		18.4		19.9		21.0	
Q15	Cheshire and Merseyside	16.1		16.1		17.0		18.6	
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire	15.0		17.4		18.7		19.3	
Q14	Greater Manchester	14.9	Low	15.3	Low	17.0		19.0	
Q11	North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	17.6		18.6		19.7		20.2	
Q23		19.1	High	17.9		18.6		17.1	
Q12	West Yorkshire	16.3		16.1		18.1		18.2	
Q25	Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	16.6		16.5		16.8		18.2	
Q24	Trent	18.4	High	18.9		19.5		19.1	
Q27	Birmingham and the Black Country	20.4	High	20.7	High	21.3	High	21.3	High
Q28	West Midlands South	16.1		17.7		19.3		21.9	
Q26	Shropshire and Staffordshire	19.0	High	19.3		19.0		20.6	
Q02	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	15.5		16.1		16.3		18.4	
Q03	Essex	13.8		16.5		18.3		17.9	
Q01				17.2		19.5		19.9	
Q05	North Central London	13.1	Low	14.8		15.5		14.1	
Q06	North East London	16.6		17.7		18.0		20.1	
Q04	North West London	16.1		17.1		17.1		18.8	
Q07	South East London	19.1	High	18.8		18.8		18.8	
Q08	South West London	12.3	Low	12.5	Low	14.8	Low	15.4	
Q17	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	15.0		17.1		17.9		18.8	
Q18	Kent and Medway	17.7		20.0	High	20.3		19.7	
Q19	Surrey and Sussex	13.4	Low	14.9	Low	16.9		17.4	
Q16	Thames Valley	16.9		17.1		16.7		16.5	
Q20	Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	15.8		15.4	Low	15.8	Low	16.1	Low
Q22	Dorset and Somerset	18.3		18.6		19.1		19.3	
Q21	South West Peninsula	16.9		18.1		17.8		18.9	

Code	*Name*	*1998–2000* %	*SI*	*1999–2001* %	*SI*	*2000–02* %	*SI*
Q10	County Durham and Tees Valley	19.3		23.8		27.3	High
Q09	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	20.8		21.3		21.3	

Code	Name	1998–2000 %	SI	1999–2001 %	SI	2000–02 %	SI
Q15	Cheshire and Merseyside	19.4		20.9		21.0	
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire	21.2		21.5		22.4	
Q14	Greater Manchester	20.3		20.2		21.1	
Q11	North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	21.7		23.9	High	26.1	High
Q23		18.0		17.1	Low	19.6	
Q12	West Yorkshire	18.1		18.5		20.8	
Q25	Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	20.5		22.1		24.3	
Q24	Trent	21.7		23.0		25.1	High
Q27	Birmingham and the Black Country	23.4	High	24.0	High	24.9	High
Q28	West Midlands South	21.1		23.1		22.6	
Q26	Shropshire and Staffordshire	21.5		22.1		22.9	
Q02	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	18.1		20.1		18.8	Low
Q03	Essex	19.4		19.2		20.2	
Q01		20.1		20.6		21.6	
Q05	North Central London	17.9		17.5		18.4	
Q06	North East London	20.7		20.9		20.7	
Q04	North West London	19.8		21.0		18.4	Low
Q07	South East London	18.6		18.2		19.2	
Q08	South West London	20.2		19.9		24.3	
Q17	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	19.4		20.9		21.4	
Q18	Kent and Medway	20.0		21.5		23.1	
Q19	Surrey and Sussex	17.4	Low	17.3	Low	17.6	Low
Q16	Thames Valley	17.3	Low	17.3	Low	18.9	Low
Q20	Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	17.8		19.4		17.3	Low
Q22	Dorset and Somerset	18.9		19.7		19.3	
Q21	South West Peninsula	18.5		19.9		19.9	

Notes

In the SI (significance indicator) column, "High"/"Low" indicate age standardised values for this SHA that are significantly higher/lower than the England average, at the 95 per cent. confidence level.

LCL = Lower 95 per cent. confidence interval; UCL = Upper 95 per cent. confidence interval

Source

Health Survey for England: Health and Lifestyle indicators for Strategic Health Authorities 1994–2002 Department of Health

Table 2 shows the proportion of adults who are obese (BMI of 30 and above) for each Government office region for 2003

Obesity prevalence (age-standardised), by Government office region and sex

Percentage

Aged 16 and over with both valid height and weight measurements	Government office region									2003
BMI (kg/m2) over 30	North East	North West	Yorkshire and the Humber	East Midlands	West Midlands	East England	London	South East	South West	
Men	22.6	23.8	25.4	23.8	24.1	24.6	18.7	19.5	22.4	
Women	26.6	26.1	28.5	27.4	31.4	26.9	23.0	21.1	22.5	
Bases (unweighted)										
Men	368	849	560	574	629	728	727.0	930	601	
Women	468	1006	667	678	778	825	837.0	1119	712	
Bases (weighted)										
Men	339	878	634	591	676	755	930.0	1052	663	
Women	376	901	650	582	696	735	876.0	1071	683	

Source

Health Survey for England 2003—Risk factors for cardiovascular disease

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many primary school pupils in *(a)* England, *(b)* London, *(c)* London borough of Hillingdon and *(d)* Uxbridge constituency are identified as (i) overweight and (ii) obese. [46592]

Caroline Flint: The data are not available in the format requested. The main source of data on the prevalence of obesity is the health survey for England (HSE). The sample size of the health survey does not allow figures to be produced at the level of London boroughs or parliamentary constituencies. For children, aged two to 10 years, national and Government office region (GOR) figures are presented using the national BMI percentile classification.

The available information is presented in the two following tables, using the estimated obesity and/or overweight prevalence results of the HSE for 2001, 2002 and 2003. The national level data presented are the most recent available, and shows overweight and obesity prevalence among children. Data at GOR level is only available for obesity prevalence. GOR data provided are the most recent available and use combined information from the 2001 and 2002 surveys.

Overweight and obesity prevalence among children aged two to 10-years, England, 2003

	Children aged two-10-years with valid BMI
Obese percentage	13.7
Overweight including obese percentage	27.7
Bases (weighted)	1774
Bases (unweighted)	1733

Notes:

Prevalence based on the UK national BMI percentile classification.

Source:

"Obesity among children under 11, 2005". Department of Health and the Health and Social Care Information Centre

Obesity prevalence among children aged two to 10-years, London, 2001-02

	Children aged two-10-years with valid BMI
Obese percentage	18.2
Bases (weighted)	830
Bases (unweighted)	701

Notes:
Prevalence based on the UK national BMI percentile classification.

Source:
"Obesity among children under 11, 2005". Department of Health and the Health and Social Care Information Centre

Patient Deaths

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS patient deaths there were in each of the last three years *(a)* during operations and *(b)* post-operatively. [47833]

Jane Kennedy: The specific information as requested is not collected centrally.

Physiotherapy Services

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the waiting time for emergency physiotherapy in the *(a)* Brighton and *(b)* Adur, Arun and Worthing Primary Care Trust area was in the latest period for which figures are available; [48261]

(2) what the waiting time for non-urgent physiotherapy in the *(a)* Brighton and *(b)* Adur, Arun and Worthing Primary Care Trust area was in the latest period for which figures are available. [48262]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Recombinant Factor VIII

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what period of time her Department plans to fund recombinant Factor VIII for use by haemophiliacs in the UK. [49699]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* Department officials have been closely monitoring the implementation of the recombinant roll-out programme over the past two years. The Government remains committed to this programme and we are currently considering options for future funding of this important treatment.

Sexual Health

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the Government have allocated for its publicity campaign on sexually transmitted diseases; and when it will begin. [49798]

Caroline Flint: Our current plans are to aim to launch the new sexual health campaign later in 2006. The campaign will be funded from the additional monies announced for sexual health over three years as a result of the Choosing Health White Paper to modernise and transform sexual health in England.

Turnaround Teams

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what funding she allocated to the external commercial turnaround expertise sent to the Kennett and North Wiltshire Primary Care Trust; and from what budget this funding will be drawn; what the remit is and by what criteria she will judge its success. [46892]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* The turnaround teams were announced in a ministerial statement on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS. The teams will comprise of experts with a mix of commercial and national health service turnaround skills.

The first stage of this is a baseline assessment, the aim of which is to ensure there is an agreed understanding of the local financial problem and that actions are in hand to address this.

The contract for the baseline assessment was awarded to consultants KPMG. Kennett and North Wiltshire Primary Care Trust's (PCT) assessment was included in this assessment. The value of this contract is commercial in confidence.

Following the baseline assessment a tailored package of turnaround support will be agreed by the local NHS. The first three months of a turnaround director at the PCT will be funded by the Department. The remit is to support the local management enable the PCT to deliver its statutory duties, including financial balance, and key national targets.

I envisage that the turnaround teams will be needed to the end of 2006-07, when I expect the NHS to have returned to financial balance.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many financial directors have been removed from *(a)* NHS trusts and *(b)* strategic health authorities as a direct result of findings following visits from turnaround teams in the past two years and how many in each case have been removed to date in 2005-06. [47392]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not held centrally.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total cost is of the turnaround work in the NHS in *(a)* England, *(b)* York and *(c)* North Yorkshire. [46885]

Jane Kennedy: The turnaround teams were announced in a ministerial statement on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS. The teams will comprise of experts with a mix of commercial and national health service turnaround skills.

The first stage of this is a baseline assessment, the aim of which is to ensure there is an agreed understanding of the local financial problem and that actions are in hand to address this.

Selby and York primary care trust (PCT), Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT and Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale PCT are included in this assessment. The value of the contract to run the baseline assessment exercise is commercial in confidence.

A national programme office, to coordinate the turnaround programme, has been established; its value is also commercial in confidence.

Following the baseline assessment a tailored package of turnaround support will be agreed with each organisation. The costs will depend on the packages of support agreed.

Vulnerable Adults

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many checks against the protection of vulnerable adults list were made in the last year for which figures are available; and what the average time taken to respond to each check was in the last period for which figures are available. [44899]

Mr. Byrne: The Criminal Records Bureau's (CRB) standard and enhanced disclosures will include a check against the protection of vulnerable adults (POVA) list where this is requested on the application form. The total number of disclosures issued in 2005 containing a check against the POVA list was 1,366,698. The CRB service standards are to process 93 per cent. of standard disclosure applications within two weeks and 90 per cent. of enhanced disclosure applications within four weeks.

I understand from the CRB, that there are no figures available to determine the average time taken to process a POVA check because the check forms part of the overall internal CRB disclosure process and figures are not collated centrally.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 13 February 2006

PRIME MINISTER

Butler Inquiry

Adam Price: To ask the Prime Minister whether the Government provided information to the Butler inquiry team relating to his meeting with President Bush and his advisers held at the White House on 31 January 2003. [51515]

The Prime Minister: The Government co-operated fully with the Butler review.

TRANSPORT

Maritime Safety

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many cases involving *(a)* near miss incidents and *(b)* contraventions of International Collisi Prevention Regulations there have been in the Cha. el in each year since 2000, broken down by flag. [48825]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of near miss incidents and contraventions of International Collision Prevention Regulations, broken down by flag, by year is shown in the following table.

	Near misses			*Contraventions of ICPR*		
	2003	*2004*	*2005*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Antigua and Barbuda	—	1	3	4	3	1
Bahamas	2	—	—	—	1	6
Barbados	1	—	—	—	1	9
Belgium	—	—	2	12	12	—
Bermuda	—	—	1	—	—	—
Brazil	—	—	1	—	—	—
British Virgin Islands	—	—	—	—	1	—
Bulgaria	—	1	—	—	—	—
Cayman Islands	—	—	1	1	1	1
China	—	—	—	—	1	1
Comoros	1	—	—	—	—	—
Cyprus	1	—	2	—	4	—
Denmark	—	1	—	—	—	—
France	3	2	2	26	19	13
French Antarctic Territories	1	—	—	2	1	—
Germany	—	—	—	3	—	1
Greece	—	—	1	2	—	—
Hong Kong China	—	—	—	—	—	3
India	—	—	—	—	—	1
Iran	—	—	—	—	—	1
Irish Republic	—	—	—	—	—	1
Isle of Man	1	—	—	—	—	3
Italy	—	—	1	1	1	—
Korea (North)	—	—	—	1	—	—
Liberia	1	1	2	—	2	1
Malaysia	1	—	—	—	—	—
Malta	—	—	1	2	—	5
Marshall Islands	—	—	—	2	—	—
Netherlands	2	2	2	5	4	2
Netherlands Antilles	—	—	—	—	—	1
Norway	1	—	1	3	4	—
Panama	9	2	5	4	6	10
Philippines	1	—	—	2	—	—
Portugal	—	1	—	—	—	—
Portugal (MAR)	—	—	—	—	1	1
Russia	1	—	—	2	1	1
Spain	—	1	—	—	—	—
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	—	—	—	3	2	—
Sweden	—	—	—	1	—	—
Turkey	1	—	—	2	1	—
United Kingdom	1	—	2	5	7	9
Total	28	12	27	85	71	71

The figures are taken from the Channel Navigation Information Service (CNIS) for the period 23 February 2003 to 31 December 2005. CNIS was installed and commissioned in February 2003.

Buses

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many new bus services have commenced running in the North Western Traffic Area in each financial year since 1997. [50356]

Ms Buck: The following table shows the number of new bus services registered in the North Western Traffic Area in each financial year since 1 April 1998. The number of services registered before this date cannot be recovered without disproportionate cost.

Financial year	*New bus services registered*
1998–99	1,243
1999–2000	1,077
2000–01	1,147
2001–02	933
2002–03	926
2003–04	772
2004–05	842

Commission for Integrated Transport

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of whether there is a potential conflict of interest between the chairmanship of his Commission for Integrated Transport and the role of Transport for London Commissioner. [50817]

Ms Buck: The role of the Commission for Integrated Transport (CfIT) is focussed on future strategic issues and best practice at a national level, so I am satisfied that there is no general conflict of interest. I believe CfIT benefits from the added value of such a senior figure as Chair. However, in the event that CfIT's work was to impinge on TfL's responsibilities the Chair has made it clear that he would declare an interest and if necessary excuse himself from that work. There are many other commissioners and a Vice Chair of CfIT who in that case would have no conflict.

Ferries (Fire Safety)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the recommended method is of extinguishing fires on board roll-on roll-off ferries; and if he will make a statement. [50143]

Dr. Ladyman: The Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS 1974) requires passenger roll-on roll-off ferries to be fitted with a type-approved, fixed pressure water spraying system to extinguish fires on the vehicle decks.

The convention also requires drainage or pumping arrangements sufficient to ensure that the water from the spraying system will be discharged rapidly from the ship, to avoid the serious loss of stability that could arise due to water accumulating on the vehicle decks.

Structural fire protection and fire suppression systems are also required throughout the accommodation and machinery spaces.

Heathrow Airport

Mr. Marshall-Andrews: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many and what proportion of night flights into Heathrow operated on (*a*) a westerly and (*b*) an easterly flight path (i) in 2004 and (ii) in 2005. [48014]

Ms Buck: The Department does not hold detailed information on this, which is an operational matter for National Air Traffic Services Ltd. (NATS). I understand that they are willing to assist in collating this information and suggest my hon. and learned Friend directs his inquiries to the chief executive of NATS.

Hydrogen Powered Fuel Cell Buses

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much the trial of hydrogen powered fuel cell buses in London cost; and how much of this amount was met by (*a*) his Department, (*b*) the European Union, (*c*) the Energy Saving Trust and (*d*) other sources; [48264]

(2) whether he has received a report on the conclusions drawn from the trial of hydrogen powered fuel cell buses in London; and when he next expects to receive such a report; [48265]

(3) how many hydrogen powered fuel cell buses have been in operation in each year since 2004. [48267]

Ms Buck: Three hydrogen-powered buses have been in operation in London since January 2004 as part of a European demonstration programme supported by this Department and a number of other stakeholders. No other hydrogen-powered buses have been in operation in the UK during the years in question.

The trial was due to finish in December 2005, but London and a number of other European cities taking part in similar trials are currently in discussions with the European Commission about extending the project for a further year. A report summarising the lessons learned from the trials across Europe is due to be published shortly.

We estimate that the total costs of the London trial have amounted to over £3 million. Costs have been shared among a number of partners. The European Commission provided just over £1 million of support, and the UK Government provided just under £500,000 through the Department for Transport's New Vehicle Technology Fund programme, administered by the Energy Savings Trust. The trial was overseen by Transport for London and a number of other project partners provided financial and other support. These included London Bus Services Ltd., FirstGroup, Daimler-Chrysler, Ballard, and BP.

Limousines (Licensing)

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Department plans to establish a working party involving interested parties to examine the regulations surrounding the licensing of limousines and stretch limousines. [48950]

Ms Buck *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* We are satisfied that current legislation adequately caters for the licensing of limousines. We are aware of the concerns over stretch limousines and will update our advice to the industry in the near future. We have no plans to set up a working party.

Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many inspectors have been employed by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in each year since 2000; and how many inspections were carried out by the agency in each year since 2000, broken down by flag. [48826]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of inspectors (surveying staff carrying out Port State Control duties) employed by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) for 2004 was 105. The MCA do not have any staff who work exclusively on Port State Control, but the effort in this activity is about 18 full-time equivalents.

102 inspectors were employed in 2003. Figures for previous years are unavailable.

The number of inspections carried out per year is as follows:

	UK ships	*Foreign ships*	*Total*
2000	622	1,806	2,428
2001	683	1,811	2,494
2002	845	1,769	2,614
2003	905	1,692	2,597
2004	984	1,768	2,752

The breakdown by flag is available within the MCA's Annual Plan and Accounts, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funds were allocated for external radio surveys of merchant ships on behalf of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in 2005–06; how much of this fund remains to be spent; and if he will make a statement. [48828]

Dr. Ladyman: No funds were allocated for external radio surveys of merchant ships on behalf of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in 2005–06. Vessel owners/operators are responsible for the payment of survey charges.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the retirement age is for employees of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. [51498]

Dr. Ladyman: Employees of the Coastguard may retire at the age of 60 although they have the right to choose to continue in service up to the age of 65.

Merchant Navy (Competency Certificates)

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many holders of certificates of equivalent competency are serving on merchant vessels which joined the UK shipping register since 2000. [48827]

Dr. Ladyman: There are currently 8,957 valid holders of Certificates of Equivalent Competency (CECs) in circulation, these having been issued within the last five years. Records of where the holders are currently serving are not kept.

Ministerial Cars

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will ensure that all ministerial cars are converted to run on an 85 per cent. biofuel blend as soon as is practically possible. [49589]

Ms Buck: The responsibility for the provision of ministerial cars and drivers has been delegated under the terms of the framework document to the Government Car Despatch Agency. I have asked its Chief Executive Mr. Roy Burke to write to my hon. Friend. Copies of his letter will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Roy Burke, dated 13 February 2006:

You recently tabled a Parliamentary Question about the fuel used by the Government car fleet. The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State has asked me to write in my capacity as the Chief Executive responsible for the Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA).

GCDA is committed to ensuring that all its vehicles are as environmentally friendly as they can be while meeting the needs of Government. All new vehicles purchased by the Agency will be environmentally friendly. They are either a vehicle with a diesel engine capable of running on bio diesel or a hybrid vehicle.

Currently there are few vehicles that can be run on bioethanol and conversion at this point in time would be likely to invalidate the manufacturer's warranty. Further, there are very few places in the UK where bioethanol can be purchased. We will continue to monitor the situation and when the technologies of vehicle and fuel are more widely available we will use the most environmentally friendly option available.

A copy of this letter has been placed in the Libraries of the House for information.

Parliamentary Questions

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance his Department follows on answering parliamentary questions. [48248]

Ms Buck: The Department follows the "Ministerial Code", the "Civil Service Code" and "Guidance to Officials on Drafting Responses to Parliamentary Questions" when answering parliamentary questions. Copies of these documents are available in the Library.

Rail Safety (Hampshire)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which train level crossings in Hampshire *(a)* are unmanned, *(b)* have half barriers and *(c)* have full barriers; which (i) have and (ii) do not have CCTV; and what steps will be taken to upgrade unmanned or those with half barriers in (A) 2005–06 and (B) 2006–07. [47252]

Derek Twigg: The information is not held centrally in the form requested.

Rail Services

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will reverse the decision of the Office of Rail Regulation to reject GNER's plans for further half hourly services between London and Leeds including stops at Peterborough. [50342]

Derek Twigg: The decision is one for the independent Office of Rail Regulation (ORR).

Rail Strikes

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with Virgin Cross Country regarding the use of untrained staff on strike days in the current dispute with the Rail, Maritime and Transport Union. [49763]

Derek Twigg: Pay and conditions are matters for negotiation between staff and employers. Her Majesty's Rail Inspectorate have been consulted on the arrangements of trained staff to provide cover as guards/train managers on strike days. The company are satisfied that their safety case has not been compromised.

Road Pricing Schemes

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department has published guidelines on whether *(a)* local and *(b)* national road pricing schemes should be revenue neutral; and if he will make a statement. [48250]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has not published guidance on whether local and national road pricing schemes should be revenue neutral.

Road Signs

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is on conversion of British road signs to metric. [50305]

Ms Buck: The Government have no such proposals. UK legislation requires that imperial units be used for indicating speeds and distances on traffic signs. EC legislation on units of measurement (council directive 80/181/EEC, as amended by directive 89/617/EEC) allows the continuing use of miles and yards on UK road signs.

Roadworks (Speed Restrictions)

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many speed restrictions have been imposed as a result of roadworks in each of the last five years; and how many have continued to operate when work on the road is not happening. [48255]

Dr. Ladyman: Traffic authorities are responsible for setting local speed limits, including temporary restrictions at roadworks. These records are retained by individual traffic authorities but there are no central

figures indicating how many speed restrictions have been imposed as a result of roadworks in the last five years.

Temporary speed restrictions are for the benefit of both road workers and road users, and are considered when a temporary hazard exists such as restricted visibility, narrow lanes, loss of vehicle restraint barrier, or other construction hazard. While it may not always be obvious to passing motorists that such a hazard exists, it is important that any imposed speed restrictions should remain as long as the hazard remains, even when no work is physically taking place.

Traffic Management Act

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what penalties have been issued by each local authority for disruption caused by roadworks under the Traffic Management Act 2004; and what the cash value of these penalties is. [48227]

Ms Buck: The regulations enabling penalties have not yet been made. Consequently penalty notices cannot yet be issued under the Traffic Management Act 2004.

Tyne and Wear (Financial Bids)

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what payments have been made to Newcastle City Council and its partners for the Quayside Transit System, broken down by year. [34378]

Ms Buck *[pursuant to the reply, 8 December 2005, Official Report, c. 1465W]:* The Department has paid Newcastle city council a total of £4.711 million for the Quayside Public Transport Scheme.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Hague: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to achieve a sustained and significant reduction in the production and trafficking of narcotics in the Afghan province of Helmand; and if he will make a statement. [49316]

Mr. Straw: The southern province of Helmand is one of Afghanistan's most significant poppy growing provinces. As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence announced on 26 January, UK troops will be deployed to Helmand in support of a UN authorised, NATO-led mission, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and as part of the international coalition. They will work to counter insurgency and help the appropriate authorities build security and Government institutions to continue the progress of recent years. Above all, their presence will help the Afghans create the environment in which economic development and institutional reform—both essential to the elimination of the opium industry—can take place. ISAF forces will help with the provision of training to Afghan counter-narcotics forces and will when necessary provide support to their operations. They will help the Afghan Government explain their policies to the people.

The UK's aim is to make drug production a high risk/low benefit endeavour by developing a stronger and more effective provincial government, strengthening the Governor and his office, building greater local drugs law enforcement capacity (strengthening the Counter Narcotics Police) and developing criminal justice systems to deliver sustained progress against the drugs trade. We will work with the Government of Afghanistan to increase access to legal rural livelihoods and to increase the perception of risk associated with poppy cultivation to encourage farmers and traffickers to make a sustained move away from cultivation of opium poppy.

Our counter narcotics objectives for Helmand are consistent with the Afghan National Drug Control Strategy, which the Afghan Government recently reviewed and updated with the support of the UK as partner nation for counter narcotics. The strategy was launched at the London Conference on 31 January & 1 February. It sets out four key priorities, which we believe will help make a greater impact on the trade and sustain the reduction in cultivation we have seen in 2005. These are: targeting traffickers; strengthening and diversifying legal rural livelihoods; building institutions; and demand reduction.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what contribution other countries are making to the British led anti-opium initiative in Afghanistan. [49445]

Dr. Howells: The Government of Afghanistan is responsible for leading the counter narcotics effort in Afghanistan. As key partner nation for counter narcotics, the UK is committed to helping Afghanistan deliver its National Drug Control Strategy and to coordinating international assistance in support of the strategy.

It is not possible to quantify, numerically, the total level of counter narcotics assistance provided by the international community as much of it takes the form of capacity building, including the secondment of mentors and trainers to the counter narcotics police of Afghanistan and the counter narcotics criminal justice task force. Equally there is no clear dividing line between broader reconstruction and counter narcotics specific assistance.

However, the US is the biggest contributor to the Government of Afghanistan's counter narcotics campaign—spending US$787.9 million in 2005. Other key players include EU member states and the Commission (spending €150 million from 2005, excluding UK spending), Norway, Canada and Afghanistan's regional partners.

Australia, New Zealand, the European Commission, Estonia, Sweden, the US, Korea and the UK have also contributed to the Counter Narcotics Trust Fund (CNTF), launched by the Government of Afghanistan in October 2005. To date, total commitments to the CNTF stand at US$77.5 million.

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what payments he has authorised to Afghan poppy farmers; and if he will make a statement. [50946]

Dr. Howells: In 2002, the Afghan Transitional Authority considered it appropriate to offer a one-off programme of compensation payments to opium poppy farmers on the basis that the poppy crop had been planted during the Taliban regime, before the current regime came to power. The UK provided financial assistance worth £21.25 million in order to support the new regime's commitment to tackle drugs production, but it was the responsibility of the Afghan authorities to administer the system of payments. The UK has not authorised any further payments.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the death of Mr. Steve MacQueen in Afghanistan; and what stage British investigations of his death have reached. [51158]

Dr. Howells: Steven MacQueen, a British national working for the World Bank as an adviser to the Government of Afghanistan's Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, was shot and killed by unknown attackers in a main street in Kabul on 7 March 2005.

The Government of Afghanistan asked the UK to assist with their investigation into Mr. MacQueen's murder. Officers of the Metropolitan police service visited Kabul in March, May, July and November 2005 to assist the Government of Afghanistan with their on-going investigations. To date, no-one has been charged.

Belarus

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to encourage the development of civil society in Belarus. [49607]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) provides support for non-governmental organisations and help to civil society in Belarus under the Global Opportunities Fund and other FCO budgets. Since 2002, we have provided over £1,500,000 for this purpose. The Government also provide funding through the EU. During the UK's presidency, the EU agreed steps to increase contact with the Belarusian people and to strengthen support for civil society, including through technical assistance and by opening an EU office in Minsk. To this end the EU has transferred €2 million to the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights programme, which is better suited to providing support for civil society.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether *(a)* at and *(b)* at General Affairs Council meetings since the meeting of the General Affairs Council of the EU on 21 and 22 November 2005 he (i) proposed a commitment of and (ii) was asked to contribute (A) arms and (B) material to the EU mission in Congo. [48774]

Ian Pearson: The UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guehenno, wrote to my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary in his capacity as President of the General Affairs Council on 28 December 2005. He asked if the EU could consider making available a deterrent force which could be deployed, if necessary, to the Democratic Republic of Congo during the forthcoming election period. The EU is working with the UN on clarifying its requirements. An EU fact finding mission visited Kinshasa and New York last week.

The UK believes that the EU should consider the UN request favourably. But the UK's ability to contribute to any EU mission will be constrained by its heavy operational commitments elsewhere.

Departmental Catering Budget

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much and what proportion of his Department's catering budget was spent on fairtrade produce in the last period for which figures are available. [49913]

Mr. Straw: During the 2004–05 financial year, £256,419 was spent on fairtrade products with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's catering contractor, in the UK. This represents 19 per cent. of the overall spend with the contractor during that period.

Details for the overseas estate can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Details for Government hospitality are not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's policy is on the procurement of fairtrade produce for consumption on its premises. [49924]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) policy on the procurement of fairtrade produce is to ensure that fairtrade produce is available to purchase and the FCO will explore options to expand the variety of fairtrade options offered for sale, within the boundaries of good procurement practice including value for money. Tea and coffee provided for official functions are fairtrade.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in each English region in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40085]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) maintains buildings in London and at Hanslope Park in Buckinghamshire. It is responsible for one executive agency, the Wilton Park Conference Centre, which maintains buildings in Sussex. The expenditure for each of these areas for the years requested is shown in the following table.

£

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06[1]
Buildings				
London	3,185,126.11	4,002,514.96	4,213,034.85	2,928,312.00
Hanslope Park	956,842.67	589,299.48	1,169,837.24	1,239,319.00
Wilton Park	158,620.00	170,552.00	184,120.00	151,880.00
Insurance				
London	0	0	0	0
Hanslope Park	0	0	0	0
Wilton Park	43,893	53,303	64,606	68,275

[1] Estimated

The estimated figure for London buildings is lower than previous years as an additional £921,560 for the maintenance of the fabric of the buildings has been allocated in the mid-year review, but has not yet been allocated to individual buildings. This brings the total estimated spend to slightly below last year's actual spend.

London and Hanslope Park buildings are not insured—the office acts as it's own insurer. The Wilton Park buildings are insured under the current lease agreement.

The FCO also has responsibility for a number of non-departmental public bodies which have recorded expenditure on buildings and insurance in these financial years. The following expenditure was made in London.

£

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06[1]
Buildings				
British Council[2]	5,600,000	5,600,000	4,800,000	5,700,000
Westminster Foundation for Democracy	41,824	89,402	50,028	88,004
British Association for Central and Eastern Europe	32,787	30,583	34,139	31,363
BBC World Service[2]	13,700,000	13,700,000	13,700,000	13,700,000
Great Britain-China Centre	0	0	0	0
Insurance				
British Council	0	0	0	0
Westminster Foundation for Democracy	1,655	2,031	1,834	3,849
British Association for Central and Eastern Europe	1,549	1,596	1,739	1,571
BBC World Service[2]	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
Great Britain-China Centre	977	1,031	815	818

[1] Estimated
[2] The BBC World Service and British Council figures are approximate

The British Council also maintains buildings in Manchester, which incurred the following expenditure.

British Council[1]

£

	Buildings
2002-03	2,200,000
2003-04	2,700,000
2004-05	2,500,000
2005-06[2]	2,800,000

[1] Estimated
[2] The BBC World Service and British Council figures are approximate

No expenditure on buildings and insurance was recorded during this period for any other non-departmental public body for which the FCO has responsibility.

Departmental Functions

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many staff are associated with the delivery of the *(a)* policy and service delivery function and *(b)* corporate function of his Department; and what the total salary costs were for each function in the last year for which figures are available. [48895]

Mr. Straw: Staff numbers and costs are not collected in a way that would give the above information. Our Activity Based Management (ABM) system gives an allocation of cost and staff numbers to business objectives but these are not the same as policy, service delivery and corporate services.

Departmental Information

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much was spent on his Department's public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [48959]

Mr. Straw: We do not maintain this information centrally and in order to provide it each overseas post would need to identify each relevant accounts transaction for the past five years. The information requested could therefore be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Detention Centres (US Flights)

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2843W, on detention centres (US flights), what assessment he has made of differences between the UK Government's working definition of torture and that of the US Administration. [49247]

Dr. Howells: In the UK, torture is defined in section 134 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988. The Government do not have any other "working definition" of torture. Any "working definition" used by the US Government would be a matter of US law and practice. As a State Party to the UN Convention

Against Torture, the US Government, like the UK Government, is obliged to prevent and to criminalise torture as defined in Article 1 of that Convention.

Family Member Permits

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which 10 of his Department's overseas diplomatic posts issued the greatest number of European economic area family member permits in 2004–05; and what checks were made on the eligibility of family members before they were issued. [50709]

Dr. Howells: The following 10 overseas diplomatic posts issued the greatest number of European Economic Area (EEA) family permits in the financial year 2004–05:

EEA family permits issued

Diplomatic post	*Number of permits*
Dusseldorf	6,661
Paris	2,279
Mumbai	1,752
Amsterdam	1,505
Brussels	915
Madrid	903
Oslo	891
Geneva	836
Stockholm	792
Copenhagen	777

Further entry clearance statistics in addition to those provided can be found on the UK visas website at: www.ukvisas.gov.uk-'Entry Clearance: Facts and Figures'.

Applicants for EEA family permits must show that they meet the requirements of the Immigration (European Economic Area) (Amendment) Regulations 2003 in order to be granted entry clearance on that basis. An entry clearance officer (ECO) assessing an EEA family permit application must be satisfied in particular that the applicant is related as claimed to the EEA principal (the person in regards to whom the applicant is making their application) or the EEA principal's spouse. If the ECO has doubts about an application, he/she is entitled to interview the applicant and conduct further investigations until satisfied.

In addition, the ECO will need to see evidence that the EEA principal is in or intends to travel to the UK, has an EEA passport and evidence of the EEA principal's employment in the UK or that they can be supported for the whole period of their stay.

Human Rights

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's most recent assessment is of the human rights situation in *(a)* Libya, *(b)* Eritrea, *(c)* Vietnam, *(d)* Turkmenistan and *(e)* Belarus; and if he will make a statement. [49491]

Dr. Howells: The Government remain concerned about the human rights situation in Libya, Eritrea, Vietnam, Turkmenistan and Belarus.

Libya

The Government welcome the opening of a dialogue between the Libyan authorities and groups like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. We also welcome progress made in the joint programme on prison management between the Libyan Secretariat of Justice and the International Centre for Prison Studies, which was financed by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Global Opportunities Fund. We also welcome the abolition of the Revolutionary Courts, the recent debate in the Basic People's Congresses on the possible abolition or further restriction of the death penalty, and the release of 14 political prisoners in January 2006.

Eritrea

We monitor the human rights situation in Eritrea closely. The continuing detention of members of minority religious groups and the arrest and detention without charge of journalists and prominent members of the People's Front for Democracy and Justice since 18 September 2001 are of grave concern to us and the international community. We regularly raise these concerns with the Eritrean Government.

Vietnam

Vietnam has made substantial progress in terms of economic and social rights over recent decades. However, it has, despite some recent progress, a poor record with regard to civil and political rights.

The UK, with our EU partners, is pursuing an increasingly open dialogue with the Vietnamese Government on human rights, particularly at the twice-yearly meetings of the EU-Vietnam Human Rights Dialogue. The EU has concerns with regard to the right to a fair trial, freedom of the press, of expression, of information, of assembly, of association, and of religion, the death penalty, and the treatment of ethnic minorities. The EU also maintains a list of prisoners/detainees of concern in Vietnam, whose cases are brought up regularly with the Vietnamese authorities.

Turkmenistan

The Turkmen Government have made some progress in addressing human rights issues but, as noted in the UN Secretary-General's report on human rights in Turkmenistan of September 2005, there is still a lack of overall improvement in addressing serious human rights violations.

On the positive side, Turkmenistan has acceded to three further UN protocols and conventions, including those on the Rights of the Child, more minority religious groups have been allowed to worship for the first time, and exit visas as a requirement for leaving the country have been abolished.

However, a number of areas of concern remain. The Government of Turkmenistan continue to restrict freedom of thought, conscience, expression, movement, religion or belief. Conditions in Turkmen prisons remain poor and credible reports of mistreatment of detainees persist.

In November 2005, together with our EU partners, we supported a Resolution on Turkmenistan in the UN's Third Committee. This Resolution comprehensively covered the points of progress and of continuing concern

and encouraged the Government of Turkmenistan to ensure full respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Belarus

We are deeply concerned at the poor human rights situation in Belarus and continue to raise these concerns with the Belarusian authorities both bilaterally and together with EU partners. We regret in particular the continued harassment of non-governmental organisations, including legal action against the Belarus-Helsinki Committee, and amendments to the civil and penal codes that can be used to stifle further free speech ahead of the 19 March presidential elections. EU Foreign Ministers discussed Belarus again at the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 30 January 2006. Conclusions were issued which reiterated the EU's deep concern at the deteriorating situation in respect of democracy, human rights and political freedoms in Belarus and called on the Belarusian authorities to ensure that the Presidential elections on 19 March are conducted in a free and fair manner. We will continue to press the Belarus authorities on these matters.

The Government, with the international community and other stake holders, will continue to work with the Libyan, Eritrean, Vietnamese, Turkmen and Belarus authorities to encourage them to move towards internationally accepted standards on human rights and the rule of law.

India

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what timescale he expects for admitting India as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. [50710]

Dr. Howells: It is not possible to give a timescale on when India will be admitted as a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the UK Government and its allies in Iraq have opened *(a)* direct and *(b)* indirect channels of dialogue with representatives of armed groups commonly referred to as the Iraqi insurgency. [51513]

Dr. Howells: Our policy remains, as my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister stated in June 2005, to bring as many people into the democratic process as possible. Iraq and its allies, including the UK, believe that an inclusive political process is critical for Iraq's future stability. To this end we maintain dialogue with all those who subscribe to this aim. There are elements of Iraqi society who appear to be irreconcilably opposed to the political process and determined to pursue their aims solely through violent means. We can have no dialogue with them.

Israel

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2852W, on Israel, if he will make it Government policy not to apologise in any case where someone from another country is arrested or threatened with arrest as a result of a warrant issued by a UK court following private prosecution under international law. [49681]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary apologised as a matter of courtesy to Israeli Foreign Minister Shalom.

There are no plans to formulate a policy regarding when apologies are appropriate.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what visits Ministers from his Department have made to UK Overseas Territories in the last five years, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* country and *(c)* Minister. [49113]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Details of official visits by Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers to each of the Overseas Territories in the last five years are as follows:

Anguilla

There is no record of any recent visits to Anguilla.

Ascension Island

November 2003: Bill Rammell, the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, stopped briefly at Ascension Island on his way to the Falkland Islands.

Bermuda

18–20 July 2002: Baroness Amos, the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State.

British Antarctic Territory

24–28 January 2001: Baroness Scotland of Asthal, the then Parliamentary Under-secretary of State.

British Indian Ocean Territory

There is no record of any recent visits to the British Indian Ocean Territory.

British Virgin Islands

2–4 September 2004: Bill Rammell, the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State.

Cayman Islands

16–17 February 2003: Baroness Amos, the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State.

Falkland Islands

26–29 November 2003: Bill Rammell, the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State.

Gibraltar

3–4 July 2003: Dennis MacShane, the then Minister for Europe.

3 May 2002: Jack Straw, Foreign Secretary.

6 September 2001: Peter Hain, the then Minister for Europe.

Montserrat

21 December 2001: Baroness Amos, the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State.

Pitcairn Islands

There is no record of any recent visits to the Pitcairn Islands.

St. Helena

There is no record of any recent visits to St. Helena.

Tristan da Cunha

There is no record of any recent visits to Tristan da Cunha.

South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands

There is no record of any recent visits to South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands.

The Sovereign Base Areas on Cyprus (Akrotiri and Dhekelia)

There is no record of any recent visits to the Sovereign Base Areas.

Turks and Caicos Islands

18–19 December 2001: Baroness Amos, the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State.

Non-proliferation (G8 Action Plan)

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in meeting the commitments to fund and expand the Global Partnership Against Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction contained in the G8 Action Plan on Non-proliferation of 10 June 2004; and if he will make a statement. [51317]

Dr. Howells: As a result of the June 2004 Action Plan, a further US$14 million has been pledged to the Global Partnership from seven new donor countries. Progress has also been made in expanding the recipient base of the Global Partnership:

During the UK G8 Presidency, discussions were held with nine countries of the former Soviet Union to discuss possible entry to the Global Partnership and to gather detailed information on potential projects;

The US and UK have made progress in developing project proposals for the redirection of scientists in Iraq and Libya;

A number of donors have also been in discussion with Ukraine concerning potential new projects.

Furthermore, during the UK G8 Presidency in 2005 substantial progress was made on a number of key areas of Global Partnership implementation. Particular areas of success under UK-managed programmes include the establishment of a new nuclear security programme, securing additional international pledges of £210 million to the Chernobyl Shelter Fund, significant progress on decontamination at Andreyeva Bay in NW Russia, one of the largest depositories of spent nuclear fuel in the world, and implementation of a further £4 million portfolio of projects to provide sustainable, non-weapons employment for former nuclear scientists and technicians.

Full details of the UK programmes under the Global Partnership can be found in the 2005 Annual Report available at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/nuclear/fsu/index.shtml.

Palestine

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the Palestinian Authority's security services since the Palestinian elections; and if he will make a statement. [50500]

Dr. Howells: The Palestinian Authority's security services have been undertaking their normal duties. It is important that the Palestinian security forces maintain law and order. Their ability, capacity, and will to do so remains in question. Wide-ranging security sector reform was vital before the elections and, it remains vital now.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Palestinian Authorities on the disarming of members of Hamas; and if he will make a statement. [50501]

Dr. Howells: As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary told the House on 7 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 735,

'we have been equally clear that those who take part in the democratic process have a responsibility to reject violence. The result therefore presents Hamas with a very clear choice. Last Monday, 30 January, the Quartet agreed that all members of a future Palestinian Government must be committed to non-violence, to a recognition of Israel and to an acceptance of previous agreements, including the road map. We, along with our EU partners, will continue to work with the Palestinians, the Israelis and the international community to make progress on the road map, to which both the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and the Israeli Government remain committed.'

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the likelihood of Hamas militants being incorporated into the Palestinian Authority's security services; and if he will make a statement. [50502]

Dr. Howells: We have no indications at present of whether Hamas militants will be incorporated into the security services. We continue to monitor the situation closely with international partners.

As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary told the House on 7 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 735;

'we have been equally clear that those who take part in the democratic process have a responsibility to reject violence. The result therefore presents Hamas with a very clear choice. Last Monday, 30 January, the Quartet agreed that all members of a future Palestinian Government must be committed to non-violence, to a recognition of Israel and to an acceptance of previous agreements, including the road map. We, along with our EU partners, will continue to work with the Palestinians, the Israelis and the international community to make progress on the road map, to which both the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and the Israeli Government remain committed.'

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of Hamas militants in the Palestinian territories; and if he will make a statement. [50503]

Dr. Howells: We have not made a formal estimate of the number of Hamas militants in the Occupied Territories. The nature of the organisation, the problem of defining 'militants' and the fact that we have no contact with Hamas makes an estimate difficult.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received on whether a cooperation agreement has been signed between the Palestinian Authority and the Iranian Government; and if he will make a statement. [50504]

Dr. Howells: We are not aware of any cooperation agreements having being signed between the Palestinian Authority and Iran.

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many parliamentary questions tabled in the last 12 months for answer by him on a named day *(a)* were transferred and *(b)* received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named. [49873]

Mr. Straw: The figure for named day parliamentary questions formally transferred into the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) from 1 February to 16 May 2005 cannot be produced using our current parliamentary questions management system. From 17 May 2005 to 31 January 2006, 20 named day questions were transferred out of the FCO for answer.

From 1 February 2005 to 31 January 2006, 389 named day questions received a substantive answer on the day named and 181 received a substantive answer after the day named.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by him in the last 12 months have been answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* between 14 and 28 days, *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if he will make a statement. [49902]

Mr. Straw: In the period 1 February 2005 to 31 January 2006, 2,373 ordinary written parliamentary questions (95 per cent.) were answered within 14 days and 107 in excess of 14 days. Our current parliamentary questions management system does not hold information that would allow us to break the latter figure down further.

Pensions Contributions

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39981]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth (FCO) paid the following amounts in Accruing Superannuation Liability Charges (ASLC) in the years in question:

	Amount (£)
2002–03	24,301,473
2003–04	26,253,831
2004–05	27,034,675

We estimate that our ASLC payment for 2005–06 will be about £37.5 million.

Payments made by the non departmental public bodies for which the FCO is responsible were as follows:

£

	The British Council	*Westminster Foundation for Democracy*	*Great Britain-China Centre*	*British Association for Central and Eastern Europe*	*BBC World Service*
2002–03	5,351,489	59,523	13,026	15,699	1,700,000
2003–04	5,726,288	73,227	23,681	16,532	2,100,000
2004–05	6,193,803	67,598	20,989	17,580	2,600,000
2005–06	[1]8,363,803	[1]99,876	[1]29,394	[1]18,500	[1]3,100,000

[1] Estimated cost.

Diplomatic Service Appeals Board

Holders of these positions receive a daily fee. No deduction is made for pension purposes and no pension contribution costs have therefore been incurred.

Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission, Government Hospitality Advisory Committee for the Purchase of Wine and Wilton Park Academic Council

Holders of these positions are unpaid, and no pension contribution costs have therefore been incurred.

Foreign Compensation Committee

No expenditure has been incurred in each of the last financial three years and none is planned for 2005–06.

Costs for the FCO's Executive Agency, Wilton Park, are included within the overall figures for the FCO.

The FCO does not identify its administrative costs by area.

South Georgia Council

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) when the South Georgia Council last met; and who attended; [49115]

(2) who sits on the South Georgia Council; how often it meets; and where it holds its meetings. [49116]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: South Georgia has no permanent population and therefore no Council. The Territory is governed by the Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, as established under the South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands Order 1985. The head of Government is a Commissioner based in Stanley, Falkland Islands. The Governor of the Falkland Islands is the current Commissioner.

Sudan

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the security situation in Sudan's Darfur region; and if he will make a statement. [49668]

Ian Pearson: We remain very concerned about the security situation in Darfur. In his latest report the UN Secretary-General notes that December saw a continuation at very high levels of violence and banditry, with both the Government of Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) flouting the ceasefire declarations they have signed. Reports indicate that in January high levels of violence continued, but that the SLM/A have been responsible for initiating a greater number of ceasefire violations.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and my noble Friend, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, met the Sudanese Foreign Minister, Dr. Lam Akol, on 3 February where they made clear that this situation is entirely unacceptable and that urgent steps must be taken to improve security. They underlined that the Government expect full compliance by the Government of Sudan and all allied forces with provisions of the N'djamena ceasefire agreement, the Abuja Security and Humanitarian protocols and the UN Security Council Resolutions on Sudan. They also stressed that we expect the Government of Sudan to co-operate actively with the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS). During the meeting, Dr. Akol agreed that the Government of Sudan would exempt AMIS from the night-time curfew in Darfur. We are also making clear that all other armed movements in Darfur, particularly the SLM/A and the Justice and Equality Movement must adhere to these conditions.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* bilateral and *(b)* multilateral preparations the Government have made to provide assistance to Zimbabwean refugees should they enter Zimbabwe's neighbouring countries in large numbers. [49309]

Ian Pearson: We are deeply concerned about the humanitarian impact of the deteriorating political, economic and social conditions in Zimbabwe. We make repeated representations to the states in the region about the actual and potential impact of the ongoing crisis.

We continue to support the work of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and other international organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in providing adequate assistance to Zimbabwean refugees wherever they may be. The UK's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Sir Emyr Jones Parry, has raised our concern about the Zimbabwe crisis at the UN Security Council and made clear the responsibility of governments to provide the World Food Programme, and all humanitarian agencies and NGOs, with full co-operation and access to those in need.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Consultants

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by her Department in 2004–05, excluding its non-departmental public bodies and Executive agencies; and if she will make a statement. [51206]

Mr. Lammy: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Hemel Hempstead (Mike Penning) on 6 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1094–1096W.

Departmental Catering Budget

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much and what proportion of her Department's catering budget was spent on fair trade produce in the last period for which figures are available. [49918]

Mr. Lammy: The Department does not collect and record data on Fair Trade produce.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her Department's policy is on the procurement of fairtrade produce for consumption on its premises. [49920]

Mr. Lammy: There are no Government wide approach to the procurement of fairtrade products. Each Government Department are responsible for making its own decisions on such products, against the background of the Government's value for money policy, the EC procurement rules and the Department's objectives. We have encouraged our catering contractors to use fairtrade products wherever possible.

Departmental Entertainment

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much was spent on entertainment by her Department in 2004–05, broken down by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [50890]

Mr. Lammy: Departmental expenditure, including associated staff costs, on entertainment, including working breakfasts or lunches, refreshment at meetings and official entertainment during 2004–05 was £97,803.39.

The Department's accounting system does not record information by the categories requested and it can be obtained only as disproportional cost.

All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in Government Accounting.

Departmental Works of Art

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether works of art other than those stolen in August 2001 from the temporary residence of the ambassador in Buenos Aires have been stolen from departmental buildings since 1997. [50567]

Mr. Lammy: The Government Art Collection has not found or been advised of any theft of its works of art from 1997 to 2006 other than the loss from Buenos Aires in 2001.

The Government Art Collection makes regular physical and postal inventory checks of its works of art on loan to several hundred major Government buildings in the UK and around the world, in order to ensure that the works are accounted for and that any incidents resulting in loss or damage are reported. This necessarily relies upon the advice of the members of staff in these buildings.

Digital Broadcasting

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether it is her Department's policy to provide for the reception of a digital signal via a second set where an individual qualifies for Government support in the process of digital switchover. [50536]

James Purnell: Assistance will be available to households where someone is aged 75 or over and to households with people with severe disabilities. This will consist of providing the necessary equipment to convert one TV set and the relevant support to install and use such equipment. More details will be announced later.

Film Production

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) when she will announce the co-production guidelines for UK-qualifying films; [48498]

(2) whether the new co-production guidelines for UK-qualifying films will supersede existing bilateral national treaties; and if she will make a statement. [48505]

James Purnell: Following a comprehensive review of the UK's film co-production treaties my Department, with the UK Film Council, is in the process of renegotiating its co-production treaties with Australia, New Zealand, Canada and France and establishing new co-production treaties with South Africa, India, China, Jamaica and Morocco.

Each treaty will need to be negotiated, agreed, signed and ratified by both governments before it can enter into force. Guidelines will be produced in time for a new treaty coming into force.

It is envisaged that each of the treaties we have with our existing bi-lateral partners will continue in force until it is replaced with a renegotiated treaty.

Negotiations are progressing well with all our partners, we have signed the main body of the Indian co-production treaty and are now working on the Annex to the agreement and Statements of Intent to progress our new treaties have been signed with South Africa, China, India and Morocco.

Gymnasiums (Disabled Access)

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will commission research on funding by local authorities to provide disabled user access to council-run gymnasia. [50828]

Mr. Caborn: DCMS will not be commissioning research but local authorities have contributed funding to the Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI), which has also benefited from significant lottery funding. The IFI aims to improve opportunities for disabled people to access fitness gyms and 180 public sector, not-for-profit sites will be operational by spring 2006. In addition to this, the culture block of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment should challenge local authorities to provide decent sport and leisure facilities for all their residents, disabled and non-disabled alike.

Leisure Centres

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment her Department has made of the implications for capital investment in community sports facilities of the transfer of ownership of leisure centres from local authorities to newly-formed charitable trusts. [50120]

Mr. Caborn: Specific information on the transfer of ownership of leisure centres from local authorities to newly-formed charitable trusts is not centrally collated. However, information from the Leisure Database Company suggests that approximately one-fifth of public leisure facilities in England are provided through trusts.

My Department recognise the importance of this issue in ensuring the continued sustainability of publicly provided sports facilities. The Audit Commission is currently undertaking a study into the different types of management arrangements available to local authorities for running these services and how they approach the task of choosing the option best suited to local needs. This is expected to include a consideration of the potential implications of each of these options, including for charitable trusts.

I will ensure a copy of the study is placed in the House Libraries once it is published.

Licensing

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she expects to publish her review of the guidance on the Licensing Act 2003 which was given to local authorities and the police. [50472]

James Purnell: Our review of the guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 commenced on 1 December 2005 and will be in two stages. An initial review focussing on issues where there is a high degree of consensus among stakeholders will be completed and supplementary guidance laid before Parliament in early spring 2006.

A comprehensive formal review of the guidance including a full public consultation will be completed by summer 2006 and a revised version will be laid before Parliament by the end of 2006. This comprehensive review will include consideration of matters that cannot be easily resolved during the initial review.

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many applications have been granted for 24-hour sale of alcohol licences in *(a)* South Yorkshire and *(b)* Doncaster North constituency. [50595]

James Purnell: This information is not held centrally, but should be available from local licensing authorities.

The Department has collected survey material concerning 24-hour licences in England and Wales generally, but does not hold specific information about the majority of licensing authorities.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the organisations that responded to the Gambling Commission consultation paper Statement of Principles on Licensing and Regulation. [50922]

Mr. Caborn: The Gambling Commission received 69 responses from organisations to its Statement of Principles on Licensing and Regulation consultation document as listed. There were a further eight responses from individuals. The Commission are planning to publish a revised Statement of Principles in April 2006 and to publish a summary of responses received in due course.

Organisations

192.com Business Services
ACPO
ACPOS
Advertising Standards Authority
Association of British Bookmakers
Association of Greater Manchester licensing managers' group
BackAndLay.com Ltd.
Betfair
Bracknell Forest Borough Council
British Amusement and Catering Trades Association
British Beer and Pub Association
British Casino Association
British Holiday and Home Parks Association
British Horseracing Board
British Institute of Innkeeping
Business in Sport and Leisure Ltd.
Camelot Group plc
Casino Machine Manufacturers' Group
Casino Operators' Association
City of Westminster Council
Community Trade Union
East Herts Council
Evangelical Alliance
Gateshead Council
GB Group plc
Glasgow Licensing Board
GMB Union
Harbottle and Lewis LLP
Harrah's Entertainment Inc.
HMRC
Hospice Lotteries Association
Huntingdonshire District Council
ICSTIS
Institute of Professional Sport
Interactive Gaming Council
Justices' Clerks' Society
Kerzner International UK
Kroopier Technologies
Lancaster City Council
Leisure and Gaming plc
Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services
London Borough of Havering
Lotteries Council
Magistrates' Association
Maldon District Council
Methodist Church
MGM Mirage
Mitchells and Butlers plc
Mobile Broadband Group
NHS Counter Fraud and Security Management Service
National Association of Licensing and Enforcement Officers
National Joint Pitch Council
New Forest District Council
OFT
Prime Table Games UK
Quaker Action on Alcohol and Drugs
Rank Group Gaming Division
Remote Gambling Association
Responsibility in Gambling Trust
Royal College of Psychiatrists
Salvation Army
Satellite Information Services Ltd.
Shuffle Master Inc.
Slough Borough Council
T&G Union
The Bingo Association
The Jockey Club
UC Group Ltd.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what guidance she has issued on whether businesses which are in the vicinity of a licensed premises may be classed as interested parties and object to a licensing application. [51101]

James Purnell: Under paragraph 5.32 of the guidance issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003, a person involved in a business in the vicinity of the premises in question, or a body representing persons involved in such businesses, is entitled to make representations to licensing authorities as an 'interested party'. It is for a licensing authority to determine whether or not a representation has been made by an 'interested party'. We are considering as part of our review of the guidance whether we can improve the guidance in this area.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether she has received *(a)* complaints and *(b)* representations from (i) local authorities and (ii) sports and leisure bodies about the level of licence fees under the Licensing Act 2003. [49374]

James Purnell: We have received differing views from local authorities and sports and leisure bodies about the level of licensing fees under the Licensing Act 2003.

In order to consider these and other representations, I have put in place an Independent Licensing Fees Review Panel whose remit is to assess how well the existing arrangements are working. Sir Les Elton chairs the Panel, which includes representatives from local government. The Panel's interim findings were published on 5 December. Among other matters, the

Panel found that there was insufficient information available to conclude whether or not fees had been set at the right level.

The Panel's final report will be delivered in the autumn, although Sir Les has been asked to focus as a priority on local authority licensing fee income and costs, and if possible report back earlier. I have given an undertaking that the fees regime will meet the full costs of local authorities in carrying out their legitimate responsibilities efficiently under the 2003 Licensing Act, within a national system.

Online Gambling

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what regulation is applicable to companies who are registered abroad, pay no tax in the UK, but advertise their online gambling and betting services in this country. [50740]

Mr. Caborn: Gambling companies that are based abroad but advertise on-line gambling in the UK are regulated by Section 42 of the Gaming Act 1968, which restricts the content of advertising relating to gaming, and by section 9 of the Betting and Gaming Duties Act 1981 which prohibits, with some exceptions, advertising by off-shore betting operators.

Playing Fields

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many playing fields are listed on the Sport England Domesday Book of Sports Facilities, Active Places; and how many of the sports grounds are owned by *(a)* the Ministry of Defence, *(b)* health authorities and *(c)* universities and colleges of higher education. [50924]

Mr. Caborn: Sport England advise that there are approximately 50,000 grass pitches on the Active Places database, of which *(a)* 252 (across 97 sites) are owned by the Ministry of Defence, *(b)* 31 (across 20 sites) belong to health authorities and *(c)* 1,182 (across 166 sites) are owned by higher education institutions. The majority of sites on the database are owned by educational establishments and local authorities. The number of grass pitches listed will increase as more information is added to the database.

Press Coverage

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 she has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* her Department; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47077]

James Purnell: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not made any complaints to the PCC. It is for individuals to decide whether they wish to make a complaint. She is not, generally, in a position to determine whether an article about others has breached the editors' Code of Practice; the PCC exists to make that determination. Moreover, she would not presume to make a complaint on behalf of anyone else, particularly as everyone has equal access to the PCC.

Shipwrecks

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate her Department has made of the value of artefacts on shipwrecks around the coast of the British Isles. [50976]

Mr. Lammy: The concept of value is difficult to define when applied to cultural property. Intrinsic value is only one factor alongside aesthetic, community, evidential and historical values.

58 historic wrecks have been designated in the UK under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973. These and their artefacts are considered to be of historical, archaeological, or artistic importance, and therefore worthy of protection.

The total number of wrecks around the coast of the British Isles, and therefore the number and value of artefacts, is not known.

English Heritage is currently developing a framework to assess heritage value as part of the stage one consultation on their Conservation Principles, which began on 9 February 2006. English Heritage has also supported the On the Importance of Shipwrecks research project under the Aggregates Levy Fund. The aim of the project is to develop a framework and methodology to assess the 'importance' of physical remains of wrecks on the seabed.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department has taken to protect valuable artefacts and items of historical value on shipwrecks around the British Isles from theft. [50977]

Mr. Lammy: The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport has power under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973 to designate wreck sites which she is satisfied ought to be protected from unauthorised interference on account of their archaeological, historical or artistic importance. Once a site is designated, it is a criminal offence for a person to interfere with the site except under the authority of a licence. In addition any artefacts recovered from wrecks of over 50 years of age in UK territorial waters require an export licence if they were to leave the UK.

Allegations of illegally excavated material are investigated in conjunction with the Receiver of Wreck, police and heritage agencies. Enforcement action is then taken in accordance with the severity of the offence.

Sport Participation

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the effect on participation levels in sport of the staging of major sporting events in the UK; and if she will make a statement. [50923]

Mr. Caborn: We believe that staging major sporting events in the UK has the potential to drive up participation levels in sport.

Research for UK Sport found that 7 per cent. of the adult UK population believed that the Manchester Commonwealth Games in 2002 had resulted in a positive impact on their participation in sport. Among children, the reported effect was greater. Household

surveys conducted in Greater Manchester, Liverpool, Blackburn and Congleton in summer 2003 found that in each area, at least 19 per cent. of children aged 6 to 15 said that the Games had had a positive effect on the amount of sport they were playing.

Sports Grounds

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport for what period of time sports grounds must remain unused before she can dispose of them without permission. [50925]

Mr. Caborn: I have no statutory role in the disposal of sports grounds. Sport England is a statutory consultee on all planning applications affecting playing fields, land used as playing fields, or land allocated for use as playing fields in a current development plan. This includes being consulted on applications affecting any land that has been used as a playing field in the last five years and any replacement of a grass pitch with a synthetic surface.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has published planning guidance for open space, sport and recreation (PPG 17), which requires local planning authorities to protect all open space which communities need. In preparing their plans and policies, authorities should undertake assessments of need for open space and recreation in their areas. In advance of an assessment of need, local authorities should give very careful consideration to any planning applications involving development on playing fields.

Youth Hostels Association

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what grants have been given by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* lottery distributors to the Youth Hostels Association since 1997. [50147]

Mr. Caborn: The Youth Hostels Association has received no funding from the Department but has been awarded £5,263,378 by the lottery distributors.

This information is derived from the Department's lottery awards database, searchable at www.lottery.culture.gov.uk, which uses information supplied by the lottery distributors.

NORTHERN IRELAND

24/27 Framework

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the cost to each education board area of implementing the 24/27 entitlement framework. [49622]

Angela E. Smith: The arrangements necessary to ensure that all pupils have access to the range of academic and vocational courses under the new curricular entitlement framework will be developed locally by schools and colleges working together, taking account of local needs and circumstances.

Schools have been encouraged to carry out an audit of their existing provision against the requirements of the entitlement framework and to consider future provision in the context of what is available within the local area. Until proposals are developed, it is not possible to determine what changes will be involved in a locality or any associated costs.

£24.7 million has been allocated for the implementation of the new arrangements across Northern Ireland over the period 2005-06 to 2007-08, including work on piloting arrangements for cooperation and collaboration among schools and between schools and the further education sector.

The pilots and any early proposals emerging will assist the Department of Education to estimate the future costs beyond March 2008 and will be the subject of further consideration during the next spending review.

Academic Selection

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what analysis the Department for Education Northern Ireland has made since 2000 of alternative models to the 11-plus test of post-primary academic selection; and if he will make a statement. [50715]

Angela E. Smith: No such analysis has been undertaken by the Department of Education. The Post-Primary Review Body, established by the Department in 2000 to consider future arrangements for post-primary education in Northern Ireland, recommended that academic selection should end (Burns Report). The Post-Primary Review Working Group (Costello) established by the Department in 2003 was required to take account of the consultation on the Burns recommendations and to provide advice on options for new arrangements for post-primary education. It advised that no form of academic selection would remove the high-stakes, high-stress element and that academic selection at age 11 is itself educationally unsound, as this age is too young to commit pupils to particular pathways. Accepting the Costello Report's recommendations, the Government announced in January 2004 that academic selection would end and that the last Transfer Tests will take place in 2008.

Future transfer arrangements will be on the basis of informed parental choice. Parents will have a broader assessment of their child's needs using the Pupil Profile and advice from schools. The new arrangements are about parents choosing schools not schools choosing pupils. They will give parents the right and responsibility to choose the school most appropriate to their child's needs.

Bottled Water

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much his Department has spent on bottled water in each of the last five years. [48722]

Mr. Woodward: The following figures represent the total cost of the provision of bottled water for the Northern Ireland Office, excluding its Agencies and NDPBs. The total cost includes water and the provision and maintenance of water coolers.

The figures are as follows:

	£
2000-01	19,150
2001-02	22,754
2002-03	19,071
2003-04	25,761
2004-05	29,939

Cattle (Pre-movement Testing)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Sec y of State for Northern Ireland with whom consult were carried out prior to the decision to introdu -movement testing of cattle; how results are being monitored; by whom; and what research is planned to assess the impact of the change. [50700]

Angela E. Smith: The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) consulted between July and October 2002 with a wide range of stakeholders about the proposal for brucellosis pre-movement testing, as part of its consultation about the 2002 Brucellosis Policy Review recommendations. The list of consultees who were specifically asked for views has been placed in the Library of the House. The decision to introduce compulsory pre-movement testing for brucellosis in Northern Ireland was announced on 16 June 2003.

During 2004, DARD consulted widely again about the draft legislation needed to introduce the requirement to test. Compulsory pre-movement testing was introduced in Northern Ireland on 1 December 2004.

The purpose of the measure is to assist in the detection of brucellosis and to help prevent disease spread by reducing the number of infected animals moving between farms. The measure also ensures compliance with the relevant EU legislation. Under Council Directive 64/432/EEC, pre or post-movement testing is required in a member state (or region thereof) where the percentage of bovines infected with brucellosis exceeds 0.2 per cent. during a two-year period.

DARD monitors the results of pre-movement testing, using the information held on its Animal and Public Health Information System (APHIS), as part of its overall management of the brucellosis control programme. The effectiveness of pre-movement testing as a disease control measure is assessed on an on-going basis as part of this monitoring activity. DARD plans to review the impact of the existing control measures on the incidence of brucellosis as part of its next formal review of brucellosis control policy.

No decision has been made in Northern Ireland to introduce compulsory pre-movement testing for bovine TB.

Child Safety

Dr. McCrea: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps the Government are taking to improve child safety on streets in Northern Ireland. [48286]

Angela E. Smith: Child safety is a priority for Government and is at the core of a number of key strategies across Departments and agencies. The 10-year strategy for Children and Young People will provide an overarching framework within which we will deliver on a number of outcomes for children and young people, including child safety. The strategy will be delivered through a programme of strategic actions, which will include: a road safety strategy aimed at reducing fatal and serious casualties among children; education and training in schools; safety promotion and awareness campaigns targeted at children; implementation of traffic calming measures; programmes to address antisocial behaviour, vandalism and crime related measures; and multi-agency arrangements to assess and manage the risks posed by sex offenders living in the community. Finally, safeguarding children is a subject that is actively being considered by the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People.

Costello Report

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many responses to the Government's public consultation on the Costello report proposals indicated opposition to the decision to prohibit academic selection. [50705]

Angela E. Smith: The remit of the Post-Primary Review Working Group required it to take account of the responses to the multi-stranded consultation on the Burns recommendations, including the diversity of views on academic selection. The advice from the group (the Costello report) was not published for consultation and responses were not therefore sought on its content.

Defibrillators

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many defibrillators there are in public places in each district council area in the Province. [49317]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of defibrillators in public places is not available as there is no central control of their purchase and distribution. Only a proportion of those currently provided in public places are funded by government agencies.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Francois: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent in each year since 1997 by his Department on salaries paid to civil servants. [41580]

Mr. Woodward: Gross salary figures for the years in question are as follows:

	Gross salary costs (£)	*Total departmental budget (percentage)*
1997-98	14,570,692	1.5
1998-99	14,578,075	1.5
1999-2000	14,535,166	1.4
2000-01	14,983,634	1.3
2001-02	16,629,446	1.4
2002-03	18,750,356	1.4
2003-04	20,826,798	1.8
2004-05	22,507,780	1.8

Departmental Staff

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans his Department has to change the London allowance of its staff; and if he will make a statement. [50001]

Mr. Woodward: The Northern Ireland Office has a pay scale which is applied equally to staff working in Belfast and London.

Separately, a London allowance is paid to London based staff to aid recruitment and retention and to reflect the higher cost of living. There are no plans to change the London allowance.

A London allowance is paid to staff in the senior civil service at Payband 1 and it remained at £3,500 in 2005. Staff in Paybands 2 and 3 are not eligible for payment of the London allowance.

The London allowance for staff below the senior civil service was increased from £3,875 to £4,000 as part of the 2005 pay settlement. This met the PCS claim for the London allowance.

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many departmental employees have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46777]

Mr. Woodward: The number of Northern Ireland Office staff who retired due to ill health in each of the past five years is as follows:

	Number
2000-01	5
2001-02	5
2002-03	6
2003-04	5
2004-05	9

Hospital Waiting Times

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time in accident and emergency has been at *(a)* Antrim area hospital and *(b)* Whiteabbey area hospital in each month since March 2005. [51051]

Mr. Woodward: The information is as follows.

(a) The average waiting times from patient arrival in the accident and emergency department in Antrim area hospital to examination by a clinician from April 2005 to January 2006 are presented in the following table:

Antrim area hospital

	Average waiting time in A & E from arrival to examination
April 2005	1 hour
May 2005	1 hour 9 minutes
June 2005	1 hour 6 minutes
July 2005	1 hour 1 minute
August 2005	53 minutes
September 2005	1 hour 9 minutes
October 2005	1 hour 7 minutes
November 2005	1 hour 7 minutes
December 2005	58 minutes
January 2006	1 hour 4 minutes

Source:
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust

(b) The average waiting times from patient arrival in the accident and emergency department in Whiteabbey hospital to examination by a clinician from April 2005 to January 2006 are presented in the following table:

Whiteabbey hospital

	Average waiting time in A & E from arrival to examination
April 2005	42 minutes
May 2005	52 minutes
June 2005	53 minutes
July 2005	42 minutes
August 2005	36 minutes
September 2005	32 minutes
October 2005	37 minutes
November 2005	31 minutes
December 2005	35 minutes
January 2006	36 minutes

Source:
United Hospitals Group HSS Trust

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46762]

Mr. Hain: The Northern Ireland Office is committed to promoting a culture in which difference is appreciated, valued and respected and individuals are given the space to celebrate their own identity, including their religious identity, while respecting the views of others.

An event to celebrate a range of significant religious and cultural days, including Hanukkah, was held in 2005 and the Department aims to facilitate staff who wish to celebrate such events. The Department also promotes an awareness of different religious identities through its sponsorship of a multi-faith calendar. The theme of the 2006 calendar is the practice of prayer and it highlights the significant religious days of each of the major religious traditions.

Laurelhill Community College

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost of the *(a)* case and *(b)* compensation paid was in the recent Laurelhill Community College dispute in Lisburn, County Antrim. [49861]

Angela E. Smith: The information requested is as follows.

(a) The Chief Executive of the South Eastern Education and Library Board has informed me that she is not in a position at this stage to respond to the question of the cost of recent defamation proceedings

taken by the teacher involved against the Chairman of the Board of Governors at Laurelhill Community College. The Board has not yet received bills of costs from the plaintiff's solicitor nor has it received fee notes from its own Counsel.

(b) The teacher involved was awarded compensation of £7,500 following the recent joint consultation which took place at the High Court.

NHS Staff

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what was the cost to health and social services boards of implementing UK-wide changes in NHS staff pay and conditions in 2005-06; and what the expected cost is for 2006-07. [50716]

Mr. Woodward: In the current year 2005-06 the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) has allocated to each health and social services board the following amounts in implementing the Agenda for Change Agreement for staff in the health and personal social services in Northern Ireland.

Board	*Amount allocated (£)*
Eastern	30,645,592
Northern	10,078,041
Southern	9,134,583
Western	7,889,835
Total	57,748,051

The DHSSPS has secured funding of £70 million to meet the anticipated cost for 2006-07.

The DHSSPS has also allocated the following amounts to health and social services boards to meet the salary commitments arising from the new consultant contract.

Board	*Amount allocated (£)*
Eastern	13,930,496
Northern	3,371,550
Southern	2,971,944
Western	3,512,651
Total	23,786,641

The DHSSPS has secured funding of around £27.3 million to meet the anticipated costs for 2006-07.

Planning Service

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the budget was for the Northern Ireland Planning Service in each year since 2000; and what funding has been allocated for each of the next five years. [51044]

Angela E. Smith: The budget for the Northern Ireland Planning Service in each year since 2000 is set out in Table A as follows.

Table A: Budget allocation between 2000-01 and 2005-06

£ million

Financial year	*Current expenditure*	*Capital investment*
2000-01	7.1	0.6
2001-02	8.9	0.6
2002-03	10.1	0.8
2003-04	14.3	1.0
2004-05	13.9	0.7
2005-06	14.5	4.3

The funding allocated to Planning Service for the next two years is set out in Table B as follows. Information is not yet available on funding to be allocated from 2008-09 onwards.

Table B: Budget allocation for 2006-07 and 2007-08

£ million

Financial year	*Current expenditure*	*Capital investment*
2006-07	11.9	0.6
2007-08	10.9	0.6

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what consultation is undertaken by the Northern Ireland Planning Service with the Department for Regional Development's *(a)* Water and *(b)* Road Service in considering submissions for new residential developments. [51046]

Angela E. Smith: In determining any planning application for residential development the Planning Service consults with the Department of Regional Development's Water Service and Roads Service. The purpose of the consultation is to seek advice on issues relevant to the determination of planning applications such as the provision of drinking water supply, waste water disposal, safe access and the proper layout and adoption of public roads.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have been employed by the Northern Ireland Planning Service in each year since 2000, broken down by grade; and if he will make a statement on the future staff recruitment needs of the Service. [51069]

Angela E. Smith: Details of the staffing breakdown for the Planning Service in each year since 2000 are as follows.

The Planning Service has just completed a major recruitment exercise and will keep the need for additional staff resources under continual review.

Planning Service staff in post

	As at 1 April						
Date	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*	*at 1 February 2006 (current)*
Grade							
Grade 3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Grade 5	2	2	1	3	4	3	3
Grade 6	7	7	8	8	9	9	14
Principal Professional and Technology Officer	17	17	25	26	35	37	40
Senior Professional and Technology Officer	42	55	50	78	86	79	91

Planning Service staff in post

Date	As at 1 April: 2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	at 1 February 2006 (current)
Higher Professional and Technology Officer	76	99	103	103	115	155	164
Professional and Technology Officer	84	97	111	123	148	140	161
Technical Grade 1	11	4	7	5	6	5	5
Technical Grade 2	1	5	2	1	1	—	—
Trainee Planning Assistant	11	6	17	14	26	24	35
Principal	5	5	4	4	6	7	7
Deputy Principal	9	13	13	14	21	20	22
Senior Systems Analyst	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Systems Analyst	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Staff Officer	12	9	15	14	18	20	25
Executive Officer 1	10	10	11	14	13	23	22
Executive Officer 2	13	16	18	26	29	37	39
Administrative Officer	64	76	76	79	87	106	117
Administrative Assistant	48	53	65	73	61	71	98
Typing Manager	2	2	1	1	—	—	—
Personal Secretary	9	8	9	10	9	10	10
Typist	9	8	7	7	6	7	6
Support Grade	5	5	4	5	5	4	4
Student	2	—	2	—	—	—	—
Total	440	498	550	609	686	758	864

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many planning submissions were received by the Northern Ireland Planning Service in each year since 2000, broken down by Service district. [51070]

Angela E. Smith: Details of the number of planning applications received, set out by Planning Service division, in each of the last five years are as follows.

Division	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06[1]
Ballymena	3,160	3,352	4,000	5,328	4,971	3,343
Belfast	3,442	3,821	3,592	3,840	3,862	2,762
Craigavon	4,986	5,309	6,060	7,493	6,845	5,056
Downpatrick	4,120	4,457	5,001	5,036	6,090	3,554
Londonderry[2]	3,093	3,410	3,556	4,348	4,969	3,410
Omagh[3]	4,828	4,834	5,500	6,799	9,205	7,169
Headquarters	92	135	198	196	342	234
Total	23,721	25,318	27,907	33,040	36,284	25,528

[1] Up to 31 December 2005.
[2] Includes Coleraine Sub-Divisional Planning Office.
[3] Includes Enniskillen Sub-Divisional Planning Office.

Post-primary Education

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what estimate he has made of the effect on public expenditure of the proposals for post-primary education in the Draft Education (Northern Ireland) Order; what estimate he has made of the period of time it would take to realise the estimated charges of those savings; and if he will make a statement; [50717]

(2) what estimate he has made of the *(a)* gross and *(b)* net cost to public funds of implementing the proposals for post-primary education embodied in the Draft Education (Northern Ireland) Order. [50718]

Angela E. Smith: The focus of the new post-primary arrangements is on the educational needs of the child. The new arrangements will be implemented locally by schools and school managing authorities working together, taking account of local needs and circumstances. Until local arrangements are developed the financial implications cannot be assessed. £24.7 million has been made available over the period 2005–06 to 2007–08 to support the preparation for, and phased introduction of, key elements of the new post-primary arrangements.

On 31 January 2006 the Secretary of State announced an independent review of education spending as well as the planning of the school estate and the effect of falling school rolls. The outcome of this review and the implementation of the new post-primary arrangements will result in a more effective and efficient education system for the benefit of all pupils.

Prostate Cancer

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change in the numbers of those diagnosed with prostate cancer in Northern Ireland has been in each of the last 10 years. [51328]

Mr. Woodward: The following table details the number of incidences of prostate cancer (ICD-10 C61) in Northern Ireland since 1994.

	Number
1994	481
1995	510
1996	452
1997	485
1998	492

	Number
1999	493
2000	574
2001	543
2002	648
2003	715

This information has been provided by the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry and is the most up-to-date currently available.

Rates

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will place in the Library a copy of the internal guidance on the assessment and valuation of domestic properties produced by the Valuation and Lands Agency for the rates revaluation in Northern Ireland. [49815]

Angela E. Smith: Yes.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the *(a)* value significant codes and *(b)* property attribute types that the computer assisted mass appraisal system being used in Northern Ireland rates revaluation has the capacity to store and evaluate. [49568]

Angela E. Smith: A full list of data fields relating to value significant codes and property attributes which are stored and evaluated by the computer assisted mass appraisal system being used in Northern Ireland will be placed in the Library.

Statins

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he plans to make statins available free to patients with high cholesterol in Northern Ireland. [51181]

Mr. Woodward: Statins are currently available on health service prescription in Northern Ireland. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence has recently published detailed guidance recommending the use of statins for treating adults with cardiovascular disease and adults at risk of this disease. My Department will be reviewing this guidance and will advise the health and personal social services on its applicability to Northern Ireland.

Teaching Staff (Absenteeism)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what the absenteeism rate was in 2005 among teaching staff at *(a)* controlled and *(b)* maintained schools in each of the Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland. [51354]

Angela E. Smith: The rate of absenteeism among teaching staff in the academic year September 2004 to August 2005 at *(a)* controlled and *(b)* maintained schools in each of the five Education and Library Boards in Northern is detailed as follows.

Board area	School type	Number of full time Teachers	Number of working days available	Number of sick days	% of working days lost (absence rate)
BELB	Controlled	1,627	317,265	11,659	3.67
	Maintained	1,476	287,820	12,950	4.50
WELB	Controlled	1,493	291,135	11,544	3.97
	Maintained	1,756	342,420	17,334	5.06
NEELB	Controlled	2,625	511,875	20,101	3.93
	Maintained	1,028	200,460	9,523	4.75
SEELB	Controlled	2,512	489,840	20,204	4.12
	Maintained	894	174,330	6,909	3.96
SELB	Controlled	1,981	386,295	15,424	3.99
	Maintained	1,879	366,405	23,098	6.30

Vandalism

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of his Department's buildings in the last 12 months. [49501]

Mr. Woodward: There have been no recorded acts of vandalism, which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of Northern Ireland Office buildings in the last 12 months. This information does not include the Department's Agencies and NDPBs.

WALES

Robert Powell

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will establish a public inquiry into the death of Robert Powell of Swansea on 17 April 1990 of Addison's disease. [51486]

Mr. Hain: The responsibility in this instance rests with the National Assembly for Wales. The First Minister is currently considering whether a public inquiry should be held or what other steps if any should be taken.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Clerical Pensions

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what provision the Pension Board has made for the retention of pension rights for partners of those clergy who have entered into a civil partnership. [50871]

Sir Stuart Bell: All pension schemes are required by the Civil Partnership Act 2004 and the regulations made under that Act to provide benefits for a civil partner following the death of the scheme member on the same basis as for widows and widowers in respect of all pensionable service from December 2005.

The Pensions Board will of course comply with those requirements in respect of the schemes that it administers and scheme rules have been amended accordingly.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners how many of the Church Commissioners' staff are paid on a performance-related basis. [50078]

Sir Stuart Bell: None.

Tenants

Mr. Swayne: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what measures the Commissioners are taking to expedite the transfers of their tenants who cause a nuisance to their neighbours. [50249]

Sir Stuart Bell: The Commissioners experience very few occasions of nuisance on their estates. If this arises they will seek to resolve the matter with the parties concerned. On the very rare occasions where this is unsuccessful, they reserve the right in leases to take legal action to protect the interests of all residents, and do so when necessary.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Barristers

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Solicitor-General if he will list the 10 barristers instructed to prosecute on behalf of the Crown who received the highest sums for this work in the last financial year; how much each received; and if he will make a statement. [23498]

The Solicitor-General: The Law Officers have ministerial responsibility for the Crown Prosecution Service, the Serious Fraud Office and the Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office. The Law Officers do not have ministerial responsibility for the other prosecuting authorities. The 10 barristers instructed to prosecute on behalf of the Crown by the Crown Prosecution Service, Serious Fraud Office and Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office who were paid the highest sums for this work in the financial year ending 31 March 2005 and the amounts paid are:

Counsel	*Amount paid in last financial year including VAT (£)*
Richard Horwell	568,253.63
Mark Dennis	566,981.08
Jonathan Laidlaw	540,885.02
Nigel Ingram	509,894.21
Brian Altman	485,065.55
David Cocks, QC	474,935.25
Nicholas Milliard	448,861.83
Richard Lissack, QC	429,124.73
Aftab Jafferjee	409,451.46
Patrick Harrington, QC	391,139.01

A number of qualifications need to be added to these figures:

The amount paid to barristers in one financial year is not necessarily reflective of the work carried out during that year. Payment may take place during or some time after the work, including in different years, and Departments have different payment practices.

The figures must be interpreted carefully and do not represent the personal earnings of the barristers listed—figures are inclusive of VAT and disbursements incurred. After VAT has been deducted, barristers will typically pay 25–30 per cent. of fees in professional expenses. Additionally, barristers face the same expenses as any other self-employed person, including income tax and national insurance contributions.

Not all payments could be verified with the individuals concerned. Cases in dispute, where records of payments held by the Departments differ to those held by the practitioners, have been included. Where possible, amounts have been verified by practitioners and adjusted where necessary. Records may differ due to the inevitable lag caused by the post and bank clearing services.

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Solicitor-General if he will make a statement on the *(a)* role and *(b)* effectiveness of the involvement of the Crown Prosecution Service in determining delayed charge bail cases in Northamptonshire. [50711]

The Solicitor-General: Under the statutory charging arrangements, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is responsible for making the charging decision in all but minor and routine cases. The aims of the charging scheme are a reduction in the rate of discontinuance, an increase in the guilty plea rate, and a reduction in the rate of attrition.

In some cases, where there is insufficient evidence available to make an immediate charging decision, delay charge bail is used to ensure that the investigative process is complete before the charging decision is given. This approach has ensured a steady reduction of post-charge discontinuance rates and decisions of 'No Further Action' in Northamptonshire.

The police and CPS jointly performance manage the charging arrangements. This includes the management of delay charge bail to ensure that this is only used in appropriate cases and the number of cases on delay charge bail awaiting a charging decision does not increase month-on-month. This joint approach should lead to steady reduction of delay charge bail in the county.

Incitement to Murder

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Solicitor-General how many prosecutions have been brought for incitement to murder in each year since 1995; and how many resulted in a conviction. [50132]

The Solicitor-General: The following table shows *(a)* the number of defendants who had proceedings commenced against them for the offence of soliciting to commit murder contrary to section 4 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861, or conspiracy to commit that offence, and *(b)* the number found guilty, in each year, of that specific offence, or conspiracy to commit that offence, for which figures are available.

Some defendants proceeded against for soliciting to commit murder, or conspiracy to commit that offence, will have pleaded guilty or will have been found guilty of other offences. The following conviction figures do not include those other offences, and therefore understate the number of defendants who were convicted of an offence in each year.

Defendants prosecuted at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for conspiring or soliciting to commit murder, 1994 to 2004[1,2], England and Wales

Number

	Prosecuted	*Guilty*
1994	68	18
1995	53	12
1996	69	7
1997	50	15
1998	58	14
1999	97	13
2000	75	18
2001	71	7
2002	82	13
2003	63	29
2004	59	10

[1] Data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Offences under section 4 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 and conspiracy to commit this offence under section 1 of the Criminal Law Act 1977.

Military Officer Promotions

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Solicitor-General when the Attorney-General next plans to address military officers who have been identified as suitable for promotion to the highest levels; and if he will make a statement. [50245]

The Solicitor-General: On 30 January the Attorney-General addressed military officers, attending the Higher Command and Staff Course organised by the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom at the Joint Services Command and Staff College, on the "International Legal Framework".

There are no immediate plans for the Attorney-General further to address military officers who have been identified as suitable for promotion to the highest level but he will consider doing so where a suitable opportunity arises.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal Welfare

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the implications of the EU animal welfare action plan for the UK; and what legislative changes will be required. [49378]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Community Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2006–10 will provide a more strategic and joined up approach within the Commission and member states, so that animal welfare is improved. It includes a range of proposals, including legislation.

We look forward to contributing to the development of the action plan.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research her Department is commissioning into a vaccine to cure avian influenza, with particular reference to the H5N1 strain. [49455]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra is heavily involved with research into avian influenza. This includes making sure that the department's own research and development programme is tied into further work on vaccine development that the European Union and the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council are taking forward; especially their recent published call for new research proposals.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what vaccine is available for use in poultry to prevent avian influenza. [49635]

Mr. Bradshaw: Currently available vaccines do not make vaccination effective or efficient as a disease control or prevention measure for avian influenza in the UK as, although vaccines are able to reduce mortality, it is likely that some vaccinated birds would still be capable of transmitting the disease if they became infected.

However, as part of our readiness for a disease outbreak, and being conscious that there was no authorised vaccine available for AI, the Veterinary Medicines Directorate has recently issued a Provisional Marketing Authorisation for the Nobilis vaccine, produced by Intervet. The use of any approved vaccine is also subject to European Community legislation on the control of avian influenza and would have to be specifically authorised by the Chief Veterinary Officer. We are continuing to work closely with vaccine manufacturers to assess information on other vaccines.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received (*a*) in favour of and (*b*) against vaccination of poultry against avian influenza. [49642]

Mr. Bradshaw: We are engaging closely with a wide range of stakeholders on this issue.

There is a broad consensus that preventive vaccination does not currently provide an effective and efficient means of controlling avian influenza. Good biosecurity followed by housing of birds is the best response to a heightened threat. There is a minority view that preventive vaccination for birds of high genetic value, birds in zoos, and free-range birds in areas of high risk should be considered as part of the overall control strategy.

There is also an acceptance that emergency vaccination should be considered during an outbreak. This could form part of a wider disease control strategy but would also depend on the efficacy of the vaccines available. A plan for using vaccination would also have to be approved by the European Commission. We will continue to involve stakeholders in our consideration of these issues.

Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what information she will make available by the Independent Scientific Group to inform the current consultation on bovine TB policy; and if she will make a statement. [47847]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* Significant interim results from the proactive element of the Randomised Badger Culling Trial (RBCT) were published by the Independent Scientific Group on Cattle TB (ISG) in Nature on 14 December 2005. These, combined with other scientific evidence, including results of the Irish Four Area badger culling trial, led Government to conclude that consultation is needed to inform the decision on whether to introduce badger culling as a bovine TB control measure.

Full results of the RBCT are still being collected and analysed by the ISG and have not yet been made available.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what total Government expenditure on tackling TB in cattle was in each year since 1996–97, broken down by main area of expenditure. [49168]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information requested is in the following table.

Breakdown of government expenditure on bovine tuberculosis

£ million

Activity	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Cattle testing	5.79	5.49	6.61	17.6	13.3	[1]5.4	24.7	33.2	36.4
Compensation	1.55	1.44	2.36	5.3	6.6	9.2	31.9	34.4	35.0
Badger control/culling trial[2]	1.48	1.66	1.83	4.6	6.6	6.0	6.6	7.3	7.2
Other research	1.69	1.72	2.48	3.8	5.3	6.1	6.5	7.0	5.7
Veterinary Laboratories Agency	1.40	1.62	1.85	2.4	3.5	3.7	4.1	5.3	4.9
HQ overheads	5.08	4.13	6.64	4.5	0.9	0.1	0.7	1.0	1.3
Total	16.99	16.06	21.77	38.2	36.2	30.5	74.5	88.2	90.5

[1] Testing was suspended due to foot and mouth disease.
[2] The culling trial was effective from 1999.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice her Department has provided to Shropshire farmers on bovine tuberculosis. [50767]

Mr. Bradshaw: Our aim is to slow down and prevent the geographic spread of bovine tuberculosis (TB) to areas currently free of the disease, and achieve a sustained reduction in disease incidence in cattle in high incidence areas like Shropshire.

Defra has issued farmers with guidelines on measures to help stop bovine TB affecting their cattle. More information can be found on the Defra website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/tb/publications/index.htm.

In December, we announced new measures to tackle bovine TB in England, including a public consultation on a badger culling policy in areas of high TB incidence in cattle, the introduction of pre-movement testing of cattle and changes to current compensation procedures.

Cattle Valuation

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice she received on the variations in value of cattle by *(a)* breed and *(b)* pedigree. [49097]

Mr. Bradshaw: New cattle compensation arrangements were introduced on 1 February 2006.

The Department has obtained cattle sales data from a wide range of sources across Great Britain for the last 14 months. Analysis of these data has identified the degree of variation within each of the 47 cattle categories now used to determine compensation through our system of table valuation. And this approach will be repeated on an annual basis. No breed specific reviews have been carried out.

Compulsory Cattle Slaughter (Compensation)

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reason the compensation tables for cattle which have been compulsorily slaughtered do not provide values for pedigree beef bovines under six months of age. [49092]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* Compensation categories have been drawn up with the assistance of industry advisers. There is no table value for pedigree cattle under six months. Animals that age would always be suckling, and it would be unusual to sell them without the dam.

Correspondence

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2110W, on correspondence, if she will send the promised reply by 10 February. [50989]

Mr. Morley: A reply to my right hon. Friend was despatched on 7 February 2006.

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many of her Department's employees have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46871]

Jim Knight: Defra was created in June 2001, and the figures in the following table show the number of staff who have taken early retirement due to ill-health since then.

	Number of staff
2001[1]	[2]5
2002	16
2003	19
2004	13
2005	16

[1] 9 June to 31 December.
[2] Less than 5.

The figure for 2001 is not specified on grounds of confidentiality.

Fallen Stock

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to review the fallen stock scheme. [49984]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department commissioned an independent review of the scheme at the end of 2005, and a report is expected around Easter.

Kyoto Targets

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress the Government have made towards meeting the Kyoto summit targets; and what steps are being taken to ensure that the targets are met. [50901]

Mr. Morley: The UK's commitment under the Kyoto protocol is to achieve a reduction of 12.5 per cent. of emissions in the basket of six greenhouse gases. The gases in the basket are carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4) and nitrous oxide (N_2O), plus the hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride SF_6. The reduction is to be achieved relative to base year emissions in 1990 for CO_2, CH_4 and N_2O, and in 1995 for the other gases. It applies to average emissions, weighted together using global warming potentials, over the first commitment period, 2008–12.

Latest available figures indicate that, on this basis, UK greenhouse gas emissions were 14.6 per cent. lower in 2004 than the base year total. Policies and measures already in place, plus the additional policies and measures introduced as part of the current review of the UK's climate change programme, will achieve further reductions during the commitment period. This will ensure that the Kyoto commitment is met.

Quarantine Regulations

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on her review of quarantine regulations. [50807]

Mr. Bradshaw: I assume that the hon. Member is referring to the review of avian quarantine following publication of the independent report of quarantine procedures for captive birds (excluding poultry) in the UK in December 2005.

The report contains 32 recommendations to improve the safeguards to animal and human health that the current avian quarantine system provides. We are looking carefully at all of the recommendations in close consultation with EU partners and other stakeholders. And we will implement any essential recommendations before imports of captive birds resume.

Stroud EU Life Bid

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what reasons were given for the rejection of the Stroud EU Life bid; and whether a new bid may be submitted to EU Life Plus. [49441]

Mr. Morley: Life-Environment is a Europe-wide programme to fund innovative demonstration projects that support the development of European environment policy.

Selection of projects for co-financing is competitive as there are no national allocations in the Programme. Projects are evaluated by policy officers at the European Commission and a panel of independent experts. Projects are evaluated against a range of criteria using a point scoring system. In the 2004–05 application round €71 million was available to co-finance projects and the Commission received 534 bids, of which 88 (16 per cent.) were supported.

The UK submitted 26 bids and 10 (35 per cent.) were co-financed. However, the bid submitted by Stroud did not score highly enough under the evaluation process to secure co-financing. The Commission advises applicants directly of the reasons for rejection.

The full political process to agree the Life+ Regulation has yet to be completed but it is envisaged that in 2007 Life+ will replace the current Life Programme and a number of other funding programmes currently managed by DG-Environment in the European Commission. One major difference from the current arrangements will be that the Programme will be implemented at member state level through national annual work programmes, agreed by the European Commission. Until the details of the work programme are developed and approved, it is not possible to say if the Stroud bid would be eligible for support under the new Life+ Programme.

Waste Management

Mr. Rogerson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) of 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 20W, on waste management, if she will break down the figures by local authority area. [43804]

Mr. Bradshaw: Pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker) of 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 20W, the results provided for both commercial and industrial waste at regional level cannot be broken down to local authority level.

The amount of municipal waste disaggregated by disposal method is only available for local authorities with a responsibility for municipal waste disposal. Therefore figures for disposal and unitary local authorities for 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04 from the Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey have been placed in the Library of the House.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many of his Department's staff are paid on a performance-related basis. [50077]

Mr. Jim Murphy: All Cabinet Office employees are rewarded based on their performance. Annual salary increases reflect overall performance and bonuses are available to reward delivery of specific outcomes.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission how many staff of the House are paid on a performance-related basis. [50492]

Nick Harvey: At 18 January 2006 1,292 of the House's 1,626 staff were in pay arrangements with a performance-related element.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Commission for Africa

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department has taken to make copies of the Commission for Africa Report available in Africa. [49223]

Hilary Benn: The Commission for Africa (CfA) report was launched on 11 March in parallel events at the British museum in London and at the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa. A press conference held after the launch in Addis Ababa led to good media coverage in Africa.

Hard copies of the report were sent to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union. Copies were also sent to all British embassies and DFID offices in Africa, many of which will have been passed to African partner organisations.

The story of the Commission's work is told on the Commission website www.commissionforafrica.org which will remain as a permanent online archive. The full report can be downloaded from this website, without charge in English and French and Part One in Arabic, Swahili, Portuguese (as well as Mandarin and Japanese). The cost of a hard copy of the full report is £10 which includes postage and packing, irrespective of where it will be sent globally.

In addition, I understand that over 26,000 copies of the Penguin version of Part One of the Commission for Africa report have been sold worldwide.

Departmental Expenditure

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many widescreen televisions have been purchased by his Department for use in London Headquarters in each of the last five years; and what the cost was in each year. [39145]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has purchased 38 widescreen TV displays for use in the London Headquarters in the past five years, as follows:

	Number
2001–02	0
2002–03	16
2003–04	12
2004–05	3
2005–06	7

Of these, two are used for general display purposes, and 36 form part of video-conferencing facilities. DFID makes extensive use of video-conferences between the two Headquarters in London and East Kilbride, and also to and between offices overseas. These save travel costs and enable meetings to take place which would not otherwise be feasible. The displays are usually purchased as part of complete video-conference units, and it is not possible to separate the cost of the displays from the total equipment costs.

Departmental Staff

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans his Department has to change the London allowance of its staff; and if he will make a statement. [50011]

Mr. Thomas: Under the Treasury's delegated pay arrangements for staff below the senior civil service, DFID has consolidated its London weighting allowance into basic pay.

We are currently in the second year of a three year pay deal. Salary levels for all UK based staff will be reviewed as part of the pay negotiations for the next pay settlement that takes effect from 1 August 2007.

Economic Partnership Agreements

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the UK position is on trade liberalisation conditions of the economic partnership agreements between the EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific countries; and if he will make a statement on the progress made in negotiations of these issues during the UK presidency of the EU. [49222]

Mr. Thomas: The UK position on economic partnership agreements (EPAs) was published in March 2005. It states that EPAs must be designed to deliver long-term development, economic growth and poverty reduction in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. We believe that the ACP countries can benefit from trade liberalisation in the long run, provided they have the economic capacity and infrastructure they need to trade competitively. However, without this capacity or the right conditions including appropriate complementary policies to help manage the change, trade liberalisation can be harmful. The UK also believes that each region in the ACP should have flexibility and make its own decisions on the timing, pace, sequencing, and product coverage of market opening in line with individual countries' national

development plans and poverty reduction strategies. We will not force trade liberalisation on developing countries either through trade negotiations or aid conditionality.

During the UK presidency in 2005, the European Commission and the ACP did not negotiate on trade liberalisation issues. These issues will be negotiated over the coming year for all ACP regions.

GM Crops (Terminator Seeds)

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact of Terminator seed technology on the food security and livelihoods of small-scale farmers in developing countries. [50139]

Mr. Thomas: Terminator technology (genetic use restriction technologies or GURTs) involves a wide range of complex issues that are developing rapidly. While the Government monitor the impact of this technology, DFID has not undertaken an assessment of the effects of terminator technology on the food security and livelihoods of small-scale farmers in developing countries.

DFID takes genetic modification (GM) in crops and foods and its potential impacts on poor people, including small-scale farmers, in developing countries very seriously. Our approach is based on the principle that the health of people and their environment is of primary concern. We recognise that GM technology in itself will not solve the problem of world hunger. However, biotechnology has the potential to make a contribution to development and poverty reduction, if managed responsibly and applied to those crops on which the poor rely.

Recognising that there are both potential benefits and risks associated with gene technologies and GM crops, developing countries should be able to make their own informed choices. To this end, DFID worked with the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the international community to establish the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, under the UN convention on biological diversity (CBD). The protocol adopts a strong precautionary approach and aims to ensure that countries are provided with the information necessary to make informed decisions before agreeing to the import of genetically modified organisms. It also facilitates the exchange of information on living modified organisms and assists countries in the implementation of the protocol. This means that importing countries are able to make a decision to avoid or minimise potential adverse effects of GM organisms, even if the potential extent of such effects is uncertain.

With regard to GURTs, the parties to the CBD decided in 2000, that there should be a precautionary approach to their use while research into the possible impacts of these technologies was carried out. Parties will look to re-affirm this decision at the CBD meeting in March this year. Parties will also discuss the need for further research on the impacts of GURTs and how to share information from these studies.

Kenya

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what aid and support is being given to the Wajir region of Kenya by the UK to deal with the present drought and consequential famine in the region. [51474]

Hilary Benn: The Wajir and Mandera districts are the worst affected areas in northern Kenya. Levels of malnutrition are unacceptably high. The Department of International Development's support is channelled through UN agencies and competent non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to help save the lives of those most at risk.

The total DFID contribution stands at £12.7 million since the start of the crisis in July 2004. This includes the commitment of an additional £3 million made during my recent visit to Wajir.

Our support is focused on the worst affected areas, particularly Wajir, where DFID's main implementing partners are Oxfam, Merlin and UNICEF. The support given in Wajir includes food aid channelled through the World Food Programme, emergency health support, feeding programmes for malnourished children and water provision (boreholes services and water trucking).

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by him in the last 12 months have been answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* between 14 and 28 days, *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if he will make a statement; [49899]

(2) how many parliamentary questions tabled in the last 12 months for answer by him on a named day *(a)* were transferred and *(b)* received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named. [49876]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) aims to ensure that Members receive a substantive response to their Named Day question on the named day and to endeavour to answer ordinary written questions within a working week of being tabled. Unfortunately, this is not always possible but this Department makes every effort to achieve these timescales.

During the last 12 months, DFID answered 1,136 ordinary written parliamentary questions within 14 days after the date of tabling; 12 ordinary written questions were answered between 14 and 28 days and one question was answered after 28 days.

During the same 12 month period, DFID answered 115 parliamentary questions substantively on the named day; 31 questions received a substantive response after the named day. DFID transferred six named day questions to other Government departments for response.

South Asian Earthquake

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many *(a)* tents and *(b)* other forms of shelter have been airlifted from the UK to aid victims of the South Asia earthquake. [50294]

Mr. Thomas: DFID does not have a figure for the total number of tents and shelter materials sent from the UK in response to the earthquake in South Asia. DFID however, sent 9,000 tents, 36,000 tarpaulins, 125,000 pieces of plastic sheeting and 125,000 lengths of 16.5 metre rope. Support to shelter represents a sizeable proportion of DFID financial assistance to UN agencies, non-governmental organisations and the Red Cross Movement Specifically, it was included in the £1.4 million channelled through Save the Children, £700,000 through the Norwegian Refugee Council, £300,000 through the Agency for Technical Co-operation and Development (ACTED), £498,964 through Tearfund, £1,830,000 through the International Organisation of Migration and £4.57 million through the Red Cross Movement. Tents and shelter materials were also included in the 78 relief flights arranged by DFID on behalf of the Disasters Emergency Committee.

DFID further supported UN activities through its support to the NATO airlift, transporting relief items including tents from UN warehouses in Europe and the Middle East to Pakistan (airlifts provided by the Ministry of Defence (MOD), at DFID's request, with DFID paying the marginal costs of the assistance). DFID also provided funding for an 86 strong team drawn from 59 Independent Commando Squadron Royal Engineers, deployed under NATO command, to undertake emergency shelter building operations in remote high-altitude areas in the Bagh region. The Royal Engineers unit are highly specialist troops who are trained to operate in winter and mountainous conditions.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what assessment he has made of the impact of returnees to the south of Sudan, with particular reference to the *(a)* implications for civil society and *(b)* the possibility of localised conflict; and if he will make a statement: [50042]

(2) what research he has commissioned into the possible impact of returnees to southern Sudan. [50043]

Hilary Benn: To date, the large number of returns of refugees and internally displaced people predicted by the UN and others has still not taken place. There is still potential for increasing movement in the run up to the rainy season. The returns process is likely to be a gradual process, but aid agencies need to retain the flexibility to respond rapidly to any changes in this pattern or a sudden deterioration in the humanitarian situation that can be heightened by this process. DFID stands ready to provide assistance when required.

The prospects for sustainable returns to southern Sudan are undermined by a number of factors including chronic under-development and very poor economic prospects for returnees, disease outbreaks and increasing levels of HIV/AIDS associated with population movements, and insufficient protection on the way home and in the areas of return. To support the returns process, the UK is providing early and significant contributions to the UN 2006 Work Plan, from which the UN humanitarian co-ordinator has already allocated over $40 million to the south. The UK is also establishing a £10 million service delivery fund in the south, which will act as a bridge while the Multi-Donor Trust Fund develops projects for funding and is able to assist longer term development needs. We are continuing to fund non-governmental organisation (NGO) humanitarian programmes.

The UK and other donors are supporting various civil society groups in undertaking reconciliation and peace building activities in areas of return; these efforts will need to expand to match the scale of returns. There is the potential for localised conflict and violence following return, through inter-tribal disputes and as factions adapt to the changing political landscape.

The UK has not itself commissioned any research into the impact of returns, but has been pressing the UN to enhance its analysis of the situation and the potential impacts emerging from the returns process, so that it can prioritise its interventions. DFID is regularly monitoring the situation in the south and the UN's response.

Syngenta

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the occasions on which *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials met representatives of Syngenta during (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005. [50555]

Mr. Thomas: DFID officials attended a meeting at 11 Downing Street in November 2005 for a launch of the book "Going for Growth". The book was published by the Smith Institute and sponsored by the Syngenta Foundation. DFID officials also attended the following meetings where representatives from Syngenta were present: the annual general meetings of the Consultative Group for International Agriculture Research held in Mexico City in October 2004, and in Marrakech in December 2005; and the Bureau meeting of the International Assessment of Agriculture Science and Technology held in Bangkok, January 2005.

Timber

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer from the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2119 20W, on timber, what plans he has to sign voluntary partnership agreements with *(a)* Brazil, *(b)* Indonesia and *(c)* China. [50873]

Mr. Thomas: The European Commission and member states have started consultations about Partnership Agreements with four counties, Cameroon, Ghana, Indonesia and Malaysia. Consultations with Indonesia are being led by the European Commission. The UK Government are closely involved, drawing on our experience under the Indonesia-UK Memorandum of Understanding to tackle illegal logging.

Consultations with Brazil about a Partnership Agreement have not yet started. Discussions will take place on illegal logging with Brazil in the second quarter of 2006.

Consultations with China will take place within the framework of the agreement reached at the Eighth EU-China Summit for China and the EU to work together to tackle illegal logging. The Government have discussed this with the European Commission who will take this forward from the Delegation in Beijing.

Vandalism

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of his Department's buildings in the last 12 months. [49502]

Mr. Thomas: The only act of vandalism recorded against DFID buildings in the last 12 months was graffiti which was found on our small external storage site in East Kilbride.

TREASURY

Banks

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will introduce legislation requiring all banks operating in the UK to donate 1 per cent. of their UK profits to local community projects. [50559]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government's approach to responsible business practice is voluntary and business led we aim to set an appropriate framework for responsible business and other stakeholders, encouraging business to go further, facilitating the sharing of best practice and promoting responsible operations, while meeting our better regulation objectives.

Child Trust Fund

Mr. Davey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Child Trust Fund accounts have been opened by families in London. [50768]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I refer the hon. Gentlemen to the answer given to him on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 658W.

The next release of Child Trust Fund statistics is due at the end of February 2006.

Mr. Davey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many Child Trust Fund accounts have been opened by local authorities on behalf of children in their care since the programme began *(a)* in total, *(b)* in each region and *(c)* in each local education authority. [50769]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Local authorities are not authorised to open Child Trust Fund accounts for the children in their care. Local authorities notify HMRC of the children in their care so that HMRC can ensure that these children do not miss out on a Child Trust Fund account.

The total number of Child Trust Fund accounts opened by HMRC for looked after children will be published along with other annual CTF statistics later this year.

Climate Change Levy

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what research into the effectiveness of the climate change levy his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated; and if he will make a statement. [50451]

John Healey: The Government commissioned Cambridge Econometrics to carry out an independent evaluation of the climate change levy. This evaluation, "Modelling the initial effects of the climate change levy", concluded that the levy is effective and should save over 3.5 million tonnes of carbon per annum by 2010. In particular, Cambridge Econometrics concluded that the announcement effect of CCL in Budget 1999 will, in combination with the price effect, have reduced energy demand in the commerce and public sector by 14.6 per cent. by 2010.

Companies Incorporated in India

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate his Department has made of the value in pounds sterling to the UK economy of companies originally incorporated in India in 2004-05. [51452]

John Healey: There are no direct estimates of the value to the UK economy of companies originally incorporated in India. However, figures show that UK companies are increasingly investing in India: outward foreign direct investment to India increased by over 200 per cent. over the decade to 2004, a faster growth rate than that of total foreign direct investment abroad by UK companies. The stock of direct investment in India owned by UK companies stood at £1.7 billion in 2004.

Departmental Estate (Castle Point)

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by his Department in Castle Point. [42900]

John Healey: HM Treasury owns no land or property in Castle Point.

Departmental Staff

Kate Hoey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans his Department has to change the London allowance of its staff; and if he will make a statement. [50014]

John Healey: The Treasury pays a London Allowance of £2,000 p.a. to staff at SCS Payband 1 and has no plans to review or change this level of allowance.

Euro Transactions

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of UK companies that accept payment in euros for transactions in the UK. [50854]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government have not made any assessment of euro-based transactions in the UK. Information on the use of the euro in the City of London and UK's external trade was published in Box 6.1 on Page 29 in the "Report on Euro Preparations, December 2004", available in the House of Commons Library.

It is entirely a commercial decision for UK business to determine whether or not they wish to accept the euro or any other foreign currency. The Government published updated fact sheets "The euro: its your business", in June 2005 to provide information for UK business that wish to do so. These are available to download or order free of charge from the Treasury's euro website www.euro.gov.uk.

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether *(a)* salaries and *(b)* emoluments paid by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development are exempt from UK income tax by virtue of being subject to the Bank's own internal tax. [50291]

Dawn Primarolo: Article 14 of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (Immunities and Privileges) Order 1991 provides:

"(1) As from the date on which an internal effective tax for the benefit of the Bank on the salaries and emoluments paid to him by the Bank is applied, any Director, Alternate, Officer and Employee of the Bank shall enjoy exemption from income tax in respect of such salaries and emoluments, provided that nothing in this paragraph shall be interpreted as precluding such salaries and emoluments from being taken into account for the purpose of assessing the amount of taxation to be applied to income from other sources.

(2) Paragraph (1) of this Article shall not apply to pensions or annuities paid by the Bank."

An internal effective tax system for this purpose was introduced by the Bank on 28 March 1991.

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1492–93W, on the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), whether there has been a change in the rights of employees and retirees of the EBRD to dispose of their lump sum benefit as they see fit. [50292]

Dawn Primarolo: The position remains as set out in my earlier answer. The EBRD provides a lump sum which is intended for individuals to make investments to provide income in retirement. The form of these investments is for individuals to determine.

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1492–3W, on the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), whether employees of the EBRD who do not choose to buy an annuity or other taxable investment will receive the enhancement to their lump sum originally granted for the purpose of paying income tax; and by what *(a)* formula and *(b)* amount benefit deriving from the EBRD pension fund was increased for the purpose of paying income tax. [50293]

Dawn Primarolo: The EBRD provides a lump sum which is intended for individuals to make investments to provide income in retirement. The lump sum is calculated on the same basis for all staff.

My earlier answer set out in full the rationale behind the changes to the level of lump sum payment. As I made clear, contributions to the EBRD's pension funds were increased in 1992 not for the payment of income tax, but to ensure consistency with comparable organisations.

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what mechanisms are in place to ensure that employees and retirees of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development pay income tax if they choose not to make a taxable investment with their lump sum benefit and if additional shareholder funds have been added to that lump sum for the purpose of paying income tax; and who is responsible for overseeing these mechanisms. [50290]

Dawn Primarolo: I advised the hon. Gentleman in my written answer of 19 January, *Official Report*, columns 1492–93W, that the EBRD provides a lump sum which is intended for individuals to make investments to provide income in retirement. The form of these investments is for individuals to determine. My earlier answer of the 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2797W, stated that retirement income arising from the investment is liable to income tax in the normal way.

Fair Trade

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his Department's policy is on the procurement of fair trade produce for consumption on its premises. [49961]

John Healey: The Treasury's catering contractor is encouraged to offer fair trade products for sale to staff. Fair trade coffee is served at all official meetings, and fair trade tea is also available.

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much and what proportion of his Department's catering budget was spent on fair trade produce in the last period for which figures are available. [49964]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Treasury's catering contractor does not separately identify the cost of fair trade produce within its charges to the Treasury. They reviewed orders for the week ending 3 February. Total orders for the week were £8,604, of which £3,915 (45 per cent.) consisted of fair trade produce.

Manufacturing Jobs (Beverley and Holderness)

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in Beverley and Holderness were employed in manufacturing in each year between 1992 and 1997. [51519]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 13 February 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about manufacturing. (51519)

The attached table shows estimates of the number of people resident in the Beverley and Holderness constituency employed in manufacturing for the 12 month periods ending February 1995 to February 1998 from the annual local area Labour Force Survey. Comparable figures for earlier years are not available.

These estimates, as with any from sample surveys, are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Changes in the estimates from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

People employed in manufacturing, resident in the Beverley and Holderness Parliamentary Constituency

12 months ending	*Numbers (thousands)*
February 1995	6
February 1996	7
February 1997	9
February 1998	11

Notes:
1. Estimates are subject to sampling variability.
2. Changes from year to year should be treated with particular caution.

Source:
Annual local area Labour Force Survey.

Marriages

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assumptions he has made *(a)* for the purposes of demographic modelling and *(b)* for other reasons about the number of marriages in the decade to 2016 between UK nationals and citizens of (i) Pakistan, (ii) India and (iii) Bangladesh where the latter seek settlement in the UK. [50246]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 13 February 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question regarding the assumptions made *(a)* for the purposes of demographic modelling and *(b)* for other reasons about the number of marriages in the decade to 2016 between UK nationals and citizens of (i) Pakistan, (ii) India and (iii) Bangladesh where the latter seeks settlement in the UK. (50246)

The Government Actuary's Department has periodically produced projections of the future population of England & Wales by marital status. Responsibility for such projections has recently transferred to the Office for National Statistics. As part of this work, assumptions are made about future marriage rates. However, these assumptions are not broken down by nationality.

Money Laundering

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the Financial Services Authority's press release of 8 March 2001, (1) if he will list the UK banks which laundered money for the former Nigerian dictator Sani Abacha; and how much money was handled by each bank; [50557]

(2) if he will undertake an inquiry to establish whether banks in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Crown Dependencies offered their facilities to General Pinochet to evade taxes and launder money. [50569]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The handling of accounts linked to the late General Abacha or to General Pinochet by banks in the United Kingdom is a regulatory matter, responsibility for which lies with the Financial Services Authority, and the financial regulatory authorities on each Crown Dependency.

HM Treasury and the Governments of the Crown Dependencies are responsible for the overarching framework of legislation and guidance in relation to money laundering, which has been subject to a wide ranging modernisation programme to safeguard the integrity of the financial services sector.

Myeloma

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the life expectancy of a patient suffering from myeloma was in England in the last period for which figures are available. [49870]

John Healey: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 13 February 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning what the life expectancy of a patient suffering from myeloma was in England in the last period for which figures are available. (49870)

Data on life expectancy for patients with specific types of cancer are not available. Available information relates to survival from diagnosis. Survival rates are calculated from the proportion of patients in each age group still alive at a given period after diagnosis.

The latest available survival rates for multiple myeloma[1] in England are for adult patients (aged 15–99 years) diagnosed during 1998–2001 and followed up to 31 December 2003. The five-year age-standardised[2] relative survival rates for patients diagnosed with multiple myeloma during 1998–2001[3] in England, was 25.6 per cent. for both male and female patients.

The survival statistics are available on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Productasp?vlnk=14007

[1] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) code C90.

[2] As cancer survival varies with age at diagnosis, rates have been age standardised to control for changes in the age profile of cancer patients over time.

[3] Complete five-year follow-up is currently only available for those diagnosed in 1998. For patients diagnosed in later years the most up-to-date estimates of shorter-term survival were used in this analysis of survival rates.

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many parliamentary questions tabled in the last 12 months for answer by him on a named day *(a)* were transferred and *(b)* received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named. [49882]

John Healey: A parliamentary question is transferred when it is more appropriate for an answer to be given by a Department other than that to which it was originally tabled. Records are not kept of the number of questions transferred to and from the Treasury.

In the 2004–05 Session, Treasury Ministers answered 79 per cent. of named day questions substantively on the day nominated by questioners. The figure for the 2005–06 session to date is 70 per cent.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by him in the last 12 months have been answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* between 14 and 28 days, *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if he will make a statement. [49894]

John Healey: The information requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However, in the 2004–05 session, Treasury Ministers answered 84 per cent. of ordinary written questions within a working week of their having been tabled, as provided for in "Erskine May" (Twenty-Third Edition, page 342). The corresponding figure for the 2005–06 session to date is 79 per cent.

Pool Re

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether buildings insurance provided through Pool Re covers radiological, biological and chemical terrorist attack where the building is subsequently uninhabitable due to contamination without significant structural damage. [51108]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Pool Re provides reinsurance cover for commercial property damage and consequent business interruption resulting from an act of terrorism on mainland Great Britain (excluding war and cyber terrorism risks).

Where purchased, insurance cover provided under the Pool Re scheme by its members (insurance firms) is subject to the terms and conditions which appear in the underlying policies issued by those members, which will contain no exclusions for chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear effects applying to the terrorism cover. This means that such policies will include cover for property damage relating to radiological, biological and chemical effects where the cause is an act of terrorism. The extent of the insured's cover will ultimately depend on the contract between the insurer and insured.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Leech: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in Manchester, Withington use a Post Office card account to access child benefit. [50373]

Dawn Primarolo: Approximately 920 recipients in Manchester, Withington used a Post Office card account to access child benefit in November 2005.

Qinetiq

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what professional advice his Department received about the offering of shares in Qinetiq to retail investors at flotation; when this advice was received; whether *(a)* officials and *(b)* Ministers challenged this advice; and if he will make a statement. [50931]

Mr. Des Browne: The recommendation that the Qinetiq IPO should not include a retail offer was received by the MOD from its professional advisers and the final decision was taken in consultation with other Government Departments.

Real Estate Investment Trusts

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact of the changes proposed in his pre-Budget statement in respect of real estate investment trusts upon *(a)* availability of housing for rent; *(b)* the amount and proportion of second and holiday homes, *(c)* the availability of housing in areas with a preponderance of second and holiday homes and *(d)* other aspects of the housing market. [50255]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Real estate investment trusts (UK-REITs) will provide a publicly quoted vehicle for investment in both commercial and residential property. As part of the Government's response to Kate Barker's Review of Housing Supply, one of the aims of introducing UK-REITs is to improve efficiency, affordability and professionalism in the private rented sector to the benefit of residential tenants. The Government will publish a final regulatory impact assessment alongside Finance Bill legislation.

Andrew George: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria will apply to the purchase of residential properties under his proposed changes to real estate investment trusts. [50256]

John Healey: As is set out in the draft legislation, published in December 2005 and updated in January 2006, real estate investment trusts (UK-REITs) will, among other rules, be required to be companies listed on a Recognised Stock Exchange, as defined for tax purposes, and to hold at least three properties, of which no one property can exceed 40 per cent. of the value of the total portfolio. These rules will apply to UK-REITs investing in commercial and/or residential property.

Scottish Bank Notes

Miss Begg: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is legal to use Scottish bank notes in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* Wales. [50618]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Under the Bank Notes (Scotland) Act 1845, certain commercial banks are allowed to issue their own banknotes in Scotland. There is no Act of Parliament that makes provision for Scottish banknotes to be legal tender in any part of the UK including Scotland itself. However, legal tender is a narrow legal concept that has little to do with the way in which most payments are made. Contrary to popular belief, the payment arrangements for transactions are not dependent on whether the means of payment are "legal tender" but are rather a matter for the parties concerned to agree upon as a matter of contract. Many transactions are settled through means of payment that are not legal tender such as credit and debit cards, and cheques.

Legally, no one is obliged to accept Scottish notes, or indeed other methods of payment, in any part of the UK as a means of payment if they do not wish to do so.

St. Bartholomew's Hospital

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the role of his Department in the funding of the scheme to rebuild St. Bartholomew's Hospital. [50084]

Mr. Des Browne: The business case for the proposed redevelopment of St Bartholomew's Hospital and the Royal London Hospital is being considered by the Department of Health. As with any other large investment scheme, once Health Ministers have approved it, it will be formally referred to the Treasury.

NHS investment schemes are not funded directly by the Treasury, but are paid for at a local level by trusts, from within the NHS spending review settlement allocated to Department of Health.

Staff Absences (High Cholesterol)

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent estimate he has made of the annual cost to the economy in terms of lost working hours through staff absence and reduced productivity of people with unhealthy cholesterol levels. [36769]

Caroline Flint: I have been asked to reply.

The Secretary of State has made no estimate of this kind. There are published estimates suggesting that coronary heart disease (CHD) caused 65.4 million certified incapacity days in 1999, entailing £2.2 billion in lost production that cholesterol levels above five millimoles litre account for half of the burden of CHD.

Tax (Shrewsbury and Atcham)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average amount of tax paid by families in Shrewsbury and Atcham constituency was in (*a*) 2004, (*b*) 2005 and (*c*) 2001. [50109]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of the average amount of income tax paid by families at constituency level are unavailable.

Available information on the number of taxpayers and their mean and median total income by constituency, can be found in table 3.15 "Total Income by Parliamentary Constituency" on the HM Revenue and Customs internet website http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/income_distribution/menu-by-year.htm-315.

Tax Avoidance Schemes

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in which court cases, heard by (*a*) special commissioners in which proceedings are complete and (*b*) the European Court of Justice his Department successfully challenged tax avoidance schemes operated by (i) corporate and (ii) non-corporate entities. [49716]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not readily available in the form requested and obtaining it would incur disproportionate cost.

Tax Credits

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which tax credit decisions carry the right of appeal. [50157]

Dawn Primarolo: Appeal rights of tax credit decisions are prescribed by section 38 of the Tax Credits Act 2002. The Act can be found on the website of the Office of Public Sector Information. http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/20020021.htm.

UK Coinage

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the costs were of minting each denomination of UK coinage in each of the last five years. [50855]

John Healey: I refer my right hon. Friend to the written answer I gave him on 4 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1188W.

VAT Fraud

Mr. Soames: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of VAT fraud in each of the last three years. [50630]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of VAT revenue loss—the "VAT gap", for each of the last three years, are available in the paper "Measuring Indirect Tax Losses", published in December 2005. The publication can be found in the Library of the House or in the following link: http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/pbr2005/mitl2005.pdf

Vegetable Oil

Tony Baldry: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will reduce the level of taxation on vegetable oil to the level for natural gas; [50900]

(2) how much revenue the Government expect to receive from the changes to the level of tax on vegetable oil as a fuel in 2005–06; [50902]

(3) what the level of taxation on vegetable oil as a fuel was in each year since 2001; [50903]

(4) what estimate he has made of the number of motorists using vegetable oil as a fuel; and what assessment he has made of the effect of changes to the taxation of such fuel on the numbers of motorists using it. [50905]

John Healey: Fuel produced from vegetable oil is eligible for the rate of duty for biodiesel (currently 27.10 pence per litre) if it meets the legal definition of biodiesel for tax purposes set out in section 2AA of the Hydrocarbon Oil Duties Act 1979. In other cases it is liable to duty at 47.10 pence per litre, as has been the case since Royal Assent to the Finance Act 2002.

Duty rates for all fuels are reviewed annually as part of the Budget process. Duty rates for biodiesel are set according to the principles of the Alternative Fuels Framework, published in the 2003 pre-Budget report. In line with the commitment to provide rolling three-year certainty set out in the framework, the current differential for biodiesel of 20 pence per litre is guaranteed until 2008.

There has been no increase in excise duty on road fuels, including biofuels, since October 2003, when duty dates were revalorised on line with inflation.

The rates of duty for fuel produced from vegetable oil since 2001 are as follows:

	Pence per litre	
Date	Fuel produced from vegetable oil that meets the fiscal definition of biodiesel	All other fuel produced from vegetable oil used as road fuel
7 March 2001	45.82	45.82
26 July 2002	25.82	
1 October 2003	27.10	47.10

The Government continue to review its progress in encouraging the development of a biofuels market in the UK. In January 2006, over 4 million litres of biodiesel were released for consumption in the UK, representing a three-fold increase in the level of consumption since the same period last year.

Vehicle Excise Duty

Mr. Walker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria were used in making the decision no longer to use the rolling 30-year period for exempting older, historic cars from vehicle excise duty; and if he will make a statement. [50314]

John Healey: In his 1998 Budget speech, the Chancellor announced his intention to introduce a more environmentally sensitive system of VED. The Government have since re-structured VED so that it more closely reflects environmental impacts.

The continuation of the 25-year rolling exemption was difficult to justify on environmental grounds within the reformed VED system because older cars tend to be less clean—especially in terms of local air pollutants such as particulates and nitrogen oxides—than newer cars.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to ensure that local authority children's services are aware of their new obligations under the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 when assessing young carers' needs. [48806]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* In August 2005 the Department of Health published, jointly with my Department, combined policy guidance on the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 and the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004. This was the product of extensive consultation with local authorities and other agencies and voluntary organisations. The guidance is widely available via the Department of Health website. Local authorities are required to act in accordance with the guidance under section 7(1) of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970. Local authorities also have a duty under Schedule 2, paragraph 1(2) of the Children Act 1989 to publicise their services to families with children in need, and to take steps to ensure that those who might benefit from the services receive the information.

Choice Advisers

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many choice advisers she expects will be required in each local education authority; and if she will make a statement; [50785]

(2) what *(a)* training and *(b)* qualifications will be required to be a choice adviser; and if she will make a statement. [50786]

Jacqui Smith: The number of choice advisers required in each local area will vary in relation to levels of deprivation.

We intend to publish guidance for local authorities on choice advice which will cover a range of issues including the role of the choice adviser, potential delivery models, and the training and skills necessary to perform the role.

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on how many occasions her Department consulted citizens' juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens' jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens' jury. [46230]

Bill Rammell: The Department has not conducted any citizens' juries on departmental policies in the last five years.

Class Sizes

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average class size is in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in (i) Leicester and (ii) England. [49612]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information has been placed in the House Libraries.

Contact Centres

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the contact centres for children and absent parents funded by her Department. [44665]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is listed as follows.

New supervised child contact centres

York (Family Mediation Service)
Stoke (Mediation Advisory Service)
Nottinghamshire (Nottinghamshire Domestic Violence Forum)
North Wiltshire (Family Mediation Service)
Merseyside (National Youth Advocacy Service)
Blackburn (Diocese)
South London (African Caribbean Family Mediation Service)
Cambridge (Pyramids Family Centres)
West London (Domestic Violence Intervention Programme)
Scunthorpe (The Forge)
Leeds (Family Service Unit)
Northamptonshire (Spurgeons)

NCH Herefordshire
NCH Bristol
NCH Durham

Child contact centres awarded funding from the sustainability fund

Withington Child Contact Centre
Ashton-under-Lyne WRVS Contact Centre
Bolton Contact Centre
Bootle Sefton Child and Family Connect
Workington Contact Centre
Southport Contact Centre
St. Helens Contact Centre
Rochdale Contact Centre
Oldham Contact Centre
Wirral Contact Centre
Bury Child Contact Centre
Lancaster Child Contact Centre
Child and Family Connect Liverpool
Stockport Contact Centre
East Lancashire Contact Centre
Salford Child Contact Centre
Greater Manchester Children's Supervised Contact Centre
St. Joseph's Family Centre, Warrington
Buttershaw Child Contact Centre
Harrogate Child Contact Centre
Wythenshawe Child Contact Centre
Middlesbrough Contact Centre
Bishop Auckland Family Contact Centre
Wellingborough Contact Centre
Derby Child Contact Centre
Stoke on Trent / Hanley Contact Centre
Stafford Contact Centre
Children Come First (Daventry)
Macclesfield Child Contact Centre
St. John's Ambulance Child Contact Centre, Grantham
St. John Ambulance Contact Centre, Spalding
The Meeting Place Child Contact Centre, Scarborough
Bedworth Family Support Centre
The Salvation Army Child Contact Service, Birmingham
Family Action in Our Region, Rushden
Stevenage Child Contact Centre
St. Matthew's Child Contact Centre, Colchester
Norfolk and Norwich Families House
Swindon Contact Centre
Chard Child Contact Centre
Yeovil Contact Centre
Taunton Child Contact Centre
The Little House Contact Centre, Exeter
Woking Child Contact Centre
Havant Borough Child Contact Centres
Guildford Contact Centre
St. John and St. Stephen's Contact Centre, Reading
St. Paul's Family Meeting Place, Bracknell
Cowley Child Contact Centre
Eastbourne Child Contact Centre
Cove Family Contact Centre
Lewes Child Contact Centre
Alton Contact Centre
Portsmouth Child Contact Centre (ECRC)
Kidlington Contact Centre
Walton on Thames Child Contact Centre
Medway Child Contact Centre
Neutral Ground Child Contact Centre, Greenwich
Lewisham Welcare Contact Centre
Children First Child Contact Centre, Hackney
Merlon Family Links Contact Centre
Enfield Family Contact Centre
St. Andrew's Family Contact Centre, Baling
Coram Family Child Contact Service, Camden
Havelock Family Centre
Brixton Family Services
Sutton Welcare Family Contact Centres
Welcare Accord Contact Centres

Demographics

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment her Department has made of the impact of the projected increases in the population of England upon demand and capacity in schools. [50791]

Jacqui Smith: The latest population projections produced by the Government Actuary's Department show that although the population of England is projected to rise by nearly 7 million people between 2004 and 2031, the trends are different depending on the age group. In particular, the population of children of approximately primary school age (5–10) has been falling since 1999 and is projected to continue falling until 2008. The population of children of compulsory secondary school age (11–15) started to fall in 2005 and is expected to continue falling until 2014.

Population in England at mid-year by age at last birthday (thousand)

	2004	2010	2015	2020	2025	2031
Age 5–10	3,645	3,480	3,591	3,601	3,683	3,703
Age 11–15	3,252	3,032	2,881	3,008	3,004	3,086
Age 16–18	1,957	1,942	1,837	1,772	1,821	1,848
All ages	50,094	51,715	53,009	54,344	55,594	56,832

Source:
Government Actuary's Department 2004-based principal population projections

The Department uses these population projections (along with annual schools census data and estimates of participation in education for non-compulsory ages) to produce pupil projections by age and school type to 2020. These pupil projections are used by the Department to inform the setting of teacher training places.

The impact of demographic changes will also be considered by the Department in work on revenue funding as part of the spending review process. On planning the supply of school places our policy is that this is best done at a local level by the local authority, and they are allocated the capital resources to meet future demand. Local authorities have a duty to ensure that there are sufficient places and that high quality education is provided in a cost effective way.

Many local authorities are facing falling primary rolls. Funding empty places can represent a poor use of resources particularly where schools with spare places also perform poorly. Working with local authorities and other partners we have developed a toolkit offering practical advice to help local authorities and schools manage falling rolls. The toolkit is available at www.teachernet.gov.uk/falling_rolls.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many staff employed by her Department live in Castle Point. [42814]

Maria Eagle: The numbers of staff employed in my Department who live in Castle Point are less than five.

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many of her Department's employees have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46870]

Maria Eagle: The numbers of employees in my Department who have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five calendar years are:

	Number
2005	below 5
2004	11
2003	9
2002	15
2001	21

Engineering Academy

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the merits of establishing an engineering academy. [46083]

Jacqui Smith: We are currently examining the possibility of a proposal to establish an academy in Staffordshire with a specialism in engineering and international business. During the current feasibility stage the project team is preparing detailed plans, including an educational vision, curriculum model and an outline building design. Consultation with the local community will also take place. At the end of the current feasibility stage we expect to sign a funding agreement with the project's sponsor.

Fuel Cell Technology

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department is taking to encourage schools to use fuel cell technology. [50065]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* The Department is keeping a watching brief on the development of fuel cells. At the moment they are in prototype stage and too unreliable or expensive to be used in schools but future developments may make them a cost-effective replacement for boilers and for the internal combustion engine.

GCSEs

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list secondary schools in England where the percentage contribution of BTEC first diplomas to the percentage of 15-year-olds achieving five plus A* to C grades at GCSE and equivalent was *(a)* 0.5 to 1 per cent., *(b)* 1 to 2 per cent., *(c)* 2 to 5 per cent., *(d)* 5 to 10 per cent., *(e)* 10 to 20 per cent., *(f)* 20 to 30 per cent. and *(g)* greater than 30 per cent. in 2005. [50944]

Jacqui Smith: The following table provides the information requested.

Schools where the difference between the proportion of 15-year-olds achieving the equivalent five or more A to C grades and the proportion of 15-year-olds achieving the equivalent of five or more A* to C grades if BTEC first diploma achievements are ignored*

	Location
(a) 1 percentage point difference	
Writhlington School	Bath and North East Somerset
Vandyke Upper School and Community College	Bedfordshire
Longhill High School	Brighton and Hove
Patcham House Special School	Brighton and Hove
Richard Lander School	Cornwall
All Saints' Church of England School, Weymouth	Dorset
Royal Manor Arts College	Dorset
The Causeway School	East Sussex
Oaklands Catholic School	Hampshire
Knightsfield School	Hertfordshire
Rossendale School	Lancashire
Cockburn College of Arts	Leeds
Joseph Ruston Technology College	Lincolnshire
North Kesteven School	Lincolnshire
St. Peter and St. Paul, Lincoln's Catholic High School, A Science College	Lincolnshire
North Manchester High School for Boys	Manchester
Trinity CofE High School	Manchester
Ounsdale High School	Staffordshire
Wolgarston High School	Staffordshire
Cheadle Hulme High School	Stockport
Glebelands School	Surrey
Rodborough Technology College	Surrey
Woolmer Hill Technology College	Surrey
Aveling Park School	Waltham Forest
Studley High School	Warwickshire
(b) 2 percentage points difference	
The Cedars Upper School and Community College	Bedfordshire
Bishop Challoner Catholic School	Birmingham
Holte School	Birmingham
Treviglas Community College	Cornwall
Staunton Park Community School	Hampshire
Caistor Yarborough School	Lincolnshire
Middlefield School of Technology	Lincolnshire
North Manchester High School for Girls	Manchester
Wright Robinson Sports College	Manchester
Stoke Damerel Community College	Plymouth
Siddal Moor Sports College	Rochdale
The Lakelands School and Sports College	Shropshire
Broadwater School	Surrey
West Hill School	Tameside
(c) 3 to 5 percentage points difference	
The Roseland Community School	Cornwall
Merrill College	Derby
Stoke Newington School	Hackney
The Canterbury High School	Kent
The Charles Dickens School	Kent
Glenburn Sports College	Lancashire
South Leeds High School	Leeds
The City of Lincoln Community College	Lincolnshire
Plant Hill High School	Manchester
St. Peter's RC High School	Manchester
King's Manor School, Specialist Sports College	Middlesbrough

Schools where the difference between the proportion of 15-year-olds achieving the equivalent five or more A to C grades and the proportion of 15-year-olds achieving the equivalent of five or more A* to C grades if BTEC first diploma achievements are ignored*

	Location
Hereford Technology School	North East Lincolnshire
Wintringham School	North East Lincolnshire
Wyvern Community School	North Somerset
Norton College	North Yorkshire
Haydon Bridge Community High School and Sports College	Northumberland
Sir Bernard Lovell School	South Gloucestershire
Pennywell School	Sunderland
Bishop Challoner Catholic Collegiate Girls School	Tower Hamlets
Ashton-on-Mersey School	Trafford
Lymm High Voluntary Controlled School	Warrington
(d) 6 to 10 percentage points difference	
The Vyne Community School	Hampshire
Upper Avon School	Wiltshire
Failsworth School	Oldham
Stourport High School-Language College	Worcestershire
BRIT School for Performing Arts and Technology	Croydon
Northumberland Park Community School	Haringey
Lordswood Boys' School	Birmingham
Kings Heath Boys Mathematics and Computing College	Birmingham
Thornton Grammar School	Bradford
John Spence Community High School	North Tyneside
(e) 11 to 20 percentage points difference	
Tulketh Community Sports College	Lancashire
Swan Valley Community School	Kent
Our Lady and St. Chad Catholic School	Wolverhampton

Notes

1. In no schools was the difference greater than 14 percentage points.
2. Data are for all published schools.

Grandparents (Access Rights)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance her Department provides to grandparents on remaining in contact with their grandchildren after a parental separation. [45881]

Maria Eagle: The Government's 'Parenting Plans' publication is available to parents, grandparents and other family members. They contain a checklist of issues that might usefully be considered, when planning contact and other arrangements following parental separation. My Department has recently revised the 'Parenting Plans' publication to include a range of case examples which indicate how others have reached agreement and to provide details of advisory services and agencies which families can turn to for advice.

In addition, my Department is undertaking work to make information available to grandparents and other relatives who are considering caring for a child. The Government has funded the Family Rights Group to develop advice sheets. Pages have also been added to the Every Child Matters website. These provide information on the legal arrangements for caring for a child by family and friends, parental responsibility, the availability of universal services and benefits and details of support that may be provided by local authorities. Further pages will be added to the Direct Gov website in the spring.

Higher Education (Pay)

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much the Government have allocated to higher education institutions to tackle unequal pay; [49138]

(2) what guidance has been given to the Higher Education Funding Council for England meet the Government's equal pay objectives. [49141]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 6 February 2006]*: By 2006, the Government will have provided nearly £0.8 billion to higher education institutions through the Rewarding and Developing Staff (RDS) initiative, managed by the Higher Education Funding Council. Developing equal opportunity targets—encompassing the need-address equal opportunity issues including equal pay for work of equal value—is one of the six priority areas for RDS. The KPMG evaluation of round 1 of RDS (2001–02 to 2003–04) showed that approximately £43 million (13 per cent. of the total round 1 allocation) was spent by HEIs on this priority area.

Overall funding available to institutions also influences what they can pay their staff. State expenditure on higher education will increase by around £2 billion between 2004–05 and 2007–08, taking total investment to almost £9.5 billion. Moreover the introduction of variable fees in 2006/07 will increase the funding available to the sector by an estimated further £1.35 billion per year, when it reaches steady state. It is, of course, a matter for individual institutions to decide how best to use the resources they have. The Government has provided guidance to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), through its Grant Letters, on issues concerning equal opportunities—for example in the most recent letter (January 2006) we have asked HEFCE to continue to support institutions so that they can fulfil their statutory duties. We have not provided specific guidance on equal pay.

Home Education

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 23 January 2006 to the hon. Member for Tamworth (Mr. Jenkins), *Official Report*, column 1916W, on home education, if she will commission research on the number of parents who educate their children at home. [50869]

Jacqui Smith: The research needs for my Department are currently under review, and research into the prevalence of elective home education in England is under consideration.

LEA Finance

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the funding per pupil from the Dedicated Schools Budget will be for *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in each local education authority for 2006–07. [51516]

Jacqui Smith: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Lichfield (Michael Fabricant) on 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2200W.

Lesley Staggs

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what reasons Lesley Staggs gave to her Department for resigning as National Director of the Foundation Stage; and who has been appointed to the post. [46133]

Maria Eagle: Lesley Staggs, the present National Director for the Foundation Stage within the Primary National Strategy, has tendered her resignation to her employer, The Capita Group plc. Her resignation from the post is a matter between Lesley Staggs and Capita.

Capita are currently undertaking a recruitment process to appoint a new Director for the Foundation Stage, with interviews scheduled for early February. The successful candidate will be announced in due course.

List 99

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to paragraph 27 of her Review of the List 99 decision-making process and policy implications document published on 19 January whether the 10 cases are regarded by the police as not posing a risk because *(a)* none of the individuals is currently teaching in schools or *(b)* the individuals themselves are regarded as not posing a risk. [46585]

Ruth Kelly: As I said in my statement and the accompanying report of 19 January, current inquiries suggest that none of the individuals concerned is working in a school. Police have been asked to visit each of these individuals to check whether any is a cause for concern. None is judged by the police to pose a current risk.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people on List 99 have been permitted, at Ministers' discretion, to work in *(a)* sixth form colleges, *(b)* colleges of further education, *(c)* nurseries and *(d)* playgroups in each of the last five years. [47215]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* It is not possible to provide this information in the format requested.

The Secretary of State does not give permission for people to work in specific settings; employment decisions are a matter for individual employers. Any individual who appears on List 99 or the POCA List (other than provisionally) on the grounds of unsuitability to work with children is barred from working in a "regulated position" within the meaning of section 36 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 which includes, for example, a position whose normal duties include caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children.

Protection of Children Act

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people have *(a)* been on and *(b)* been removed from the Protection of Children Act List in each year since it was first compiled. [44810]

Ruth Kelly: The Protection of Children Act List is a referral system for employers who have dismissed an individual for misconduct that harmed a child or placed a child at risk of harm. For all regulated child care settings it is mandatory to CRB check individuals prior to appointment. The Protection of Children Act List provides an additional safeguard within the CRB system for a limited range of circumstances set out in legislation, for example where somebody employed in a regulated child care position has been dismissed because they harmed a child. Since the establishment of the Protection of Children Act List in October 2000 the following number of people have been added or removed from the Protection of Children Act List in each year since it was first compiled:

	Names added	*Names removed*
(a) 2000	899	0
(b) 2001	48	52
(c) 2002	53	14
(d) 2003	68	9
(e) 2004	129	12
(f) 2005	227	26

The names added includes people transferred from the Consultancy Service Index, which was maintained by the Department of Health prior to the introduction of the Protection of Children Act.

Pupil Exclusions

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the rates of *(a)* temporary and *(b)* permanent exclusions are at schools run with (i) exclusively public money and (ii) financial assistance from the Vardy Foundation. [44066]

Jacqui Smith: The Emmanuel Schools Foundation sponsors three schools—King's academy; Trinity academy and Emmanuel city technology college.

Trinity academy only opened in September 2005 so no exclusions data have yet been collected from this establishment. Information on exclusions during the 2005/06 academic year should be available by June 2007.

Information on fixed period exclusions from academies and city technology colleges will start to be collected on a termly basis from May 2006. Figures for the full 2005/06 academic year should be available by June 2007.

The available information relating to permanent exclusions in the 2003/04 academic year is given in the table.

Maintained secondary schools, city technology colleges and academies[1]: number and percentage of permanent exclusions 2003/04: England

	Permanent exclusions	
	Number	Percentage
The Emmanuel Schools Foundation		
The King's academy[2]	27	2.60
Trinity academy[3]	[4]	[4]
Emmanuel city technology college[2]	0	0.00
Total schools receiving funding from the Emmanuel Schools Foundation[2]	27	1.19
Other schools		
Maintained secondary schools	8,315	0.25
City technology colleges (excluding Emmanuel CTC)[2]	24	0.16
Academies (excluding the King's academy and Trinity academy)[2]	58	0.63
Total other schools[2]	8,397	0.25

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.

[2] Information on permanent exclusions collected from academies and city technology colleges has not been validated. Figures are as reported by schools.

[3] Permanent exclusions data are collected retrospectively. The 2005 Annual Schools Census collected information on pupils on roll as at January 2005 together with permanent exclusions in 2003/04 school year. Trinity academy opened in September 2005, so information on permanent exclusions from this establishment is not currently available.

[4] Not available.

Source:
Annual Schools Census

Regulatory Reform

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many regulatory reform orders her Department has laid before Parliament in each of the last five calendar years. [46809]

Maria Eagle: My Department laid one regulatory reform order in 2001. The order was made. The order was: The Regulatory Reform (Voluntary Aided Schools Liabilities and Funding) (England) Order 2002 (2002/906).

Safeguarding Children

Sir George Young: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to her oral statement of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 966–70, on safeguarding children, what arrangements are in place to ensure that teachers from overseas meet the standards set for teachers based in the United Kingdom. [45243]

Ruth Kelly: Overseas teachers are subject to the same vetting procedures as UK teachers. However, where staff are recruited from countries outside the UK, the CRB or List 99 may not be appropriate, particularly when they are newly arrived. We currently advise employers to take extra care in other checks on overseas candidates and to seek information as to any criminal history from the authorities in their country of origin wherever possible. The CRB has an information service which can help with this.

It is important that any checks we have in place are as effective as we can make them, and we are reviewing the current process for vetting overseas teachers.

School Meals

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the amount of Brazilian beef procured for school meals during the last year for which figures are available. [47471]

Maria Eagle: The Department does not collect this information.

School Nursing

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much funding was allocated to school nursing in each of the past 10 years; [24428]

(2) what action she is taking to ensure school nurses have sufficient *(a)* time and *(b)* resources to provide a full range of services for children. [24430]

Mr. Byrne: I have been asked to reply.

Historically, allocations for school nurses were not determined centrally and until the September national health service work force census, the school nurse establishment was not identified separately from other services for children. The 2004 census showed there were 2,409 (91,619 full-time equivalent) qualified nurses working in the school nursing service.

The Choosing Health White Paper made a commitment to provide new funding for school nursing so that by 2010, every primary care trust (PCT) working with children's trusts and local authorities, will be resourced to have at least one full-time qualified school nurse working with each cluster of primary schools and its related secondary school. Roll out will start from 2006–07 in the 20 per cent. of PCTs with the worst health deprivation indicators (spearhead PCTs). There are 3,122 secondary schools.

The identified funding for school nurses is £20 million in the 2006–07 allocation, and £42 million in 2007–08. The majority of the funding is prioritised for spearhead PCTs in 2006–07, with the allocation for 2007–08 shared among all PCTs.

Our aim is to ensure there is sufficient work force capacity to provide high quality health services in schools. There is scope to reinforce the school nurse role by drawing in other workers and the chief nursing officer has been leading work to modernise the school nurse's role. In the new year, we will be publishing updated material entitled, 'School Nurse Development Pack', which will outline the principles of a modern role and will enable school nurses to expand their knowledge, skills and competencies to further develop their child-centred public health role.

School Staff (Child Protection)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* other school staff have been cautioned for having indecent pictures of children on their computers in each of the last five years. [48541]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* The information is not available in this form.

Schools

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of additional *(a)* secondary and *(b)* primary schools that will be required in Aylesbury Vale to meet planned expansion of housing. [43305]

Jacqui Smith: The Government have announced, in the run-up to the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007, and in response to Kate Barker's review of Housing Supply, a cross-cutting review into supporting housing growth to effectively co-ordinate across departments the strategic delivery of local and regional infrastructure necessary to support additional housing.

DfES rely on local authorities for planning additional schools in their area. This is because local authorities are in the best position to asses, in the light of existing schools1 provision, whether additional *(a)* secondary and *(b)* primary schools are required in areas of planned expansion of housing.

David Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the level of debt carried by schools in Cambridgeshire. [50713]

Jacqui Smith: Based on latest section 52 outturn statements received from local education authorities for the financial year 2004–05, 21 schools in Cambridgeshire had deficit balances totalling £2.7 million; 227 schools had credit balances totalling £17.1 million; and two schools had zero balances. It is for the local authority to distribute funding to its schools using its locally agreed funding formula, and it is for schools governing bodies to decide how to spend their available resources.

While schools are responsible for their own financial management, where a school is in deficit, it has to agree a three year recovery plan with the local authority to eliminate it. New school funding arrangements starting this year to replace annual budgets with multi-year ones will also help these schools better plan and manage their finances.

Services Education

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will revise the Pupil Level Annual Census to include children of servicemen and women; and if she will make a statement. [47377]

Jacqui Smith: Data on all pupils in maintained schools and non-maintained special schools in England is collected via the school census. This includes data on the children of servicemen and women attending schools in England. Although there is no mandatory requirement for service education schools located abroad to provide this information, they do provide individual pupil data in line with the school census on a voluntary basis. Currently however there is no provision to separately identify details on the children of servicemen and women within the school census.

Sex and Relationships Education

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many schools in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland have been rated (i) unsatisfactory, (ii) poor and (iii) very poor by Ofsted in sex and relationships education; [45113]

(2) how many schools in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland were without a sex and relationships education policy on their last visit by Ofsted inspectors. [45114]

Jacqui Smith: These are matters for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, Maurice Smith, has written to my hon. Friend and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Maurice Smith, dated 24 January 2006:

Your recent parliamentary questions have been passed to me, as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, for reply.

In PQ 45113 you asked how many schools in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland have been rated (i) unsatisfactory, (ii) poor and (iii) very poor by Ofsted in sex and relationships education. Ofsted inspectors do not make this type of judgement thus we are unable to provide any further details.

In PQ 45114 you asked how many schools in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland were without a sex and relationships education policy on their last visit by Ofsted inspectors.

Inspectors have never specifically reported about the lack of policy on sex and relationship education. However, between January 2000 and July 2005 they were asked if there was evidence of non-compliance with policies relating to sex and relationship education. The table overleaf shows the responses recorded for schools in England, the Tees Valley and Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland.

Is there evidence of non-compliance with policies relating to sex and relationship education? January 2000 to July 2005[1]

	Number of schools		
	England	*Tees Valley*	*Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland*
Primary schools			
No	17,088	210	86
Yes	118	1	1
Secondary schools			
No	3,117	38	16
Yes	48	1	0

[1] In the period 2000/2003 inspectors were asked about non-compliance in sex education; from 2003 to 2005 the judgement related to non-compliance in sex and relationship education.

A copy of this response has been sent to Jacqui Smith and will be placed in the library of both Houses.

Sex Offenders

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many referrals have been made to the Protection of Children Act list since it was established; and how many referrals have resulted in a name being added to the list. [45512]

Ruth Kelly: 1,141 referrals have been made to the Protection of Children of Children Act List since it was established and 451 names have been added to the list.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many persons in the employment of *(a)* her Department and *(b)* its agencies have convictions or cautions for sex offences; and how many of those have responsibility for policy or

implementation of policy in relation to (*a*) sex offences, (*b*) List 99, (*c*) teacher recruitment and (*d*) related areas. [45823]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 26 January 2006]*: We are not aware of anyone working for DfES who is, or has been on the Sex Offenders Register.

The Department undertakes 'Character Enquiry' checks prior to any unconditional offers of employment being made as part of its recruitment procedures. The procedure requires potential recruits to complete a stencil detailing any current or previous criminal convictions. Any declared convictions are followed up by obtaining details directly from the relevant courts. Decisions on whether the information would prevent the Department from offering the individual an appointment are taken as appropriate at this stage.

Additionally, procedures are in place for serving staff to report any convictions received since their employment with the Department commenced. If the position requires working in direct contact with children or vulnerable adults, Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks are carried out prior to any unconditional offers of employment being made. The information is available to staff and managers via the Department's Intranet. Personal criminal convictions, are potentially disciplinary issues, as is the failure to declare a conviction.

Specialist and Academy Schools Trust

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what (*a*) allowances, (*b*) expenses and (*c*) other moneys from public funds have been paid to Lord Levy in connection with his role as president of the Specialist and Academy Schools Trust. [45972]

Jacqui Smith: Lord Levy does not receive any public funds in connection with his role as president of the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. His appointment is a matter for the trust and he receives no remuneration for this.

Statutory Instruments

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the statutory instruments introduced by her Department since 6 May 2005. [46252]

Maria Eagle: As of 3 February 2006, my Department has produced 106 statutory instruments since 6 May 2005. Of these, 81 were general and 25 were local. Four of the general statutory instruments were Orders in Council. These related to appointments to the Office for Standards in Education (England) (Ofsted). A list of general statutory instruments by the DfES from 6 May 2005 to 2 February 2006 has been placed in the Libraries.

Teachers

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers of (*a*) Australian, (*b*) New Zealand, (*c*) South African, (*d*) Malawian, (*e*) Ghanaian, (*f*) Namibian, (*g*) Kenyan and (*h*) Nigerian origin have been dismissed from teaching posts in the past five years because of criminal activity in (i) their country of origin and (ii) the United Kingdom. [45537]

Ruth Kelly: My Department does not collect this information.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps are being taken by her Department to ensure that teachers of (*a*) Australian, (*b*) New Zealand, (*c*) South African, (*d*) Malawian, (*e*) Ghanaian, (*f*) Namibian, (*g*) Kenyan and (*h*) Nigerian origin do not have criminal histories in (i) their country of origin and (ii) the United Kingdom which would make them unfit to teach under departmental guidelines. [45538]

Ruth Kelly: Overseas teachers are subject to the same vetting procedures as UK teachers. However, where staff are recruited from countries outside the UK, the CRB or List 99 check may not be appropriate, particularly when they are newly arrived. We currently advise employers to take extra care in other checks on overseas candidates and to seek information as to any criminal history from the authorities in their country of origin wherever possible. The CRB has an information service which can help with this.

It is important that any checks we have in place are as effective as we can make them, and we are reviewing the current process for vetting overseas teachers.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers of (*a*) Australian, (*b*) New Zealand, (*c*) South African, (*d*) Malawian, (*e*) Ghanaian, (*f*) Namibian, (*g*) Kenyan and (*h*) Nigerian nationality have had their applications for teaching posts in the United Kingdom rejected because of previous criminal convictions in each of the past five years. [45539]

Ruth Kelly: The Department does not collect this information.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers of (*a*) Australian, (*b*) New Zealand, (*c*) South African, (*d*) Malawian, (*e*) Ghanaian, (*f*) Namibian, (*g*) Kenyan and (*h*) Nigerian nationality who are working in schools in the UK have a criminal record in (i) their country of origin and (ii) the UK. [45545]

Ruth Kelly: My Department does not collect this information.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many (*a*) teachers and (*b*) full-time equivalent teaching posts there were in schools in West Lancashire constituency in each year since 1997; [45005]

(2) how many (*a*) classroom assistants and (*b*) full-time equivalent classroom assistant posts there were in schools in West Lancashire constituency in each year since 1997. [45004]

Jacqui Smith: The following table provides the full-time equivalent number of teachers and teaching assistants employed in schools in West Lancashire constituency in each January since 1997.

The full-time equivalent number of teachers and teaching assistant posts in schools in West Lancashire constituency is not collected centrally.

Full-time equivalent number of teachers and teaching assistants in maintained sector schools including pupil referral units in West Lancashire constituency

	Teachers	Teaching assistants[1]
1997	820	140
1998	800	150
1999	800	160
2000	800	180
2001	800	220
2002	830	180
2003	810	300
2004	810	320
2005	820	380

[1] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools.

Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
Annual School Census.

Truancy

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on measures to reduce truancy in schools; what objectives have been set since 1997; and when she expects these will be met on current trends. [39883]

Jacqui Smith: I refer the hon. Member to the replies given on 9 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 623W, to the Members for Romford and Buckingham and on 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1344W, to the Member for Chorley. The Department expects schools to take steps to improve attendance and requires all schools to agree targets for improving attendance with their local authority.

My Department has had two public service agreement (PSA) targets to reduce unauthorised absence. They were in:

1998 – to reduce unauthorised absences by a third by 2002; and

in 2002 – to reduce the 2002 level of unauthorised absence by 10 per cent. by 2004.

Neither of these targets was met. We are now focused on improving attendance levels through tackling all forms of absence because attendance correlates to pupils' attainment levels and subsequent life chances, while continuing to prioritise truants within this approach. The PSA target agreed in 2004 is, therefore, to reduce the 2002/03 level of absence (i.e. both authorised and unauthorised combined) of 6.83 per cent. by 8 per cent. by 2008. Since 2002/03 there has been a reduction in absences of 5.7 per cent. which is over two-thirds of the way towards the PSA target.

Young Sex Offenders

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what information she collects on the number of pupils who have *(a)* convictions and *(b)* cautions for sex offences who are in schools; of how many such pupils she is aware; and what advice she gives to schools on the (i) inclusion and (ii) management of such pupils. [45489]

Ruth Kelly: The Department does not collect this information. Guidance on working with children and young people who abuse others is included in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', the core inter-agency guidance on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what military assistance his Department *(a)* is providing and *(b)* plans to provide to the Afghan Government to tackle the problem of heroin production. [49446]

Mr. Ingram: Counter-narcotics (CN) operations are the responsibility of the Government of Afghanistan. United Kingdom forces deployed under the international security assistance force (ISAF) in Afghanistan contribute to the broader CN effort by helping to provide the secure environment in which the rule of law can be applied, reconstruction can take place and legal rural livelihoods can be developed.

Under NATO's operational plan for the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, UK forces under ISAF can also provide, within means and capabilities, training and operational support to Afghan CN forces. They do not have a direct role in targeted interdiction operations or in eradication of opium poppy in the fields.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many troops each country which has participated in the operation in Afghanistan has provided for active service in each year since the start of the war. [49447]

Mr. Ingram: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what resources are being allocated by the Department to protect *(a)* engineers and *(b)* teachers from attacks by the Taliban in Afghanistan. [49449]

Mr. Ingram: British troops in Afghanistan are deployed primarily under the NATO-led international security assistance force (ISAF), which helps the Government of Afghanistan to maintain security and to extend its authority across all of the country. In doing so, ISAF helps create a secure environment in which the rule of law can be applied, reconstruction and development can take place, and teachers and others can carry out their work.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the threat posed by the use of improvised explosive devices in Helmand Province to UK armed services personnel. [50623]

Mr. Ingram: We continuously assess all threats to UK armed forces personnel wherever they are deployed. It is true that the operating environment in the South of Afghanistan is less benign than in the ISAF's current area of operation, and improvised explosive devices do pose a threat. The safety of our troops is paramount and our troops will deploy with appropriate force protection, tactics and procedures.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what agreement between the UK and the Afghan Government has governed the arrest and detention of prisoners captured in Afghanistan since the UK led the first international security assistance force (ISAF) deployment to Kabul in 2001; and what agreement between the UK and the Government of Afghanistan will govern the arrest and detention of prisoners captured during ISAF operations in the Helmand province. [44263]

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements have been agreed between the British and Afghanistan Governments in relation to the arrest and detention of suspects captured by international security assistance forces personnel. [45799]

Mr. Ingram: As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence stated on 7 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1078W, troops deployed under international security assistance forces (ISAF) are able to arrest and detain by virtue of the authorisations permitting use of all necessary measures to fulfil its mandate contained in, most recently, UNSCR 1623 (2005), and by agreement with the Government of Afghanistan. ISAF policy is that individuals should be transferred to the Afghan authorities at the first opportunity and within 96 hours or released.

There is currently no separate agreement specifically on detention between the United Kingdom and the Government of Afghanistan, and we will continue to act under the above agreements.

Ascension Island

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future role of Ascension Island in the United Kingdom's defence strategy. [47329]

Mr. Ingram: Ascension Island fulfils a strategic role as a staging post in support of our Defence interests in the South Atlantic. This role will continue for as long as necessary to protect the right of self-determination of the inhabitants of the South Atlantic Overseas Territories.

Brazilian Beef

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the amount of Brazilian beef procured for departmental establishments in the last year for which figures are available. [47473]

Mr. Ingram: For the financial year 2004–05, the total value of Brazilian beef procured for the British armed forces worldwide was approximately £3.7 million.

Civil Servants (Overseas Visits)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what costs were incurred by his Department as a result of sending civil servants on overseas visits in each of the last 10 years. [46287]

Mr. Touhig: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. All travel is conducted in accordance with the guidelines set out in the civil service management code and in the most cost-effective manner.

Civilian Prisoners (Japan)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many compensation payments to civilian prisoners of the Japanese were made before the introduction of the birth link criterion; and on what basis they were paid. [50833]

Mr. Touhig: In view of my statement to the House on 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1119–21, reliable information is not currently available on how many payments to civilians interned by the Japanese were made before the introduction of the birthlink criterion. During my attendance at the evidence session of the Public Administration Select Committee on 1 December 2005, I announced that I had set in hand a review to look at the criteria used for deciding claims under the ex-gratia payment scheme. As part of this, we are examining when the birthlink criterion was applied for deciding applications from former civilian internees. I expect the review to conclude shortly. I will make a further statement to the House on the findings of the review as soon as possible thereafter.

Correspondence

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will reply to the letter of 11 November 2005 by the hon. Member for Mid Bedfordshire on Gulf War Syndrome; and if he will make a statement. [49542]

Mr. Touhig: I replied to the hon. Member on 10 February.

Defence Export Services

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when Alan Garwood's contract as Head of Defence Export Services ends; what steps have been taken to appoint a successor; who will be on the appointment panel; and if he will make a statement. [49805]

Mr. Touhig: Mr. Alan Garwood was seconded to the Ministry of Defence in September 2002 on a three-year contract with the possibility to extend the contract to a maximum of five years. The contract has already been extended to cover the period to September 2006. No action is yet required to find a successor.

Defence Science and Technology Laboratory

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many new personnel were employed in the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory in each year since 2002. [44410]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Defence Training Review

Mr. Ian Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* direct and *(b)* indirect jobs are provided by the Defence College of Aeronautical Engineering, Cosford, in (i) Shropshire and (ii) the West Midlands region. [40384]

Mr. Touhig: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 701–02W to my hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton, South-East (Mr. McFadden).

Defence Vetting Agency

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether civilian staff may be employed on his Department's premises before basic security check by the Defence Vetting Agency has been carried out. [49751]

Mr. Ingram: Ministry of Defence policy requires a Basic Check (BC) to be carried out for all civil servants, including casual, temporary and work experience staff, prior to the date from which they start their employment. The Basic Check forms part of the MOD's system of protection against risks from terrorism, espionage and crime by providing assurance about the identity and integrity of individuals who have access to MOD assets and establishments. Exceptionally, in the case of short term contractors who only require physical access to MOD sites (with no access to classified information) for less than two weeks, there is provision for the requirement for BC to be waived, providing that measures are taken by the establishment concerned to control access, including, where possible, escorting.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many applications for *(a)* security checks and *(b)* developed vetting the Defence Vetting Agency has processed in each of the last five years. [49755]

Mr. Ingram: The following numbers of applications for security checks and developed vetting, including vetting reviews, have been completed in each of the last five complete years. The figures exclude applications that were cancelled during the vetting process:

	Security checks	*Developed vetting*	*Total*
2000–01	86,915	8,682	95,597
2001–02	83,025	7,011	90,036
2002–03	103,330	8,441	111,771
2003–04	100,304	11,611	111,915
2004–05	89,199	10,632	99,831

Departmental Entertainment

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much was spent on entertainment by his Department in 2004–05; and how much of that sum is accounted for by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [50895]

Mr. Touhig: Information on expenditure on "hospitality and entertainment" for the financial year 2004–05 has been published at Note 3 of our Annual Report and Accounts, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

A breakdown of the total figure by subcategory is not held and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Expenditure on official entertainment is subject to strict departmental rules and compliance with the principles of propriety set out in Government Accounting.

Departmental Estimates

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will break down the *(a)* main estimate, *(b)* winter supplementary estimate and *(c)* spring supplementary estimate Request for Resources (i) 2 and (ii) 3 provision by (A) direct resource departmental expenditure limit (DEL) and (B) indirect resource DEL for financial years 1999–2000 to 2004–05. [49767]

John Reid: Prior to the introduction of Stage 2 Resource Accounting and Budgeting (RAB) in financial year 2003–04, indirect RDEL did not exist as a budgeting aggregate, and I therefore provide figures for Request for Resources 2 for financial years 2003–04 and 2004–05.

£ million

		RDEL	
RFR2 – costs: 2003–05	*Total*	*Direct*	*Indirect*
Total conflict prevention costs: 2004–05	1,413.610	1,398.510	15.100
of which:			
Main estimate	36.700	36.700	0.000
Winter supplementary estimate	1,140.000	1,139.900	0.100
Spring supplementary estimate	236.910	221.910	15.000
Total conflict prevention costs: 2003–04	949.884	916.746	33.138
of which:			
Main estimate	50.360	50.360	0.000
Winter supplementary estimate	0.000	0.000	0.000
Spring supplementary estimate	899.524	866.386	33.138

Request for Resources 3 is for the payment of war pensions and allowances, which was the responsibility of the Department of Work and Pensions until financial year 2002–03. All costs are classified as annually managed expenditure (AME), rather than as Resource DEL, and there are no separate direct and indirect controls on AME. The total figures published in the estimates, are therefore not split between direct and indirect elements. Copies of the estimates are available in the Library of the House.

Departmental Expenditure Limit

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will break down the Request for Resources *(a)* 2 and *(b)* 3 outturn by (i) direct resource departmental expenditure limit (DEL) and (ii) indirect resource DEL for financial years 1999–2000 to 2004–05; [49768]

(2) if he will break down each of the figures for conflict prevention costs in *(a)* note 2 page 188, *(b)* note 2 page 159 and *(c)* note 2 page 135 of his Department's Annual Report and Accounts 2004–05 (HC 1080) by (i) direct resource departmental expenditure limit (DEL) and (ii) indirect resource DEL. [49771]

John Reid: Prior to the introduction of Stage 2 Resource Accounting and Budgeting (RAB) in financial year 2003–04, indirect RDEL did not exist as a budgeting aggregate, and I therefore provide figures for Request for Resources 2 for financial years 2003–04 and 2004–05 in the following table. These are the same figures as those disclosed in the Annual Report and Accounts 2004–05 page 188 note 2 (HC464) and 2003–04 page 159 note 2 (HC1080), to which I assume the hon. Member refers.

£ million

	Outturn	RDEL direct	RDEL indirect
Total conflict prevention costs 2004-05	938	865	73
Of which			
Balkans (Bosnia/Kosovo)	85	75	10
Afghanistan	58	58	0
Iraq	747	684	63
Conflict Prevention Programme	48	48	0
Total conflict prevention costs 2005-06	1,233	1,089	144
Of which			
Balkans (Bosnia/Kosovo)	103	94	9
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1	1	0
Afghanistan	36	34	2
Iraq	1,051	918	133
Sierra Leone	1	1	0
FUEYROM	1	1	0
Conflict Prevention Programme	40	40	0

Request for Resources 3 is for the payment of war pensions and allowances, and all costs disclosed in the Annual Report and Accounts for each year since the introduction of RAB are classified as annually managed expenditure (AME), rather than as resource DEL. There are no separate direct and indirect controls on AME. The outturn figures for each year are published in the Ministry of Defence Annual Report and Accounts for financial years 2002-03 onwards, which are available in the Library of the House. Prior to that the Veterans Agency (formerly the War Pensions Agency), which administers these payments, was the responsibility of the Department of Work and Pensions, and the Ministry of Defence did not have a Request for Resources 3.

Departmental Staff

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans his Department has to change the London allowance of its staff; and if he will make a statement. [50008]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence last changed its London Weighting allowance in 2002 as part of its four year pay settlement which concluded in 2005. London Weighting will be one of a number of issues being considered during this year's pay negotiations.

Depression/Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many service personnel are suffering from *(a)* clinical depression and *(b)* post-traumatic stress disorder. [48026]

Mr. Touhig: Figures are not held centrally on the total number of Service personnel who are suffering from clinical depression or post traumatic stress disorder and this could therefore only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Eurofighter Typhoon

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 667W, on RAF aircraft, whether the current estimated cost of Eurofighter Typhoon is *(a)* substantially below, *(b)* substantially above and *(c)* similar to the original cost. [49633]

Mr. Ingram: In view of the commercial sensitivity of the Eurofighter Typhoon programme, it remains inappropriate to provide any indication of its current estimated cost.

Gibraltar

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he last discussed departmental requirements in Gibraltar with the *(a)* Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, *(b)* Governor of Gibraltar and *(c)* Chief Minister of Gibraltar. [50985]

Mr. Ingram: There are no plans to change Gibraltar's current military role, which centres on providing a forward mounting base and other facilities to support overseas operations. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence has had no discussions on this issue with the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the Governor of Gibraltar or the Chief Minister of Gibraltar.

Gulf War Syndrome

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many representations his Department has received on Gulf War Syndrome; and if he will make a statement; [49544]

(2) what representations the Government has received on Gulf War Syndrome; and if he will make a statement. [49546]

Mr. Touhig: The Government has received a significant number of representations about Gulf War Syndrome over the years. It places a high priority on addressing the concerns of 1990-91 Gulf veterans and we continue to respond to representations from parliamentarians and others on various issues relating to Gulf veterans' illnesses, including Gulf War Syndrome. We remain committed to providing medical assistance through the Medical Assessment Programme, financial support through the War Pensions Scheme and armed forces occupational schemes. We have commissioned a large amount of research on these illnesses and remain committed to openness in response to this complex issue.

As indicated in my written statement of 24 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 128-29WS, the Government was pleased to note the recent decision of the Pensions Appeal Tribunal (PAT) in the case of former Guardsman Daniel Martin which accepted the use of Gulf War Syndrome as an umbrella term to cover accepted conditions which are causally linked to the 1990-91 Gulf conflict. We hope that the use of the umbrella term will address the known concern of some Gulf veterans that we have not recognised a link between their ill-health and the 1990-91 Gulf conflict. The PAT decision also confirmed our position that there is insufficient reliable evidence to indicate that Gulf War Syndrome exists as a discrete pathological entity, or in other words as a recognised disease.

Gulf War-related Illnesses

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what analysis was made by the Government of the RAND report on pyridostigmine bromide before ordering its use during Operation Telic. [50297]

Mr. Touhig: The RAND Report entitled "A Review of the Scientific Literature as it Pertains to Gulf War Illnesses, Volume 2: Pyridostigmine Bromide" was published in October 1999. Following its publication, a detailed review and written assessment were produced by the Ministry of Defence's Gulf Veterans Illness Unit. A copy of this is available in the Library of the House.

In summary, the review presented no new scientific work on pyridostigmine bromide and its possible association with Gulf Veterans Illness; rather it discussed a series of possible hypotheses drawn from speculation and debate at the time. The report did not advance our understanding as to whether pyridostigmine bromide was a contributing factor to illness suffered by Gulf Veterans. MOD has not commissioned any further work on the RAND Report.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what weapon systems using propellants and explosives containing pyridines were employed by UK forces during Operation *(a)* Granby and *(b)* Telic. [50299]

Mr. Touhig: No weapon systems using propellants and explosives containing pyridines were used by UK forces during either Operation Granby or Operation Telic. There are no explosives or propellants currently in service with UK armed forces that contain pyridine.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence to what extent the decision to provide nerve agent pre-treatment tablets to forces serving during the Iraq war in 2003 was based upon information on chemical weapons in Iraq; what chemical weapons were identified in this information; and for how many of those chemicals the information on use in Iraq was not borne out by the report of the Iraq Survey Group. [50301]

Mr. Touhig: In preparing for operations in Iraq, an assessment was produced on the likely CBRN threats to UK forces. A number of nerve agents were assessed to be available for use by the Iraqi regime. Delivery systems were assessed to include mortars, artillery, rocket artillery, aerial bombs, ballistic missiles, spray tanks and UAVs.

The decision to issue NAPS, a licensed pre-treatment for nerve agent poisoning, to UK deployed forces and subsequently to order its use was a sensible and prudent measure, partly based upon this assessment and Iraq's previous use of CW during the Iran/Iraq war and against the citizens of Hallabja.

The Iraq Survey Group did not discover any large scale CW agent production facilities or stockpiles. However, in their findings they judged that Iraq had the intention to pursue WMD programmes when UN sanctions were lifted.

HMS Sheffield

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2341W, on HMS Sheffield, what the timetable is for completion of the departmental review of HMS Sheffield; and what the reasons are for the length of time being taken for the review. [47967]

Mr. Ingram: The Departmental review is still ongoing but is expected to be completed by spring. Once it is complete I will write to the hon. Member to advise him of the timetable for releasing documents relating to the Board of Inquiry into the loss of HMS Sheffield into the public domain. The BOI report and its associated annexes runs to over 3,000 pages and its disclosure raises many complex issues, including the duty of care to the crew and next of kin, and the need to protect personal data under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. Of necessity, therefore, the review that is in hand is a lengthy process.

Identity Cards

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 318W, on identity cards, whether his Department has finalised its estimates of the cost of using the Identity Cards Scheme to support the services which it oversees. [50453]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has not finalised its estimates of the cost of using the Identity Cards Scheme to support the services which it oversees.

Incapacity Benefit

Jeremy Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* service personnel on long-term sick leave and *(b)* former service personnel are claiming incapacity benefit. [49959]

Mr. Touhig: The payment of incapacity benefit is a matter for the Department for Work and Pensions. Former service personnel who are incapable of working due to an illness or injury caused by service before 6 April 2005 may receive an unemployability allowance from the Ministry of Defence and are precluded from receiving incapacity benefit. Any personnel categorised as medically downgraded are still on the Ministry of Defence pay roll and would not be eligible for incapacity benefit.

Iraq

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total strength was of UK forces in Iraq in each month since May 2003; and what he expects the figure to be by May 2006. [44462]

Mr. Ingram: At the peak of the UK troop commitment in Iraq, there were some 46,000 British forces personnel committed to Operation Telic. The figures in the following table record the numbers deployed (rounded to the nearest hundred) on the last day of each month since then. Around 15 per cent. of the troops on Operation Telic will be stationed outside Iraq, supporting the operation from aboard ships, or from airfields or other bases outside the country.

As at end (date)	*Troops on Telic*
War-fighting phase	c.46,000
May 2003	17,900
June 2003	9,600
July 2003	10,500
August 2003	9,600
September 2003	9,900
October 2003	[1]10,500
November 2003	9,200
December 2003	9,000
January 2004	9,700

As at end (date)	Troops on Telic
February 2004	9,000
March 2004	9,000
April 2004	[1]9,000
May 2004	9,800
June 2004	9,500
July 2004	9,400
August 2004	9,200
September 2004	9,200
October 2004	[1]11,200
November 2004	10,300
December 2004	9,700
January 2005	9,700
February 2005	9,600
March 2005	9,200
April 2005	[1]11,400
May 2005	9,700
June 2005	10,000
July 2005	10,100
August 2005	9,500
September 2005	9,400
October 2005	[1]11,000
November 2005	9,200
December 2005	9,600
January 2006	9,600

[1] Roulement.

The numbers deployed in May 2006 will depend on the prevailing conditions during the period of transition in which the new Government is forming.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many troops in Iraq have been issued with improved coverage body armour. [50371]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* There are three types of body armour used on Operation Telic. Enhanced combat body armour has been standard issue for all troops. Over 3,000 sets of enhanced personal protection equipment (known as 'Kestrel') have been issued to 'top cover' sentries. Following recent successful trials, the first 200 of over 9,000 sets of the improved performance body armour ('Osprey') have been despatched this month, with the remainder due in theatre by May.

Joint Strike Fighter

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions the UK has had with the US Administration in the last six months on *(a)* the cost of and *(b)* technology transfer in relation to the Joint Strike Fighter project. [49807]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom's contribution remains fixed at $2 billion for the current system development and demonstration phase of the programme. There is regular dialogue with the United States Administration on the potential costs of the follow-on sustainment phase of the programme and technology transfer. The US Administration are aware of our requirements for the necessary Joint Strike Fighter technical information to meet our sovereign requirements. These will need to be satisfied before we are able to commit to the next phase of the project.

Military Explosive Manufacturing

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) which military explosives will continue to be manufactured in the United Kingdom following proposed closures of former Royal Ordnance factories; [49649]

(2) from which countries he expects United Kingdom armed forces to obtain military explosives after the proposed closure of former Royal Ordnance factories. [49652]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* As set out in the Defence Industrial Strategy, we aim to retain a substantive and flexible capability in the final stages of the general munitions manufacturing process, specifically fill, assemble and pack. We do not, however, consider it necessary to retain all aspects of bulk explosives manufacture in the UK; although we do intend to retain a capability in the manufacture of Polymer Bonded Explosives (PBX) for artillery ammunition and demolition explosives on shore. PBX will continue to be manufactured at the BAE Systems Land Systems (BAES LS) facility at Glascoed following implementation of the company's recently announced rationalisation plans.

Decisions on sourcing explosives are principally a matter for BAES LS. However, as set out in the Defence Industrial Strategy, we intend to retain an on shore capability to manufacture PBX.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what long-term plans he has for the security of supply of military explosives for UK forces. [49651]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* As set out in the recently published Defence Industrial Strategy the MOD's long-term plans for general munitions are being taken forward through Project MASS (Munitions Acquisition, The Supply Solution), which seeks to ensure long term security of supply for general munitions and deliver value for money.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of work being carried out at the former Chorley Royal Ordnance site for his Department's contracts. [50173]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* BAE Systems Land Systems is responsible for the security of supply of items currently manufactured at Chorley and will remain so after the closure of the site. Detailed plans on how they intend to achieve this without impacting on their delivery of existing contracts have been provided to MOD and we remain confident in their ability to do so. These plans are, however, commercial in nature and it would not be to the benefit of the company or MOD to release them.

Opposition Visits

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the formal visits undertaken by official Opposition spokespersons which were funded by his Department over the last two years. [35209]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 7 December 2005]:* The information relating to the principal official Opposition spokespersons is given in the following table.

Date of visit	Member of Parliament	Place visited
*17–18 December 2003	The right hon. Nicholas Soames MP	Accompanied Minister of State for the Armed Forces to Iraq
2 March 2004	The right hon. Nicholas Soames MP	HQ Brussels
4 March 2004	The right hon. Nicholas Soames MP	RAF Cranwell
17 June 2004	Paul Keetch MP	Hereford Cocktail Party
1 July 2004	The right hon. Nicholas Soames MP	Tidworth
6 July 2004	The right hon. Nicholas Soames MP	PJHQ
17 November 2004	The right hon. Nicholas Soames MP	Defence Procurement Agency
22–23 November 2005	The right hon. Michael Ancram MP	Afghanistan

Note:
Other than the visit starred no costs other than lunch, refreshments and travel by car to and from the base fell to the MOD budget.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* servicemen and *(b)* ex-servicemen have received treatment for post traumatic stress disorder or related conditions in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [49185]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 6 February 2006]*: Figures are not held centrally on the total number of service personnel who have received treatment for post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or related conditions and this could therefore be provided only at disproportionate cost.

We do not hold information on the treatment received by ex-service personnel because the NHS has responsibility for the treatment of ex-service personnel suffering from both mental and physical disorders. We can, however, provide data regarding the number of ex-service personnel who have claimed for a war pension. Between 1 October 2004 and 30 September 2005 (the most recent 12 month period for which data is currently available), some 320 ex-service personnel made a successful war pensions claim where one of the accepted conditions related to the individual's service was PTSD or a related condition.

For those ex-service personnel whose condition is due to service and for whom it is appropriate, courses of remedial care are funded at facilities provided by the charity, Combat Stress. For the year ending December 2005, funding was some £2.8 million.

Service Children's Education

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many and what proportion of military bases *(a)* in England and *(b)* overseas have (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools located on them; and how many pupils attend these schools. [47159]

Mr. Touhig: Within the United Kingdom, service children attend local education authority schools, but information on how many and what proportion of military bases have schools located on them and how many pupils attend these schools is not held centrally.

Overseas, Service Children's Education (SCE)—an MOD agency—operates a total of 36 primary, two middle and six secondary schools. Currently some 10,200 pupils attend these schools. All of these schools are located within garrison areas, and 15 are sited on a military base.

Strategic Tanker Aircraft

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the original timetable was for the development of strategic tanker aircraft; what the current timetable is; and if he will make a statement. [49428]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Strategic Tanker Aircraft (FSTA) is a prospective PFI project currently in the assessment phase. As such, it does not have a formally approved development programme or date for introduction to service.

Negotiations with industry are ongoing.

US Interrogation Centres

Mr. Clegg: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many individuals detained by UK forces in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Afghanistan who have been handed over to US forces have subsequently been transferred to US interrogation centres in each year since 2001. [45342]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Carmarthen, East and Dinefwr (Adam Price) on 7 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1083W.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what training has been provided to magistrates in *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* Northern Ireland on the use of antisocial behaviour orders in each of the last two years; and what the cost of the training provided was in each year. [48724]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Studies Board (JSB) is responsible for the provision of guidance and training materials for magistrates in England and Wales. The delivery of training is performed on a local basis. There is currently no central data collected on the information requested and to provide the information would incur disproportionate cost.

In April 2001, the JSB issued training materials for magistrates in respect of the antisocial behaviour provisions contained in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. These materials have been updated twice since that date. The latest update was issued in March 2004 and includes changes in the law introduced by the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. The chairman of the JSB Magisterial Committee issued a letter in 2004 to all court

areas indicating that the JSB expectation was that all magistrates will receive a minimum of two hours of face to face training on ASBOs within the first 18 months following the implementation of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

The Magistrates' Court Sentencing Guidelines include guidance on how to deal with breach of an ASBO and lists examples of possible aggravating factors.

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1446W, on audible fire alarms, what plans she has to extend audible fire alarm coverage to all buildings. [47046]

Bridget Prentice: It is the policy of my Department that all remises must have an audible fire alarm system. Pursuant to my answer on 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1446W, the locations that do not currently have audible fire alarms have systems in place to manage the fire risk until audible alarms are installed. Works are currently under way in one location to repair an existing system and in another to install a new audible system. The remaining locations will assessed by way of a fire safety risk assessment and audible fire alarms provided when funding is secured.

Baroness Usha Prashar

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when she next plans to meet Baroness Usha Prashar. [48909]

Ms Harman: I have no plans to meet Baroness Prashar.

Burial and Cemeteries Advisory Group

Dr. Tony Wright: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs when she expects the Burial and Cemeteries Advisory Group to report. [47240]

Ms Harman: In accordance with its then terms of reference the Advisory Group reported to Ministers in December 2002. The group continues to meet for the purpose of providing advice and recommendations for Government. The issues include memorial safety, on which I hope to see proposals later this year.

Census Records

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many requests her Department has received regarding access to census records before 1970 in the last 12 months. [50996]

Ms Harman: The National Archives holds the 1911 and earlier censuses, while censuses from 1921 onwards are in the custody of the Office for National Statistics. Since the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act on 1 January 2005, the National Archives has received 171 specific requests for access to information contained in the 1911 census returns.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent representations her Department has received regarding the denial of public access to census records before 1970. [50997]

Ms Harman: Since the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act on 1 January 2005, the National Archives has received 14 appeals from inquirers who have been denied access to information contained in the 1911 census returns.

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs on how many occasions her Department consulted citizens juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the Citizens' Jury. [46240]

Ms Harman: The Department for Constitutional Affairs has not convened any citizens' juries in the last five years. However it has made extensive use of other forms of consultation during that period, ranging from formal consultation papers to an online discussion forum.

Cohabitation

John Bercow: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans she has to reform the law relating to unmarried couples to provide legal protection for cohabitants in the case of relationship breakdown. [45743]

Ms Harman: The Government have no plans to reform the law in this area. The Law Commission is working on a project on cohabitation as part of its ninth programme of law reform. The Law Commission is considering how the law affects cohabiting couples on the termination of their relationship by separation, or death, and the merits of providing greater legal protection. The Government will consider any recommendations made by the Law Commission when it reports in summer 2007.

Commonhold

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* households and *(b)* developments have adopted commonhold tenures since the introduction of commonhold. [46406]

Ms Harman: As at 26 January 2006, there were seven commonholds registered at Land Registry: six in England and one in Wales. These comprise 97 units. 18 residential units have been transferred to unit-holders.

No statistics are available for unregistered commonhold developments, but proposals for a £500 million mixed-use commonhold, including up to 2,000 homes, were announced on behalf of the developer on 16 December 2005.

Community Legal Service

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many inquiries were

referred through to the community legal service by *(a)* citizens advice bureaux, *(b)* law centres, *(c)* high street solicitors and *(d)* other independent advice centres in the last year for which figures are available. [50149]

Bridget Prentice: A variety of organisations, such as citizens advice bureaux, law centres and high street solicitors, provide advice under the Community Legal Service (CLS). Information is not held centrally on inquiries referred to, or between, CLS providers.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many inquiries were submitted through the Community Legal Service network in *(a)* Leicestershire and *(b)* England and Wales in each year between 2000 and 2005. [50150]

Bridget Prentice: Information is not held centrally on inquiries referred to, or between, Community Legal Service providers. The Legal Services Commission (LSC) record numbers of new matter starts. New matters started in Leicestershire and England and Wales between 2000 and 2005 are set out in the following table.

	England and Wales	*Leicestershire*
2000–01	803,828	14,975
2001–02	764,697	11,423
2002–03	811,848	11,986
2003–04	709,769	9,378
2004–05	654,267	7,719

The above represents controlled work; that is the number of cases, or matter starts, the supplier is authorised to start in a particular year under their General Civil Contract as issued by the LSC.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what was the running cost of the Community Legal Service in each year between 2000 and 2005. [50151]

Bridget Prentice: Legal Services Commission payments made in relation to the running of the Community Legal Service for the years 2000–05 are provided in the following table:

	Payments (£ million)
2000–01	791.9
2001–02	734.5
2002–03	812.8
2003–04	897.9
2004–05	845.9

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what research she has commissioned on the perceptions of *(a)* Citizens Advice Bureaux, *(b)* Law Centres, *(c)* high street solicitors and *(d)* other independent legal advice centres of the effectiveness of the Community Legal Service. [50152]

Bridget Prentice: The Department commissioned an independent review of the Community Legal Service (CLS) in 2004. This was conducted by Matrix Research and Consultancy. The review looked at how the CLS had impacted on the accessibility of legal advice services and the quality of provision. Key stakeholders and suppliers were consulted on their views and perceptions of the CLS.

In 2005 the Legal Services Commission published a consultation paper, "Making Legal Rights a Reality", outlining its proposals for the future development of the CLS. Key stakeholders and suppliers were consulted on the proposals outlined in the document.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what research she has commissioned on satisfaction of members of the public with the Community Legal Service. [50153]

Bridget Prentice: The Legal Services Research Centre (LSRC) has conducted two surveys relating to the Community Legal Service and Civil and Social Justice since 2000 (covering England and Wales). The findings of the first of these surveys are available in the LSRC's "Causes of Action: Civil Law and Social Justice" publication.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many inquiries were referred to the Community Legal Service in the last period for which figures are available, broken down by type. [50154]

Bridget Prentice: A variety of organisations, such as Citizens Advice Bureaux, Law Centres and High Street Solicitors, provide advice under the Community Legal Service (CLS). Information is not held centrally on inquiries referred through the Community Legal Service. The information in the table concerns new matters started, and certificates issued, in 2004–05 by suppliers contracted by the Legal Services Commission (LSC) to deliver publicly funded advice through the CLS. This information is broken down by category.

Matter type	*New matter starts*	*Funding certificates granted*
Family	272,903	129,134
Actions Against the Police	4,551	918
Clinical Negligence	3,649	5,672
Community Care	3,426	620
Consumer	3,891	563
Debt	58,253	439
Education	2,646	532
Employment	9,487	88
Housing	83,193	11,834
Immigration	94,236	1,856
Mental Health	30,910	175
Personal Injury	3,137	308
Public Law	1,632	975
Welfare Benefits	72,532	98
Miscellaneous	9,821	1,308
Total	654,267	154,520

Compensation Bill

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the likely impact of section 1 of the Compensation Bill on the funding of employers' liability cases. [47945]

Bridget Prentice: Clause 1 of the Compensation Bill contains a provision relating to the law of negligence, which reflects the existing law and guidance given by the higher courts. It is not anticipated that this provision will have any impact on the funding of employers' liability cases.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the likely impact of the Compensation Bill on the work of small claims courts. [47954]

Bridget Prentice: It is not anticipated that the Bill will have any impact on the work of the small claims courts.

Coroners

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the adequacy of the powers of the coroner to conduct inquiries into major public incidents; and if she will make a statement. [44775]

Ms Harman: I am satisfied that coroners within England and Wales have sufficient powers to hold inquests into fatalities arising from major public incidents. I will be publishing a draft Bill to reform the coroner service, and to improve the law relating to coroners' functions, later this session.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 1 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 490W, to the hon. Member for North-East Hertfordshire (Mr. Heald), on coroners, what is the timetable for the appointment of a judge to conduct inquests into the fatalities arising from the Potters Bar rail crash; and how soon she expects such inquests to be held. [50160]

Ms Harman: I understand that the coroner will proceed to set a date for the inquests and appoint a judge as his deputy once a current application for judicial review of a decision relating to the incident has been resolved.

Correspondence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* letters from hon. Members, *(b)* letters from members of the public and *(c)* parliamentary questions from (i) hon. Members and (ii) Lords were dealt with by her Department in each year since 1995; in respect of what percentage her Department took (A) more than one month and (B) more than three months to provide a substantive answer; and if she will make a statement. [37411]

Bridget Prentice: The figures, in so far as I am able to provide them, are contained in the following table. I am unable to provide percentage figures for those letters and parliamentary questions that have taken more than one month and more than three months to answer as this information is not collected and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

My Department endeavours to provide prompt, comprehensive and helpful replies to all correspondence, whether from hon. Members or members of the public, and within the targets it sets for itself; and, where possible, to parliamentary questions within parliamentary deadlines.

The Cabinet Office, on an annual basis, publishes a report to Parliament on the performance of Departments in replying to Members/Peers correspondence. The publication of the report for 2004 was announced on 6 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 137–40WS. This and reports for earlier years are available in the Libraries of both Houses.

In 2004 my Department began publishing details of its performance on correspondence from members of the public. A copy of the report is available in the Libraries of both Houses.

	1995	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Letters received from hon. Members	4,641	2,876	2,458	2,672	2,038	1,844	1,737	2,577	2,746	3,416	3,179
Percentage of letters from hon. Members answered within 20 working days	81	68	76	82	82	76	74	54	49	64	92
Letters received from members of the public	—	—	—	—	5,961	6,508	6,766	6,505	7,790	11,933	4,846
Percentage of letters from members of the public answered within 15 working days	—	—	—	—	69	61	72	87	85	76	81

Courts Act 2003

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people convicted of offences have *(a)* failed to furnish a statement of their financial circumstances in response to an official request and *(b)* been prosecuted for failing to do so under section 95 of the Courts Act 2003 in the last two years. [47531]

Ms Harman: The information is as follows.

(a) Information on the non-provision of means information by offenders is not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

(b) To date, no offenders have been prosecuted for failure to provide means information under section 95 of the Courts Act 2003.

Data Sharing

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the technical specifications for the co-ordinated Online Record of Electors will allow two-way data-sharing with the proposed identity cards database. [43540]

Ms Harman: The technical specifications for CORE will be drafted in the light of responses to the current consultation paper on providing national access to local electoral registration data. There is currently no proposal for these specifications to provide for two-way data-sharing with the proposed identity cards register.

Departmental Catering Budget

Andrew George: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much and

what proportion of her Department's catering budget was spent on Fair Trade produce in the last period for which figures are available. [49909]

Bridget Prentice: Catering services to meet my Department's requirements are contracted out and provided by commercial suppliers. Consequently, my Department does not procure Fair Trade produce directly.

However, a proportion of spend on Fair Trade produce against total food purchases by commercial suppliers providing catering services to my Department is set out in the following table. These figures relate to financial year 2004–05.

£

Total food purchases	*Proportion spent on fair trade produce*
2,796,582	171,641

Andrew George: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what her Department's policy is on the procurement of Fair Trade produce for consumption on its premises. [49919]

Bridget Prentice: My Department does not currently have a specific policy in relation to Fair Trade produce.

Catering services to meet my Department's requirements are contracted out and provided by commercial suppliers. Consequently, my Department does not procure Fair Trade produce directly.

However, within the overarching objective of achieving best value, my Department encourages its suppliers to make use of Fair Trade produce.

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was spent by her Department on refreshments in each year since 1997. [41250]

Bridget Prentice: It is not possible to provide details of how much the Department spent on refreshments in each year since 1997 without incurring disproportionate costs.

However, for overall expenditure on entertainment for the Department from 1998–99 to 30 November 2004, I would like to refer the hon. Member to a previous PQ tabled by the hon. Member for Tatton (Mr. Osborne) answered on 10 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 118W.

All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety that is based on principles set out in Government Accounting.

Departmental IT Systems

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much her Department has spent on IT systems in each year since 1997; what the purpose of each system is; what the outturn against planned expenditure of each system was; and what the *(a)* planned and *(b)* actual date of completion was of each system. [41320]

Ms Harman: The expenditure on IT systems since 1997 is contained within three main areas; Crown and county courts, magistrates courts and headquarters. These three areas are covered by separate contracts: LOCCS, ARAMIS and the LIBRA contracts. Details of the individual contracts are as follows:

LOCCS (Local County Court System) provides operational IT systems to Her Majesty's Courts Service.

Expenditure for each year was as follows:

	£ million
1998–99	5.92
1999–2000	14.35
2000–01	24.9
2001–02	33.4
2002–03	17.5
2003–04	41.46
2004–05	25.13

ARAMIS (Resource Accounting and Management Information System) provides accounting, financial, HR/payroll and management information services to the Department.

Expenditure for each year was as follows:

	£ million
1997–98	3.07
1998–99	13.54
1999–2000	14.47
2000–01	18.5
2001–02	18.39
2002–03	24.74
2003–04	28.54
2004–05	31

The LIBRA contracts

The first part of the Libra Project provided new IT infrastructure and office automation for the magistrates courts. The second part of the project will deliver a national case management system.

Expenditure on the Libra contracts for each year was as follows:

	£ million
2000–01	11.2
2001–02	22
2002–03	68
2003–04	79.6
2004–05	65.25

All three are overarching contracts through which large numbers of IT projects have been delivered since 1997. Information about individual projects could now be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Website

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the cost of maintaining her main departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46291]

Bridget Prentice: The cost of maintaining my Department's main website is part of a larger contract with Cable and Wireless to provide hosting services for all of my department's associated websites and as such figures cannot be provided for a single website. The full contract totals £555,096 per annum.

For the period January to December 2005, the number of unique visitors to the Department for Constitutional Affair's website were as follows:

	Number
January	242,261
February	213,170
March	204,306
April	240,528
May	206,200
June	212,799
July	198,081
August	192,775
September	247,441
October	278,636
November	315,111
December	215,087

Deputy Lieutenants (Lancashire)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 150–51W, on deputy lieutenants (Lancashire), in which geographical area each of the existing deputy lieutenants for Lancashire not recently appointed resides. [50135]

Ms Harman: There are 14 administrative areas in the ceremonial county of Lancashire, including 20 districts of Lancashire county council, and the two unitary authorities of Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen. According to this measure of geography, the areas in which each of those existing deputy lord lieutenants for Lancashire reside (excluding those six most recently appointed) are as follows:

Blackpool

Armfield, James OBE DL
Beilby, Stephen JP DL
Gledhill, Keith MBE DL

Blackburn

Master, Ibrahim DL

Burnley

Entwistle, John DL

Chorley

De Hoghton, Sir Bernard Bt DL
Duckworth, His Honour Judge Brian DL
Goodall, William DL

Cumbria

Duckworth, Mrs. Judith JP DL

Fylde

Dowling, Mrs. Marlene JP DL
Evans, Sir Richard CBE DL
Vasudev, Dr. Kadaba DL

Hyndburn

Sanderson, Lieutenant Colonel David MBE DL

Lancaster

Bowring, Thomas DL
Henig: The Baroness Henig of Lancaster CBE JP DL
Holt, John JP DL
Kerr, Admiral Sir John GCB DL
Kimber, Timothy DL
Reynolds, Mrs. Susan DL
Sharp, Peter DL
Winterbottom, Max JP DL

Pendle

Hughes, Mrs. Susan JP DL
Mendoros, Dennis OBE DL

Preston

Johnson, Gordon DL
Mileham, Peter DL
Robertson, (Brigadier) Dr. Iain OBE TD QHP DL
Tailor, Ishwer MBE JP DL
Wilson, Andrew DL

Ribble Valley

Cann, Anthony CBE DL
Openshaw, Sir Peter DL
Parker, Robert DL
Robinson, Peter DL
Swarbrick, Rodney CBE DL

Rossendale

Oates, Mrs. Gloria OBE DL
Shepherd, Robert JP DL
Trippier, Colonel Sir David RD JP DL

South Ribble

Ashworth, Professor Graham CBE DL
Jolley, Colonel Alan TD DL

West Lancashire

Clare, Mrs. Pauline CBE QPM DL
Gray, Bryan MBE DL
Moores, Sir Peter CBE DL
Robinson, John JP DL
Stanley, Mrs. Gail MBE JP DL

Wyre

Gandhi, Ramesh JP DL
Moores, James JP DL

Domestic Violence

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what training courses were provided for *(a)* magistrates and *(b)* district judges on domestic violence in each region since 2003; what percentage of each attended courses in each region in this period; and if she will make a statement. [50581]

Ms Harman: Judicial training is the responsibility of the Judicial Studies Board (JSB), an independent body chaired by Lord Justice Keene. The JSB organises its training for the professional judiciary, including district judges (magistrates courts), nationally rather than regionally. It provides advice and support to those providing training in the magistrates courts but the training is organised and delivered locally. Data on the provision of magistrates training courses is not currently held centrally and could be obtained only at

disproportionate cost. Since the amalgamation of the Court Service and the magistrates courts into HM Courts Service on 1 April 2005, the JSB is putting in place processes to monitor and evaluate the training delivered to magistrates.

Domestic violence training is not compulsory for magistrates. The JSB offered training for trainers in each region between October 2003 and March 2004 to enable them to provide domestic violence training for magistrates in their local areas. Representatives from all HM Courts Service regions attended these courses which were supported by the publication of a JSB domestic violence training pack for use in the training of magistrates.

All newly appointed fee-paid judges, and all judges who are authorised to take on new jurisdictions, are required to attend a relevant induction course and normally receive continuation training in each jurisdiction they exercise every three years. district judges (magistrates courts) attend dedicated annual courses. Additionally, they are invited to attend specialist family courses on a three-year cycle. The annual DJ(MC) courses run between 2003 and 2005 did not deal specifically with domestic violence, but the courses planned for 2006 will include a domestic violence session and will be run for both full and part time district judges who sit in magistrates courts. Those expected to attend will constitute 99.3 per cent. of the district judge (magistrates courts) bench. District judges who sit in the county courts attend a dedicated annual seminar which included a session on domestic violence in 2003. They also attend civil and (where appropriate) family law continuation courses every three years. These courses include sessions on domestic violence. In addition to training courses, the JSB has produced training materials for magistrates and judges, which are available in hard copy and electronic form.

Electoral Administration

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 236W, on electoral administration, whether data and information from marked registers will be placed in the co-ordinated online record of electors once it is operational. [43542]

Ms Harman: The particular types of information that the proposed co-ordinated online record of electors should hold once operational is the subject of a current consultation paper, issued by my Department last month.

In that paper, we raise the possibility that a CORE dataset might in future hold copies of marked registers, and request views on whether or not we should seek to implement that functionality. Decisions on whether or not to proceed with this aspect of CORE will be taken in light of the responses to the consultation, which is due to close on 7 March.

European Court of Human Rights

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what representations she has made to her counterparts in other Council of Europe member countries on the proficiency in *(a)* English and *(b)* French of judges of the European Court of Human Rights; and if she will make a statement. [50131]

Ms Harman: In a recent independent review of the working methods of the European Court of Human Rights, the former Lord Chief Justice, Lord Woolf, made 26 recommendations, of which provision of language training to new judges was one. I understand that the President of the Court has welcomed Lord Woolf's report and referred its proposals to the Court's Working Methods Committee.

Freedom of Information Act

Mr. Drew: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps she is taking to speed up responses to Freedom of Information Act inquiries made to Government Departments. [45904]

Ms Harman: In the third quarter of 2005 Departments of State responded to Freedom of Information requests within their statutory obligations in an average of 86 per cent. of cases. This figure reflects an increase of 11 per cent. on performance in the second quarter of last year, which in itself had improved significantly on performance in the first quarter.

However, there is still work to be done and DCA continues to work with departments to improve performance. In particular each Department of State has a dedicated liaison point within DCA to address specific performance issues. The Information Rights Practitioners Conference also provides a regular forum in which officials across Whitehall can share best practice and raise any specific issues with experts both from my Department and elsewhere in Government.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the extent to which local authorities are complying with the Freedom of Information Act 2000; and if she will make a statement. [47216]

Ms Harman: The Department for Constitutional Affairs does not directly monitor Freedom of Information Act compliance in local government in order to avoid imposing an administrative burden. However, independent surveys and reports in the regional press indicate that FOI is working well in local government, and a great deal of new information is being released to local communities.

Compliance with the Act is regulated by the independent Information Commissioner, who has statutory powers of investigation.

HM Court Service

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the proposal put forward by HM Court Service to merge the three local justice areas of Chorley, Ormskirk and South Ribble. [48103]

Ms Harman: The proposed alteration of the Chorley, Ormskirk and South Ribble Local Justice Areas is presently subject to the formal consultation procedures contained in section 8 of the Courts Act, 2003. The consultation period expires on 3 February 2006 and the Area Director for HMCS, Lancashire will consider the

responses, prepare a summary of same and determine whether to submit a formal proposal to the Lord Chancellor. The outcome of this process will be published in due course.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what costings have been carried out by HM Court Service in relation to the proposals to merge the three local justice areas of Chorley, Ormskirk and South Ribble. [48104]

Ms Harman: No detailed costings have been carried out regarding the proposal, which is predicated on the need to improve the service afforded to court users and the provision of an equal opportunity for all magistrates in the South West Lancashire area to carry out a fair share of the work of the courts in that area. The proposal does not involve any capital expenditure and the likely impact on revenue expenditure is expected to be cost neutral.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on how the principle of local magistrates sitting on local courts will be sustained under the proposals to merge the proposed merger of the three local justice areas of Chorley, Ormskirk and South Ribble. [48105]

Ms Harman: The consultation paper seeks views on the proposal to combine the local justice areas referred to above and it is expected that, if the proposal goes ahead, local magistrates will be based at a local courthouse in which matters affecting the local community are likely to be heard and will sit there for the majority of their time. It seeks to assure consultees that no courthouse closures are planned. Existing magistrates will be invited and any new magistrates appointed to the combined area will be expected to sit elsewhere in the South West Lancashire area from their base court, subject to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995, to enable the development of a more responsive and flexible service to the communities that the courts serve.

Information Commissioner

Mr. Drew: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what meetings she has held with the Information Commissioner in the last 12 months; what issues were discussed at these meetings; and if she will make a statement. [45905]

Ms Harman: The Information Commissioner is an independent body created by statute. He has responsibilities for handling complaints made to him under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998. I have had no meetings with the Commissioner. However my noble and learned Friend the Lord Chancellor meets regularly with the Information Commissioner to discuss issues of mutual interest, covering both Freedom of Information and Data Protection. At some of these meeting he is accompanied by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Baroness Ashton. Baroness Ashton has also met the Information Commissioner separately to discuss issues of both Freedom of Information and Data Protection.

These issue have included such matters as the implementation and operation of Freedom of Information in its first full year, the promotion of public understanding of Freedom of Information and Data Protection, the promotion of best practice among authorities subject to the Acts, and the Commissioner's report on his work in 2004–05 and his plans for his office in 2005–06 and 2006–07.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many complaints the Information Commissioner has received about the time taken by his office to handle cases. [47533]

Ms Harman: The Information Commissioner is an independent body created by statute with responsibility for handling complaints made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

The Commissioner's Office has not routinely maintained statistics relating to complaints about the length of time it has taken to handle cases. Any complaints received are treated in accordance with the Information Commissioner's policy in complaints. This policy has recently been updated and from 1 February 2006, the office has maintained a database of information about complaints received which include the reason for the complaint.

Since the introduction of the Freedom of Information Act, the Commissioner has also received 17 FOI requests relating to the time taken to close cases.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many appeals have been received by the Information Commissioner's officer against refusals to release information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000; and how many of these appeals have *(a)* been upheld, *(b)* been rejected and *(c)* yet to be determined. [47534]

Ms Harman: The Information Commissioner's Office receives appeals under the Freedom of Information Act and the related Environmental Information Regulations on a range of matters and not only refusals to release information including complaints about failure to comply with time limits.

Not all complaints result in a formal decision by the Commissioner. Many are resolved informally, withdrawn or remitted to the public authority. The total number of Freedom of Information Act complaints outstanding on 31 December 2005 was 1,325.

Of the 1,060 cases closed during 2005, 135 have resulted in formal Decision notices being issued by the Commissioner. In 70 cases the complaint was upheld, in 44 cases the complaint was not upheld and in 21 cases the complaint was partially upheld.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many complaints the Information Commissioner is dealing with; and what the average amount of time taken to deal with such a complaint was in the last period for which figures are available. [47803]

Ms Harman: The Information Commissioner's Office is an independent body created by statute with responsibility for handling complaints made to him under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

The total number of Freedom of Information complaints outstanding on 31 December 2005 was 1,325, with 1,060 cases closed. The number of Data Protection Act complaints outstanding on the same date was 2,477.

The average time taken from receipt to closure for all cases closed during 2005 was 95 days. 48.1 per cent. of cases were closed within 60 working days of receipt. The ICO target is to close 50 per cent. of cases within 60 working days.

Inquests

Ms Keeble: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps the Government are taking to reduce delays in holding inquests; and if she will make a statement. [47771]

Ms Harman: I am committed to reducing delays in holding inquests. On 6 February, I announced our plans for reform of the coroner system—and I also placed further details in the House Library. Major priorities for the reform programme will be addressing the needs and expectations of bereaved people, including those cases where inquests are required, and improving the speed and effectiveness of investigations. I will be bringing forward a draft Bill for scrutiny in the late spring.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many inquests in each coroner's court area have been adjourned for longer than a year; and if she will make a statement. [47824]

Ms Harman: A list of coroner districts with the number of inquests concluded which took over 12 months to resolve in 2004, the latest year for which figures which are available has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. Information about inquests which are still in progress is not collected centrally.

Judges' Conduct

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many complaints have been made about the conduct of judges in each year since 1997; how many of those complaints have been upheld in each year; and what action was taken to redress each successful complaint. [48872]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Correspondence Unit was set up in 1998 and records commence from 1999. The following figures show the number of complaints about judges received for each year from 1999 to 2005; the number which were investigated in that year; and the number of disciplinary actions taken by the Lord Chancellor in that year. (It should be noted that there will have been a number of active cases carried over from year to year and so the second two columns do not simply represent a percentage of the first.)

The Lord Chancellor has a range of disciplinary actions open to him, from issuing guidance, a warning as to future conduct or a reprimand, to, in the most serious cases, removal from office for judges below the level of the High Court. (Judges at the level of the High Court and above may only be removed by the Queen following an Address in both Houses.) The following figures do not show cases where the complaint was upheld but no formal disciplinary action was deemed necessary as the JCU does not hold this information.

In all years, a large number of complaints received would have been rejected without further investigation because they related to a judicial decision and not to an issue of personal conduct.

The figures provided do not cover tribunal members or lay magistrates.

	Complaints received	*Complaints investigated*	*Disciplinary action taken*
1998–99[1]	1,965	367	8
2000	1,491	402	8
2001	1,285	352	3
2002	1,191	260	3
2003	1,122	263	1
2004	1,004	253	2
2005	1,600	298	3

[1] These figures run from when the JCU opened: August 1998 to December 1999

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many complaints have been made about judges sitting at Chelmsford Crown court in each year since 1997; how many of those complaints have been upheld; and what action was taken to redress each successful complaint. [48873]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Correspondence Unit does not collate information on complaints by reference to the court at which the judge was sitting.

Judicial Appointments

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* judicial members, *(b)* tribunal members, *(c)* lay justice members, *(d)* professional members and *(e)* lay members applied for the new Judicial Appointments Commission. [48796]

Ms Harman: The number of *(a)* judicial members, *(b)* tribunal members, *(c)* lay justice members, *(d)* professional members and *(e)* lay members who applied for positions as Commissioners of the new Judicial Appointments Commission (as specified in the Constitutional Reform Act 2005) are set out in the table.

Category	*Number of applicants*
Judicial	41
Tribunal	29
Lay Justice	64
Professional	53
Lay	237
Total	424

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs on how many occasions since his appointment, the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs has overruled a recommendation for judicial appointment. [48854]

Ms Harman: Officials present a report on a competition for judicial office to my right hon. and noble Friend the Lord Chancellor. He then selects for

appointment the candidate or candidates most fitted for appointment, taking account of all the information contained in that report.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many staff from her Department will be transferred to the new Judicial Appointments Commission. [48855]

Ms Harman: No Departmental staff will transfer to the Judicial Appointments Commission at its launch on 3 April 2006. Some Departmental staff will go into the Commission on secondment agreements.

Judicial Complaints Protocol

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on the working of the Judicial Complaints Protocol. [47962]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Complaints Protocol was launched by Lord Irvine of Lairg in April 2003 when he was Lord Chancellor. It explains the handling process that is followed by officials in the Judicial Correspondence Unit in considering complaints against members of the judiciary. Its contents were adopted by Lord Falconer of Thoroton when he became Lord Chancellor.

Most complaints relate to decisions taken by judges in the course of proceedings and those decisions (including those relating to case management) are not and should not be subject to ministerial review because that would be inconsistent with the principle of judicial independence.

In a minority of complaints, issues are raised about the personal misconduct of judicial office holders and the Judicial Complaints Protocol sets out what officials will do to assist the Lord Chancellor in resolving such complaints. The protocol also sets out the Lord Chancellor's powers to discipline judicial office holders in the event that a complaint is upheld.

Judicial Correspondence Unit

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many letters were received by the Judicial Correspondence Unit in each week in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [47186]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Correspondence Unit receives letters both directly from members of the public and Members of Parliament on behalf of their constituents. They are recorded on a monthly basis. The following table therefore shows the numbers received each month in 2004 and 2005.

	2004	*2005*
January	77	134
February	59	131
March	102	145
April	65	171
May	63	110
June	83	122
July	108	138
August	72	162
September	81	134
October	82	133
November	120	129
December	89	91
Total	1,001	1,600

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many officials are employed by the Judicial Correspondence Unit; at what *(a)* grade and *(b)* salary they are employed; and what the equivalent figures were in each year since 1997. [47187]

Ms Harman: The following information shows how many officials have been employed by the Judicial Correspondence Unit, their grade and average salary since 2001, from which point this information is available.

2001

13 officials (one Grade 7, two SEOs, four HEOs, five EOs, one AO)

Average salaries: G7: £40,372; SEO: £31,584; HEO: £25,625; EO: £19,682; AO: £15,676

2002

14 officials (one Grade 6, two SEOs, six HEOs, four EOs, one AO)

Average salaries: G6: £50,265, SEO: £31,839, HEO: £25,812, EO: £20,031, AO: £16,029

2003

15 officials (one Grade 6, one Grade 7, two SEOs, six HEOs, three EOs, two AOs)

Average salaries: G6: £52,177, G7: £42,974, SEO: £31,844, HEO: £25,912, EO: £20,172, AO:16,390

2004

13 officials (one Grade 6, one Grade 7, one SEO, five HEOs, four EOs, one AO)

Average salaries: G6: £51,840, G7: £42,602, SEO: £31,541, HEO: £25,674, EO: £19,584, AO: £16,297

2005

13 officials (one Grade 6, two Grade 7s, one SEO, five HEOs, three EOs, one AO)

Average salaries: G6: £52,507, G7: £44,019, SEO: £32,055, HEO: £26,320, EO: £20,567, AO: £16,725

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many complaints were received by the Judicial Correspondence Unit about the work of that unit in each month since 2000. [47188]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Correspondence Unit records all correspondence received from members of the public and Members of Parliament. It does not, however, distinguish letters about the work of the unit from those letters that are making complaints against judicial office holders.

The Department for Constitutional Affairs has had a centralised system for handling departmental complaints since 2005 and records show that six complaints have been received since that time, which have specifically focused on the way in which officials in the Judicial Correspondence Unit have responded to letters, complaining about judicial office holders.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what advice is produced by the Judicial Correspondence Unit for members of the public wishing to make a complaint about a member of the judiciary. [47477]

Ms Harman: Leaflets are available in courts for users who wish to complain and information is also provided by way of frequently asked questions on the Department for Constitutional Affairs' website at www.dca.gov.uk/legalsys/complain.htm. More detailed guidance is provided in the Lord Chancellor's Judicial Complaints Protocol which is available to members of the public on request.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what representations she has received about the Judicial Complaints Protocol in each of the last two years. [47478]

Ms Harman: Lord Irvine of Lairg launched the Judicial Complaints Protocol in April 2003 in his capacity as Lord Chancellor. It sets out the Lord Chancellor's arrangements through the Judicial Correspondence Unit for the handling of complaints against members of the judiciary, together with his powers to discipline judicial office holders. Lord Falconer of Thoroton adopted the contents of that protocol on taking up appointment as Lord Chancellor.

Since its publication I am not aware of any representations that have been received about the protocol.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the *(a)* publications, *(b)* periodicals and *(c)* newspapers purchased by the Judicial Correspondence Unit in each month since 2002. [47957]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Correspondence Unit has not purchased any of these items. It holds no budget for such items.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was spent by the Judicial Correspondence Unit on refreshments in each year since 1997. [47958]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Correspondence Unit is part of the Judicial Policy and Correspondence Division and its budget is managed as part of the resources allocated to that division. It would therefore be disproportionately costly to retrieve information about the cost of refreshments specifically for the Judicial Correspondence Unit from the wider budget. I understand, in any event, that the unit only very rarely requires refreshments, if for example it was holding a team event in a building away from its base in Selborne House.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many parliamentary questions were answered by the Judicial Correspondence Unit in each Session of Parliament since 1997–98. [47959]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Correspondence Unit has answered the following numbers of parliamentary questions:

	Number
1997	0
1998	1
1999	3
2000	7
2001	1
2002	6
2003	3
2004	3
2005	3
To date	3

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many letters sent by *(a)* hon. Members and *(b)* Members of the House of Lords were received by the Judicial Correspondence Unit in each month since 1997; and how many and what percentage were replied to within the target time set by her Department. [47961]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Correspondence Unit (JCU) was created in 1998, and the relevant records start with effect from January 1999. The information requested for each year, 1999 to 2005 is as follows.

Ministers' cases

From	*MPs*	*Lords*	*Number in time*	*Percentage*
2001				
January	3	4	7	100
February	9	2	11	100
March	6	0	6	100
April	7	0	7	100
May	6	0	6	100
June	6	3	9	100
July	5	0	5	100
August	9	0	9	100
September	11	0	11	100
October	10	0	10	100
November	2	0	2	100
December	10	0	10	100
Total	84	9	93	100
2002				
January	10	0	10	100
February	6	0	6	100
March	8	0	8	100
April	4	1	5	100
May	8	0	6	75
June	9	1	9	90
July	8	0	5	62.5
August	9	0	9	100
September	6	1	7	100
October	5	0	5	100
November	5	0	5	100
December	6	0	6	100
Total	84	3	81	93
2003				
January	9	0	9	100
February	4	0	4	100
March	8	0	8	100
April	6	0	6	100
May	6	0	6	100
June	8	0	6	75
July	6	0	6	100
August	14	0	14	100
September	6	0	6	100
October	9	0	9	100
November	5	0	5	100
December	6	0	6	100

Ministers' cases

From	*MPs*	*Lords*	*Number in time*	*Percentage*
Total	87	0	85	97.7
2004				
January	6	0	6	100
February	6	0	6	100
March	8	0	8	100
April	8	1	9	100
May	4	0	4	100
June	9	1	10	100
July	3	1	4	100
August	4	0	4	100
September	5	0	5	100
October	3	0	3	100
November	2	0	2	100
December	2	0	2	100
Total	60	3	60	100
2005				
January	6	0	6	100
February	13	0	13	100
March	4	0	4	100
April	8	0	7	87.5
May	2	0	2	100
June	5	1	5	83.3
July	5	0	5	100
August	7	1	7	87.5
September	4	0	3	75
October	9	0	7	77.7
November	2	0	2	100
December	5	0	5	80
Total	70	2	66	91.6
1999				
January	12	0	12	100
February	7	0	6	85.7
March	9	0	8	88.8
April	15	0	13	86.6
May	10	0	9	90
June	6	0	5	83.3
July	8	0	7	87.5
August	7	0	6	85.7
September	7	0	6	85.7
October	8	0	6	75
November	5	0	4	80
December	2	0	1	50
Total	96	0	83	86.4
2000				
January	10	0	10	100
February	5	0	5	100
March	8	1	9	100
April	7	1	8	100
May	10	1	11	100
June	13	0	13	100
July	10	0	10	100
August	11	0	11	100
September	6	0	6	100
October	6	1	7	100
November	5	0	5	100
December	9	2	11	100
Total	100	6	106	100

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent discussions she has had with stakeholders about the work of the Judicial Correspondence Unit; and if she will make a statement. [47963]

Ms Harman: As part of the Lord Chancellor's constitutional reforms and based on the agreement made with the Lord Chief Justice in the Concordat in January 2004, the handling of judicial complaints will be undertaken by the Office for Judicial Complaints from April 2006. That office will take over the responsibilities of the Judicial Correspondence Unit but will work jointly to the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Chief Justice in doing so, reflecting their joint responsibility for judicial discipline matters after April this year. Discussions have been taking place over the past year with the senior judiciary to work up proposals for the handling of judicial discipline matters in the future.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the occasions when members of the Judicial Correspondence Unit have been required *(a)* to appear before and *(b)* to give advice to officials in her Department giving evidence to (i) the Scottish Parliament, (ii) the National Assembly for Wales, (iii) Northern Ireland Assembly committees, (iv) House of Commons select committees and (v) House of Lords select committees in each session since 2001–02. [47964]

Ms Harman: I am not aware that there have been any such occasions.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the publications produced by the Judicial Correspondence Unit in each month since 2002. [48113]

Ms Harman: The only publication produced in this time is the Judicial Complaints Protocol which was published in April 2003.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of complaints dismissed by the Judicial Correspondence Unit on the grounds that they were *(a)* scandalous, *(b)* frivolous and *(c)* vexatious in each of the past 10 years. [48114]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Correspondence Unit records all complaints received from members of the public and Members of Parliament but they are not differentiated into the categories listed in this question.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what research has been *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated by the Judicial Correspondence Unit; and if she will make a statement. [48117]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Correspondence Unit has not commissioned any such research.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will place in the Library copies of research that has been *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated by the Judicial Correspondence Unit; and if she will make a statement. [48118]

Ms Harman: The Judicial Correspondence Unit has not commissioned any such research.

Legal Services Commission

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what representations she has received regarding the decision of the Legal

Services Commission to withdraw its funding from specialist legal support services; and if she will make a statement. [50148]

Bridget Prentice: In addition to the issues raised by hon. Members on 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 570W, we have received representations made by both Solicitors and not for Profit organisations expressing their concern at the decision to withdraw funding for specialist support services.

This decision will mean that £2.3 million will be redirected to fund about 9,000 opportunities for people to get direct legal advice in the next financial year. This will increase access to legal aid services for vulnerable people.

Mr. Walker: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will reverse the decision taken by the Legal Services Commission to withdraw funding in July from specialist providers of support and advice on cases relating to housing, debt, welfare benefits, immigration, employment and money; and if she will make a statement. [50312]

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will ask the Legal Services Commission to review its decision to withdraw funding from specialist support services; and if she will make a statement. [50868]

Bridget Prentice: This is a matter for the Legal Services Commission (LSC), acting under the powers contained in the Access to Justice Act 1999. I am satisfied that the LSC has acted properly in reaching this decision, which will result in more acts of direct assistance being made available to vulnerable clients.

Media Monitoring

Philip Davies: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much her Department and its predecessors has spent on media monitoring activities in each of the last eight financial years. [35635]

Bridget Prentice: The department spent £106,293 in 2000–01, £66,580 in 2001–02, £81,389 in 2002–03, £112,632 in 2003–04, £173,248 in 2004–05 and £100,609 in 2005–06.

Figures prior to 2000–01 are not available because of a change in departmental accounting systems. All figures include VAT. The figures for 2005–06 are for the period up to 24 January 2006.

Pension Contributions

Pete Wishart: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the cost was of pension contributions incurred by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which she is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40005]

Bridget Prentice: For 2005–06 employers' contributions for civil servants are payable to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) at one of four rates in the ranges 16.2 to 24.6 per cent. of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The Scheme Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a scheme valuation; last carried out as at 31 March 2003. The contribution rates reflect the cost of benefits as they accrue (net of employee contributions), not the costs as they are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme. Staff at the Legal Services Commission are not civil servants, and are not members of the Principal Civil Service Scheme, but the Department does contribute to a funded pension scheme.

The following table shows the employer's contributions paid for the last three years broken down into the core department, agency (where this can be separately identified) and non-departmental public bodies for which the Secretary of State is responsible. The contributions are not recorded by country or region and these costs could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

The forecast for 2005–06 includes the costs incurred for approximately 12,000 former Magistrates Courts Service staff who became civil servants on 1 April 2005 on the creation of Her Majesty's Courts Service.

Employer's pension contributions for the Department for Constitutional Affairs

	Actual costs (£)		
	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Department for Constitutional Affairs (including Court Service)	29,230,000	32,478,000	33,234,000
Public Guardianship Office (Agency)	955,000	902,000	956,000
Information Commissioner's Office (NDPB)	403,000	481,000	556,000
Legal Services Commission (NDPB)	5,939,193	10,739,087	11,676,207

Estimate for employer contributions for 2005–06

	£
Department for Constitutional Affairs	13,851,920
Her Majesty's Courts Service (Agency)	53,742,673
Public Guardianship Office (Agency)	1,338,692
Information Commissioner's Office (NDPB)	1,027,000
Legal Service Commission (NDPB)	8,811,587
Total estimated cost to Department	78,771,872

Personal Injury Litigation

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what information her Department collects on the costs of personal injury litigation in other developed countries. [48630]

Bridget Prentice: The Department does not routinely collect information on personal injury litigation in other countries. However, information is sought as appropriate to assist in policy development.

For example, information was sought from other European countries prior to consultation in 2002 on proposals to allow the courts to order that personal injury damages be paid in the form of periodical payments (which subsequently formed part of the Courts Act 2003). In addition, research has recently been commissioned on the funding of personal injury litigation which includes a survey of approaches in several European jurisdictions. This will be published later this month.

Southend County Court

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the average waiting time was from allocation to hearing for small claims at Southend county court in the last period for which figures are available. [50495]

Ms Harman: The figures for the Southend county court show that between April 2003 to March 2004 there were 270 case dealt with, with an average waiting time of 15.2 weeks. Between April 2004 and March 2005 the average waiting time was 12.0 weeks (217 cases), and between April and December 2005 the average waiting time was 10.5 weeks (165 cases).

Specialist Support Services

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs for what reasons the Legal Services Commission has decided to withdraw funding from specialist support services; and what assessment has been made of the likely impact of this decision. [50784]

Bridget Prentice: Specialist support services form part of the Legal Services Commission's (LSC) special projects budget. Given the pressure on the limited legal aid budget and the number of clients needing legal advice, the LSC has concluded that the money would now be better spent on direct, frontline advice to vulnerable legal aid clients.

The decision will mean that £2.3 million will be redirected to fund about 9,000 opportunities for people to get direct legal advice in the next financial year. This will increase access to legal aid services for vulnerable people.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent research on the effectiveness of specialist support services she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated. [50867]

Bridget Prentice: Research undertaken by the Legal Services Commission (LSC) which underpins their consultation paper "Making legal rights a reality" points to an increasing demand for front line advice for the most needy. The LSC has concluded that specialist support services do not represent the most cost-effective approach to delivering this need for more and better services for clients.

Squatting

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what changes to legislation relating to squatters there have been since 1997. [47889]

Ms Harman: The following changes have been made:

The Civil Procedure Rules 1998 were amended to permit Interim Possession Orders to be made against trespassers. The amendments came into force in December 2002.

The Land Registration Act 2002 reformed the law and procedures relating to acquisition of title to registered land by squatters. The reforms came into force in October 2003.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced a new police power to remove trespassers from unauthorised encampments where an alternative site is available. The provisions came into force in February 2004.

War Memorials

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will introduce proposals to amend the provisions of the War Memorials (Local Authorities Powers) Act 1923 to introduce an obligation upon local authorities to maintain war memorials situated within their boundaries. [46796]

Ms Harman: Local authorities are already able to maintain, protect and restore local war memorials where they believe this to be an appropriate use of local funds. We have no plans to impose any new duties in relation to these functions.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Arson (Peterborough)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funding assistance he plans to offer to the Arson Task Force in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to reduce the incidence of arson in the Greater Peterborough area. [50343]

Jim Fitzpatrick: On 23 January 2006, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister announced £11.4 million grant funding for fire and rescue authorities in England for 2006-08 to support fire prevention work including community fire safety, arson reduction and work with children and young people. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough fire authority were awarded a total of £89,043 for this two-year period.

Commonhold Tenure

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether shared ownership leases can participate in a commonhold tenure development; and if he will make a statement. [46967]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

There is no express prohibition in the commonhold legislation against shared ownership leases. However, to ensure that the problems of long leasehold ownership are not recreated in commonhold, the Commonhold Regulations 2004 prohibit the grant of a lease for longer than seven years in residential commonhold units. As a result of this restriction shared ownership lease arrangements, which typically require the grant of a 99 or 125-year lease, cannot be used in these units.

Other forms of shared ownership, such as trust and mortgage based arrangements, are permitted and are being developed by the property industry and the social housing sector. In the light of this work we are considering whether an exception to the prohibition on long leases is necessary for shared ownership leases of residential commonhold units.

Condover Parish Council

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent representations he has received from Condover parish council; and what response he plans to make. [50240]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister received correspondence from Condover parish council on 17 January. This was acknowledged but, as it concerned a highways matter, it was transferred to the Department for Transport on the same day.

Council House Exchanges

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance his Department has issued to local authorities on council housing exchanges between tenants. [46983]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not provide any guidance to local authorities on council housing exchanges between tenants.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from buildings occupied by his Department in the past 12 months. [43431]

Jim Fitzpatrick: There were 12 items individually valued at £100 or over reported as stolen from the buildings occupied by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its agencies in the last 12 months.

Items reported stolen from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's headquarters were:

One white Peugeot racing bicycle valued at approximately £120

One official black leather briefcase valued at approximately £100

Five official laptops valued at approximately £3,000

Items reported stolen from ODPM agencies were:

Two mac250 + mobile lights valued at approximately £491 each

One mac600 mobile light valued at approximately £805

One Mountain bike valued at approximately £300

One official desktop PC and monitor valued at approximately £350

None of the laptops or the PC mentioned above contained any sensitive material.

This answer does not include buildings occupied by Government offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Departmental Catering Budget

Andrew George: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much and what proportion of his Department's catering budget was spent on Fair Trade produce in the last period for which figures are available. [49916]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not collect this data and the information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The catering services provided in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's properties are mostly outsourced at nil subsidy. The restaurants sell Fair Trade products including coffee, tea and items including fruit, chocolate and health bars directly to staff. The hospitality menus offer Fair Trade tea and coffee for official meetings and conferences.

This answer does not include catering in the buildings occupied by Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Departmental Entertainment

Mr. Heald: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been spent on entertainment by his Office in 2004-05; and how much of that sum is accounted for by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [50893]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (excluding the Government Offices) spent £213,438 on official entertainment, catering and hospitality in 2004–05. The breakdown of this expenditure in the form requested is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on the principles set out in 'Government Accounting'.

Directly-elected Mayors

Mr. Kemp: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many councils have indicated to his Department that they want to introduce directly elected mayors; and what the *(a)* estimated cost is and *(b)* average cost has been of transferring from a traditional local authority system to a directly elected mayor. [49326]

Mr. Woolas: Local authorities which are to hold a referendum on whether to have a directly elected mayor are required to send proposals for this to the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister. To date 33 local authorities have done so. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold information about the cost of transferring from a traditional local authority system to a directly elected mayor.

Disabled Facilities Grants

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many accidents resulting in hospitalisation have been reported in relation to applicants for disabled facilities grants while waiting for their grant to be approved in each of the last three years. [49788]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Domestic Violence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of people accessing a service through Supporting People were at risk of domestic violence on the latest date for which figures are available. [51347]

Mr. Woolas: Information is collected by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister from service providers on the number of new clients accessing services through the Supporting People programme.

Of the 82,000 clients that took up services through the programme during April-September 2005, 11 per cent. were defined primarily as women at risk of domestic violence, while a further 2 per cent. of clients were defined secondarily as women at risk of domestic violence.

Empty Homes

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the trend in the number of empty homes since 2001. [45825]

Yvette Cooper: The number of vacant dwellings in England, from 2001 to 2004, is tabled as follows. These figures are the latest available data:

	Snapshot date	*Number of vacant dwellings*
2001	1 April	753,100
2002	1 November	758,100
2003	3 November	745,000
2004	1 November	716,800

Source:

The 2001 figure is based on a combination of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA) return, and the Housing Corporation's Regulatory Statistical Return (RSR). For the years 2002 to 2004 the figures are based on ODPM's Council Tax Base 1 (CTB1) return.

These figures are for all vacant dwellings, including dwellings that have been empty for fewer than six months, some for less than one month.

The number of vacant dwellings in England has fallen from 2001 to 2004, by approximately 36,000. There is not sufficient data to establish a firm trend. As indicated in its response to Kate Barker's Review of Housing Supply, the Government are exploring ways to make significant reductions in the number of empty homes, particularly those that remain empty for long periods. The Government are introducing new powers from April 2006 for local authorities to reduce the number of long-term empty homes in their area.

Euro

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the Valuation Tribunal Service's plan approved by his Department on preparing for the introduction of the Euro. [47141]

Mr. Woolas: All Central Government Departments and their sponsored bodies have been asked by HM Treasury to prepare high level plans for introducing the Euro. A copy of the Euro Conversion (High Level Plan) produced by the Valuation Tribunal Service has been made available in the Library of the House.

Falmer Stadium Application

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice he received from officials in respect of the four planning applications for a stadium at Falmer, near Lewes, between the receipt of the report from Mr. John Collyer in December 2003 and the issuing of the decision letter on 27 October 2005. [46012]

Yvette Cooper: Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Fire Services

Mr. Bone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent discussions he has had with the fire service regarding the provision of equipment. [47625]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Fire and rescue authorities are required by the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework to have in place and maintain an integrated risk management plan (IRMP) which reflects local need and sets out plans to tackle effectively both existing and potential risks to communities. It is, therefore, for each fire and rescue authority to determine appropriate fire cover in its area including the provision of equipment.

It is also not the role of Ministers to agree the operational proposals in an authority's plan; that is for elected members of the authority concerned. They are best placed to act on the professional advice of principal officers and to balance the competing local demands on available resources for the benefits of the communities they serve.

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many firefighter vacancies there are in each fire authority area. [49709]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many retained duty system firefighter vacancies there are in each fire authority area. [49710]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many firefighters have been retired due to ill-health and injury before retirement age in each of the last five financial years. [49708]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The number of firefighters in England that have been retired due to ill-health and injury in each year is presented as follows:

	1999–2000	*2000–01*[1]	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Total number of ill-health and injury retirements	625	647	630	587	531
Whole-time firelighter ill health retirements	557	578	570	545	485
Retained duty system firefighter ill-health retirements	68	69	60	42	46
Percentage of total whole-time firefighter retirements	52.0	50.9	50.7	42.1	46.5
Percentage of total retained duty system firefighter retirements	30.5	28.9	20.5	17.1	21.3

[1] Figures for West Sussex are not available

Source:
ODPM annual returns

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what contribution employers have made to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme in each of the last five financial years. [49707]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Firefighters' Pension Scheme is an unfunded scheme and pensions are paid by fire and rescue authorities from revenue. There is therefore no employer contribution. The cost of the scheme is currently estimated to be 37.5 per cent. of pensionable pay and has increased from 34.75 per cent. since 1998. Members pay a contribution of 11 per cent. of pensionable pay which has remained unaltered since 1991.

Galileo European Satellite

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans the Ordnance Survey has to use the Galileo European satellite. [51073]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Ordnance Survey makes significant use today of global positioning system (GPS) technology to maintain the national geospatial database in Great Britain and plans to replace its existing national GPS infrastructure with GPS+Galileo enabled receivers over the next two years as part of its routine asset replacement programme. It is expected that Galileo will give Ordnance Survey, and all professional users of satellite navigation, greater signal availability, acquisition speed and accuracy.

Gaming International Ltd

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the contracts which have been awarded to Gaming International Ltd. by English Partnerships; and for what project each contract was awarded. [47668]

Yvette Cooper: English Partnerships has contracts with Gaming International Ltd. relating to the development agreement for land in the Ashland area and Elfield Park in Milton Keynes:

(i) a deed of variation and agreement for health care provision relating to the Ashland area;

(ii) a lease relating to the use of Milton Keynes Bowl for public events;

(iii) an agreement for the construction of a stadium facility at Elfield Park in Milton Keynes.

In addition English Partnerships has granted Gaming International a licence to charge which allows it to make charges relating to land at the East Ashland Greyhound Stadium and the operating of the National Bowl.

The development agreement releases brownfield land for the housing development of 380 new homes.

Home Information Packs

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 203W, on home information packs, which elements of the pack are liable to VAT. [48157]

Yvette Cooper: The contents of the pack will be specified in Regulations to be made later this year. The answer given to the hon. Member on 28 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 203W, reflected our intention to include a home condition report and drainage and water search in the pack. Both of these elements are liable to VAT. Local searches provided by a local authority are not liable to VAT.

Homelessness

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what funding the Government has given to faith groups to address homelessness since May 1997. [49691]

Yvette Cooper: This information requested is not collected centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister allocates homelessness grants to local authorities and voluntary sector agencies. A significant proportion of homelessness grants to local authorities is in turn used by those authorities to fund voluntary sector homelessness services that contribute to local strategies to tackle homelessness. A number of voluntary sector agencies allocated homelessness grants since 1997 are likely to have been faith-based but ODPM's records do not categorise them in this way.

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what *(a)* revenue grant and *(b)* capital grant payments were made by the Homelessness Directorate in support of local homelessness strategies in each local authority in London in 2004–05; [47178]

(2) how much was paid in *(a)* revenue grant and *(b)* capital grant payments to the voluntary sector in London by the Homelessness Directorate in 2004–05. [47177]

Yvette Cooper: Homelessness grants from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister supplement other sources of Government funding that help to tackle homelessness, including housing capital investment, supporting people and revenue support grant.

In 2004–05 a total of just over £44 million in homelessness grants was allocated to organisations in London by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The following table provides details of homelessness revenue and capital grant payments made by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2004–05 to each local authority in London. Some of this funding may have been passed on by these authorities to voluntary sector agencies to pay for homelessness services.

Some funding was provided direct to voluntary sector agencies from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The following table also shows the total value of these grants in London. Most of the voluntary sector homelessness services funded direct by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister operate across more than one local authority area.

ODPM homelessness grants in London, 2004–05

	Revenue	*Capital*
Authority		
Barking and Dagenham	28,000.00	—
Barnet	165,000.00	—
Bexley	58,000.00	—
Brent	783,000.00	—
Bromley	100,000.00	—
Camden	1,800,000.00	—
City of London	515,000.00	—
Croydon	600,000.00	—
Ealing	600,000.00	—
Enfield	250,000.00	—
Greater London Authority	40,000.00	—
Greenwich	100,000.00	—
Hackney	640,000.00	—
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,500,000.00	470,000.00
Haringey	200,000.00	—
Harrow	183,000.00	—
Havering	27,000.00	—
Hillingdon	80,000.00	—
Hounslow	180,000.00	—
Islington	357,000.00	—
Kensington and Chelsea	943,000.00	—
Kingston upon Thames	90,000.00	—
Lambeth	2,100,000.00	—
Lewisham	100,000.00	474,000.00
Merton	80,000.00	—
Newham	250,000.00	—
Redbridge	105,000.00	—
Richmond	295,000.00	—
Southwark	1,100,000.00	353,000.00
Sutton	150,000.00	—
Tower Hamlets	800,000.00	—
Waltham Forest	200,000.00	—
Wandsworth	300,000.00	—
Westminster	7,366,000.00	9,480,000.00
Total grants to authorities	22,085,000.00	10,777,000.00
Voluntary sector organisations		
Not split by authority	9,658,188.00	1,493,550.00
Total grants to voluntary sector organisations	9,658,188.00	1,493,550.00

Housing Corporation

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* total and *(b)* administration expenditure of the Housing Corporation was in each year since 1996–97; and what the estimates are for (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07. [46984]

Yvette Cooper: The total expenditure and administration expenditure by the Housing Corporation for each year since 1996–97 is shown as follows:

£ million

	Admin spend	*Total spend*
1996–97	29.90	1,638.10
1997–98	29.00	1,327.80
1998–99	28.80	1,245.80
1999–2000	29.90	1,329.90
2000–01	30.60	1,404.90
2001–02	34.10	1,421.50
2002–03	36.39	1,749.29
2003–04	39.35	2,111.58
2004–05	41.90	1,746.89
2005–06	44.13	1,706.74
2006–07	41.80	1,891.74

Figures for 1996–97 to 2004–05 are based on information from the Housing Corporation's annual accounts.

The figures for 2005–06 and 2006–07 are based on proposed budgets as at 30 January 2006.

The administration figures include expenditure on staff costs and capital. The total includes all administration costs along with all programmes, both capital and revenue operated by the Housing Corporation for each year provided.

Leisure Centres

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what assessment he has made of the effect of the

transfer of leisure facilities from local authorities to newly-formed charitable trusts on their access to capital for refurbishment; [50118]

(2) if he will list the local authorities that have transferred the ownership of leisure centres and swimming pools to newly-formed charitable trusts; and which facilities were transferred. [50119]

Mr. Caborn: I have been asked to reply.

Specific information on the transfer of ownership of leisure centres from local authorities to newly-formed charitable trusts is not centrally collated. However, information from the Leisure Data Base Company suggests that approximately one-fifth of public leisure facilities in England are provided through trusts.

My Department recognises the importance of this issue in ensuring the continued sustainability of publicly provided sports facilities. The Audit Commission is currently undertaking a study into the different types of management arrangements available to local authorities for running these services and how they approach the task of choosing the option best suited to local needs. This is expected to include a consideration of the potential implications of each of these options, including for charitable trusts.

I will ensure a copy of the study is placed in the House Libraries once it is published.

Local Authority Housing

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many council houses in *(a)* England and *(b)* Tamworth constituency (i) have been brought up to the decent homes standard and (ii) remain to be brought up to that standard. [48657]

Yvette Cooper: The information is as follows.

(a) The number of local authority owned non-decent homes in England has decreased from £1,869,000 in 1996 to 972,000 in 2003[1].

(b) Tamworth has reported that their number of local authority non-decent homes has decreased from 2,664 in 2001 to 1,371 in 2005[2].

Sources:
[1] English House Condition Survey
[2] Business Plan Annual Monitoring returns

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of local authority housing stock in *(a)* England, *(b)* London and *(c)* each London borough has been sold under the right to buy scheme in each year since 1980. [48706]

Yvette Cooper: The number of right to buy (RTB) sales in England, London and each London borough are shown on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/373/Table4StatisticsonRighttoBuyandothercouncilhousesalesExcel242Kb_id1156373.xls. http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/371/SalesoflocalauthoritystockinEnglandregionalgrossedtotalsExcel43Kb_id1156371.xls.

Information on local authority housing stock is available in Table 116 at: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/22/Table116Excel127Kb_id1156022.xls.

The proportion of local authority stock that has been sold through the right to buy scheme is the number of RTB sales in each financial year divided by the local authority stock at the beginning of that same period. Information is only available for years shown. Regional and national figures have been grossed to compensate for missing data.

Right to buy sales as a proportion of local authority stock: London authorities and England

Percentage

	1998–99	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
England	1.22	1.71	1.74	1.85	2.34	2.83	2.14
London	1.36	1.98	2.08	1.85	2.25	2.56	2.21
Barking and Dagenham	1.54	3.08	[1]—	[1]—	2.60	3.01	2.05
Barnet	1.96	2.24	2.01	1.37	[1]—	2.16	0.00
Bexley	0.00	0.00	0.00	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[2]—
Brent	1.52	2.27	[1]—	1.47	1.51	1.82	0.00
Bromley	0.00	0.00	0.00	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[2]—
Camden	1.79	2.02	2.81	2.50	1.83	2.02	1.70
City of London	10.74	15.73	10.25	8.21	8.42	13.07	9.52
Croydon	0.99	1.16	1.60	1.70	1.64	2.22	1.14
Ealing	1.41	2.33	2.23	2.11	[1]—	2.33	1.27
Enfield	1.10	2.41	1.63	1.57	2.18	3.06	1.76
Greenwich	1.21	1.77	1.82	1.70	2.06	2.65	1.58
Hackney	0.93	1.52	2.61	[1]—	2.61	2.51	2.83
Hammersmith and Fulham	1.18	1.59	2.49	1.52	[1]—	1.73	1.56
Haringey	1.44	2.27	[1]—	[1]—	2.01	2.76	2.77
Harrow	1.50	2.10	1.41	[1]—	1.18	1.53	1.94
Havering	1.61	2.41	2.20	1.81	1.82	2.21	1.10
Hillingdon	2.32	2.19	1.95	1.38	1.40	1.53	0.93
Hounslow	1.79	2.08	1.78	[1]—	[1]—	2.61	1.20
Islington	1.07	[1]—	[1]—	2.65	2.19	2.44	0.00
Kensington and Chelsea	1.26	1.98	1.47	0.59	0.60	1.08	0.68
Kingston upon Thames	1.03	1.86	0.98	0.62	1.37	1.37	0.72
Lambeth	1.08	1.58	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	3.00
Lewisham	1.56	1.92	[1]—	[1]—	3.34	[1]—	0.00
Merton	2.23	2.33	[1]—	2.34	2.71	2.82	1.84
Newham	1.25	1.83	[1]—	[1]—	3.39	4.21	3.26
Redbridge	1.27	1.66	2.03	1.79	2.19	2.37	2.17
Richmond upon Thames	1.35	3.34	[1]—	[2]—	[1]—	[1]—	[2]—

Right to buy sales as a proportion of local authority stock: London authorities and England

Percentage

	1998–99	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Southwark	0.80	1.24	1.59	1.86	2.03	3.05	3.84
Sutton	1.29	2.25	1.57	1.40	1.75	1.81	0.74
Tower Hamlets	1.85	2.61	3.72	3.72	4.69	3.32	3.68
Waltham Forest	1.28	1.99	1.77	1.40	[1]—	2.64	1.93
Wandsworth	1.33	2.63	1.70	[1]—	0.29	1.39	1.68
Westminster	1.61	2.66	3.11	1.52	1.64	2.33	1.15

[1] Not applicable due to large scale voluntary transfer of local authority stock to a registered social landlord.
[2] Information not available due to missing return from local authority.
Source
Returns (P1A B & HSSA) from local authorities to ODPM

Local Elections

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which local authorities *(a)* are in the process of changing and *(b)* have formally requested a change to a whole council election cycle. [47870]

Mr. Woolas: The changes since the information given in answers of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 581W, and 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 681W, are that Hart district council are now considering whether to move to whole council elections and Broadland's request has been agreed. The local authorities listed have either expressed an interest or made inquiries regarding the process of change. Whether that means a formal request will be made in the future is a matter for the local authority concerned.

Mr. Walker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to postpone the 2007 local elections; and if he will make a statement. [51367]

Mr. Woolas: We expect and intend the 2007 elections to go ahead.

Local Government Finance

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what access private sector firms have to the council tax banding list for individual domestic properties; and what the costs are for such access. [47868]

Mr. Woolas: The council tax valuation list is compiled and maintained by listing officers and can be accessed free of charge through the Valuation Office Agency website (www.voa.gov.uk) or through the relevant billing authority.

Local Government Reform

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the creation of new unitary local authorities in England would require *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary legislation; and if he will make a statement. [47872]

Mr. Woolas: No decisions have been taken about creating new unitary local authorities. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister intends to finalise our position around the middle of the year at about the same time as the publication of the proposed White Paper. Intentions would be to seek new local government legislation to effect any proposed structural changes.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the recent article by the Minister for Local Government and Communities in the Local Government Chronicle, what estimate the Government have made of the transitional costs of introducing unitary local government. [47874]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member on 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 584W.

Management Consultants

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how often his Department has used management consultants in the last year for which figures are available; and at what cost. [48204]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold information centrally on the number of times consultants including management consultants have been used centrally, and could provide it only at disproportionate cost. Information on the cost for consultants which includes the cost of management consultants. For 2005–06 to date the cost is £39.661 million.

Millennium Dome (Redevelopment)

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress has been made on the redevelopment of *(a)* the millennium dome and *(b)* the surrounding land, including the millennium village; and if he will make a statement. [49712]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Inside the dome the construction of the arena and the first phase of the entertainment district are in progress. Outside the dome, the building of millennium square has begun, and work on the housing development is due to follow later in the year.

On the adjoining land, the David Beckham Football Academy has been opened since October 2005, and the current phase of Greenwich millennium village comprising of 198 homes is due for completion in September 2006. Of these, 30 homes were completed in December 2005.

Planning consent for phases 3 & 4 of Greenwich millennium village was recently granted by London borough of Greenwich.

Mobile Telephone Masts

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many refusals of planning permission for mobile telephone phone masts by local authorities have been overturned by the Planning Inspectorate in each year since 1997. [45650]

Yvette Cooper: The Planning Inspectorate does not hold information about mobile phone masts specifically, and it could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Northern Way Strategy

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the timetable is for the implementation of the Northern Way strategy; and which bodies are responsible for the strategy. [49714]

Yvette Cooper: The Northern Way Steering Group produced and launched 'Moving Forward: The Northern Way First Growth Strategy Report' in September 2004. The Northern Way Steering Group is independently chaired and Regional Development Agency led. It contains representatives from business, the housing sector, higher education and northern cities as well as the three northern Regional Assemblies, English Partnerships and Government

It is a long-term strategy to establish the North of England as an area of exceptional opportunity, combining a world-class economy with a high quality of life by 2025. The Northern Way published a business plan in June 2005 setting out how they would take the strategy forward until 2008. Both this and the growth strategy can be found on the Northern Way's website at: http://www.thenorthernway.co.uk/documents.html

Open Market Homebuy Option

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Council of Mortgage Lenders, *(b)* the Financial Services Authority and *(c)* the three lenders expected by the Department to be offering the Open Market Homebuy (OMH) product on progress with OMH. [48902]

Yvette Cooper: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister met with the Council of Mortgage Lenders and two of the Lenders expected to joint fund the expanded Open Market HomeBuy product on 26 October, 2005. Since the Chancellor's announcement of 5 December, officials have been involved in regular progress discussions with the Council of Mortgage Lenders, the Financial Services Authority, and lenders.

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Open Market Homebuy option will be available by October. [48908]

Yvette Cooper: The Open Market HomeBuy Product will be available from April. The Government are working with three lenders, Yorkshire Building Society, Nationwide and HBoS, to joint fund an expanded Open Market HomeBuy product from October.

Ordnance Survey

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether *(a)* aerial and *(b)* satellite photography are used to help provide information for the Ordnance Survey's (i) MasterMap and (ii) Land-Line. [51106]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Ordnance Survey uses aerial photography for the revision of the National Geospatial Database. Both Land-Line and the OS MasterMap Topographic Layer are generated from the database.

The potential for using satellite photography for a similar purpose in the future is kept under regular review. At the moment it is not considered suitable for maintaining the largest scale of data that is used in Land-Line and OS MasterMap, but there is scope for it to be used as a source of intelligence about change that will be collected by other survey techniques.

Planning

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his policy is in respect of *(a)* accepting hospitality from and *(b)* meeting an applicant of a live planning application where the application might be referred to him for decision. [45979]

Yvette Cooper: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister follows the policy on live planning cases set out in "Guidance on Propriety Issues in the Handling of Planning Applications in ODPM", copies of which have been made available in the Library of the House and a copy of which I am sending to the hon. Member.

Once a decision has been made, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has no further role. Even if my right hon. Friend's decision is challenged, it is not live before him unless and until the decision is quashed by the court and returned to him for redetermination.

Planning Blight (Compensation)

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the statutory compensation process is for *(a)* planning blight and *(b)* highway developments. [49689]

Yvette Cooper: Provisions exist in Part VI of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to assist the owner-occupiers of blighted land who cannot sell their property except at a reduced price because some formal plan or document indicates that it may be required by a body with compulsory purchase powers.

Under these provisions the owner-occupier may require the body responsible for the blight to purchase the property in advance by serving a blight notice. The effect of this notice is to bring forward the compulsory purchase procedure to a time of the blight claimant's choosing. When a blight notice is accepted by the appropriate authority that authority must acquire the interest specified in the blight notice and the purchase is deemed to be a compulsory purchase.

In the case of highway development, the Land Compensation Acts 1961 and 1973 establish that compensation is payable where an interest in land is acquired compulsorily. Following ministerial confirmation of the compulsory purchase order the acquiring authority will take possession of the land and negotiate the level of compensation. The principle underlying the level of compensation is that a claimant should be left no worse off and no better off in monetary terms after the acquisition than before. Compensation may also be available where a reduction in the value of land is caused by the execution or subsequent use of public works.

Population Projections

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official*

Report, column 2574W, on population projections, what consideration is being given to the inclusion in the calculations for future local government finance settlements for local authorities in Northamptonshire of housebuilding numbers and population projections in the Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional spatial strategy. [50703]

Mr. Woolas: The population projections used by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in the 2006–07 and 2007–08 Local Government Finance Settlements are the 2003-based sub-national population projections for England produced by the Office for National Statistics, as these are the best data available produced on a consistent basis for all authorities.

These projections represent how the population in an area would change given the continuation of past demographic trends.

Rates

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average business rates bill levied in *(a)* England and *(b)* each local authority billing area in England was in each year since 1997–98; and what the estimated averages are for 2005–06. [49779]

Mr. Woolas: The requested information has been made available in the Library of the House.

Right to Buy

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* initial applications and *(b)* completed sales were made under the right to buy in each local authority in London in each quarter since 2003–04. [47179]

Yvette Cooper: The number of right to buy applications and sales as reported by each local authority in London are in the following table.

Right to buy sales and applications: London authorities

		2003–04				2004–05				2005–06		
Local authority	*Right to buy*	*Q1*	*Q2*	*Q3*	*Q4*	*Q1*	*Q2*	*Q3*	*Q4*	*Q1*	*Q2*	*Q3*
Barking and Dagenham	Applications	357	364	244	347	307	293	243	232	210	210	201
	Sales	170	162	161	160	139	116	94	82	66	57	63
Barnet	Applications	52	46	40	53	42	[2]	[2]	[2]	19	71	[2]
	Sales	64	62	57	68	45	[2]	[2]	[2]	22	14	[2]
Bexley	Applications	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Sales	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brent	Applications	65	57	51	67	54	53	52	—	45	43	[2]
	Sales	40	52	46	47	49	58	42	—	26	19	[2]
Bromley	Applications	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
	Sales	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Camden	Applications	131	144	133	191	146	157	47	122	154	54	162
	Sales	123	131	131	133	120	132	111	70	51	26	36
City of London	Applications	12	8	1	10	10	14	8	7	11	3	[2]
	Sales	14	17	7	21	17	13	6	6	2	1	[2]
Croydon	Applications	52	53	34	70	56	49	46	54	39	43	30
	Sales	97	85	70	72	58	36	48	22	9	8	15
Ealing	Applications	119	113	95	139	99	70	97	87	85	60	52
	Sales	79	65	74	121	57	66	37	16	17	18	11
Enfield	Applications	64	57	8	73	77	64	49	59	71	71	41
	Sales	63	90	128	101	65	72	48	31	22	25	3
Greenwich	Applications	142	138	112	159	154	135	88	120	135	118	[2]
	Sales	173	180	168	180	139	113	104	53	34	40	[2]
Hackney	Applications	151	[2]	[2]	187	[2]	[2]	120	143	132	160	[2]
	Sales	204	[2]	[2]	123	[2]	[2]	166	97	94	43	[2]
Hammersmith and Fulham	Applications	54	[2]	[2]	87	62	50	47	39	53	55	[2]
	Sales	56	[2]	[2]	65	56	61	64	34	38	40	[2]
Haringey	Applications	120	108	109	163	117	95	122	118	83	80	93
	Sales	147	121	89	143	107	149	130	87	101	54	39
Harrow	Applications	20	17	23	25	[2]	[2]	13	5	13	22	15
	Sales	19	20	17	25	[2]	[2]	10	11	18	7	4
Havering	Applications	102	128	71	114	97	101	60	67	58	54	38
	Sales	72	59	73	54	35	23	45	21	28	21	23
Hillingdon	Applications	120	125	61	141	59	43	54	17	40	23	19
	Sales	43	44	36	54	30	26	28	21	21	24	17
Hounslow	Applications	81	68	52	73	105	67	34	50	61	36	45
	Sales	90	112	80	90	57	46	40	23	18	16	6
Islington	Applications	139	172	137	139	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
	Sales	123	228	182	210	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Kensington and Chelsea	Applications	152	34	31	32	28	20	25	28	23	35	21
	Sales	13	22	20	11	24	13	8	4	6	1	3
Kingston upon Thames	Applications	[2]	[2]	11	15	22	13	14	17	10	14	12
	Sales	[2]	[2]	11	15	16	11	5	4	4	5	[2]
Lambeth	Applications	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	241	173	136	106	182	155	[2]
	Sales	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	355	280	216	108	128	53	[2]
Lewisham	Applications	142	118	217	[2]	156	[2]	[2]	[2]	157	[2]	[2]
	Sales	259	284	228	[2]	355	[2]	[2]	[2]	98	[2]	[2]
Merton	Applications	32	42	25	47	51	74	0	63	31	35	36
	Sales	53	47	41	51	22	47	38	15	15	11	10
Newham	Applications	214	276	213	219	179	167	120	125	121	199	[2]
	Sales	214	176	268	230	216	213	142	77	69	44	[2]
Redbridge	Applications	12	19	22	33	27	46	0	0	19	26	[2]
	Sales	31	34	31	29	32	29	31	21	21	23	[2]
Richmond upon Thames	Applications	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Sales	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Right to buy sales and applications: London authorities

Local authority	Right to buy	2003-04 Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2004-05 Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2005-06 Q1	Q2	Q3
Southwark	Applications	306	315	255	309	281	273	246	228	253	253	230
	Sales	427	334	287	384	464	450	408	418	293	217	125
Sutton	Applications	18	26	28	22	5	35	13	46	21	18	[2]
	Sales	29	30	58	28	29	18	6	5	4	3	[2]
Tower Hamlets	Applications	145	216	163	203	184	165	121	155	169	177	153
	Sales	344	237	80	154	185	173	256	252	172	108	64
Waltham Forest	Applications	37	39	43	36	49	42	35	25	43	38	39
	Sales	41	59	84	104	78	30	48	15	19	12	8
Wandsworth	Applications	37	57	41	84	78	83	47	66	75	[2]	[2]
	Sales	6	8	154	75	98	57	59	52	45	[2]	[2]
Westminster	Applications	49	52	42	66	68	48	39	138	51	27	31
	Sales	58	54	76	79	51	42	32	20	15	11	4

[1] Not applicable due to large scale voluntary transfer of local authority stock to a registered social landlord.
[2] Information not available due to missing return from local authority.

Source:
Quarterly returns (PI A/B) from local authorities to the ODPM

Stephen Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many council houses have been sold in Merton under the right-to-buy scheme in each year since 1980. [50052]

Yvette Cooper: The number of council houses sold in Merton under the right-to-buy scheme in each year since 1998-99 as reported by Merton can be found on the office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at: http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/373/Table4StatisticsonRighttoBuyandothercouncilhousesalesExcel242Kb_idll56373.xls

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Alternative Energy

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the effect of the different tax rates on energy sources on incentives for companies to carry out research to identify alternative sources. [50929]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has not made a formal assessment of the effect of different tax rates on the incentives for companies to carry out research into alternative sources of energy. The Department does provide financial support for R&D in alternative energy sources.

There is good evidence to suggest that the establishment of a price for carbon, whether by taxation or emissions trading, will impact on incentives for research and innovation and that this can contribute to differences in projected fuel mix and to reduced overall costs for meeting carbon targets.

The Department has published a review of studies looking at the costs of long-term carbon reductions, including the role of innovation and technology change. This study is available at: http://www.dti.gov.uk/economics/6228-OccasionPaper1.pdf

Evidence to the Stern review on the economics of climate change from the University of Cambridge and Imperial College Centre for Energy Policy and Technology illustrates the importance of technological change for the economics and policy of climate change. This study is available at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk./media/F72/C6/climatechange_imp_1.pdf

Auditing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will require the Financial Reporting Council to publish reports on the weaknesses of all auditing firms inspected by it. [51509]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government's Review of the Regulatory Regime of the Accountancy Profession, published in 2003, recommended enhancing the monitoring of the audits of listed and other public interest entities through a new independent inspection unit (the Audit Inspection Unit) reporting to the Professional Oversight Board for Accountancy (POBA), a Board of the Financial Reporting Council.

In June 2005 the POBA published the Audit Inspection Unit's findings from its monitoring of the quality of the auditing function of the Big Four firms.

Autumn Performance Report

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to his Department's 2005 autumn performance report, what steps he proposes to take to meet the target for business investment in research and development of 1.7 per cent. of gross domestic product by 2014. [48413]

Alun Michael: The Government's policies on business investment in research and development can be found in the 10-year Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004 to 2014 (July 2004), particularly Chapter 4.

We are doing a number of things to encourage business investment in R&D:

The technology programme is supporting collaboration, knowledge transfer and R&D into promising new technologies under the business-led Technology Strategy Board's guidance;

We are encouraging knowledge transfer from universities through such things as the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF). Taking our strengths in basic research and encouraging innovation by helping ideas move towards the applied research that is so important to business R&D;

The Patent Office is building on its role as enforcer of intellectual property rights (DPR) by running a successful programme of activities educating people about innovation and the role IPR plays;

Public procurement of innovative solutions through initiatives such as the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) and work with the Office for Government Commerce are making Government a more intelligent customer prepared to buy the outputs of business R&D.

R&D tax credits help reduce the financial impact of R&D costs on a business and are expected to contribute around £600 million each year to innovative businesses; and,

Skills are a major contributor to improving levels of innovation and productivity, we are working to increase skills in science, engineering, technology and mathematics, and emphasise the importance of management and leadership skills.

The first annual report for the 10-year science and innovation investment framework was published in July 2005.

Bank of Credit and Commerce International

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in respect of how many *(a)* accountants and *(b)* auditors prosecutions have been sought by his Department for their role in frauds at the Bank of Credit and Commerce International; and if he will make a statement. [49834]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department of Trade and Industry was not the Prosecution Authority responsible for the above named matter. The Serious Fraud Office was the relevant Authority and the answer is therefore nil.

Belarus

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total value of imports was from Belarus to the UK in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2000 and *(c)* 2005. [49062]

Ian Pearson: Information on the UK's imports of goods from Belarus is not yet available for the whole of 2005. The latest data available is for the period January to November 2005. This is provided in the following table:

UK imports of goods from Belarus

	£000 (current prices)
1997	15,615
2000	34,158
January to November 2005	244,824

Source:
H M Revenue and Customs Overseas Trade Statistics, OTS1.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether he will introduce legislation requiring companies to disclose annually the amount of their carbon dioxide emissions. [49728]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

There are no plans to introduce legislation that will specifically require companies to disclose information on their carbon emissions.

However, from April 2005 quoted and large companies must produce a business review in their Directors' report, which must include information on environmental matters to the extent necessary for an understanding of the development, performance or position of the business. In addition, the Government are currently consulting on company narrative reporting requirements in the context of the Company Law Reform Bill.

The Government recently produced 'Environmental Reporting Guidelines—Key Performance Indicators' that can assist companies to identify and report on the most significant environmental impacts to the company.

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will introduce proposals to require gas and electricity companies to publish in consumers' bills the relevant carbon dioxide emissions of their use of energy. [50604]

Malcolm Wicks: Under fuel mix disclosure provisions inserted into electricity supply licences by regulations under the European Communities Act, suppliers are required to calculate and make available to consumers information on the amount of carbon dioxide that is produced for each kWh of electricity generated.

No equivalent provision exists for gas. However interested consumers could calculate the information themselves based on energy consumption information included in their gas bill and carbon emission factors contained in Defra environmental reporting guidelines.

The Government have no plans to introduce further requirements in this area.

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on how many occasions his Department consulted citizens' juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens' jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens' jury. [46242]

Alan Johnson: DTI is committed to best practice on consultation in line with the Cabinet code of practice.

DTI's own consultation standards exceed that code in requiring at least one additional form of consultation to ensure full participation in policy making from a diversity of individuals and organisations. Non-written approaches to consultation used routinely by DTI include national and regional focus groups, stakeholder workshops, listening events, web forums, targeted leaflet campaigns, road shows and exhibitions.

Citizens' jury is another example of this and was used in the DTI consultation Work and Families: Flexibility and Choice in 2004. The results were considered as part of the overall consultation exercise and are discussed in the Government Response to that consultation:

(http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/consultationchoiceflexibility2005finall.pdf, para 4.8)

Coal Health Claims

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the firms of solicitors that have been involved in processing coal health claims; and how much has been paid to each firm in costs. [50802]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Vale of Clwyd (Chris Ruane) on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 329–30W.

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much Thompson's Solicitors have received in fees for coal health claim cases in *(a)* total and *(b)* North Durham. [50803]

Malcolm Wicks: In total, Thompsons solicitors have received £92.5 million for handling coal health claims as of 8 February 2006, of which £2.5 million relates to cases in North Durham.

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been paid in coal health claim compensation to clients of Thompson's Solicitors *(a)* in total, *(b)* in County Durham and *(c)* in North Durham. [50804]

Malcolm Wicks: As of 8 February 2005, £518 million has been paid in compensation in coal health claims handled by Thompsons solicitors, of which £118 million was in cases in County Durham[1] and £14.5 million in North Durham.

[1] County Durham is made up of the following constituencies—North Durham, North West Durham, City of Durham, Easington, Sedgefield and Bishop Auckland.

Company Audits

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will limit each auditing firm to auditing no more than 10 per cent. of the FTSE 350 companies. [50022]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government do not propose to introduce such measures.

Company Director Duties

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will bring forward legislation to give company directors a duty of care to *(a)* each shareholder and *(b)* employers in respect of the probity and efficacy of the actions of the board. [50823]

Alun Michael: Part 10 of the Company Law Reform Bill provides a statutory statement of directors' general duties, which is in line with the current law and states the general duties that are owed by a director to the company. Clause 156 provides that a director of a company must act in the way he considers in good faith, is most likely to promote the success of the company for the benefit of its members as a whole. In fulfilling this duty, he must (so far as reasonably practicable) have regard to the factors listed in subsection 156(3), including the interests of the company's employees and the need to act fairly as between members of the company.

Company Fraud

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will provide a list in relation to those cases where all proceedings are complete regarding the *(a)* prosecutions and *(b)* successful prosecutions for insider trading since 1997. [49723]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following is a list of individuals against whom prosecutions have been brought by the DTI for offences contrary to s52 Criminal Justice Act 1993 or s1 Criminal Law Act 1977 (insider dealing) have been instituted since 1997. Other prosecutions may have been brought by other prosecution agencies. Prosecutions have been considered "successful" where a conviction has been recorded. Those that did not result in convictions may be due to the prosecution withdrawing those offences or not guilty verdicts being entered by the jury or at the judge's direction. Since 1997 proceedings have been brought against 15 individuals of which nine were "successful".

Name of Defendant	
Laurence Henry Champion	Convicted
John Cahill	Convicted
Gerald Cahill	Convicted
Richard Philip King	Convicted
Stuart Axam	Not Convicted
Jonathan Richard Arthur Townsend	Not Convicted
Wayne Daw	Convicted
Christopher Williams	Convicted
Anthony Hadnutt	Not Convicted
Stephen Porter	Convicted
Gareth Wynne Davies	Not Convicted
Timothy Blackstone	Convicted
Stephen Ziff	Not Convicted
Stuart Neil Ronson	Not Convicted
Richard Steele	Convicted

Company Law

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will seek to introduce legislation to require companies to publish a list in their annual accounts of the names and locations of all *(a)* subsidiaries, *(b)* affiliates, *(c)* shell companies and *(d)* trusts, together with the (i) turnover, (ii) profit and (iii) tax paid by each. [50023]

Alun Michael: The Government's intention is that Clause 382 of the Company Law Reform Bill (Information about related undertakings) will replace the provisions of section 231 of the Companies Act 1985. The Government intends to make regulations under clause 382 to replace the current Schedule 5 to the 1985 Act.

Schedule 5 requires the disclosure of the names and locations of subsidiary undertakings. It also covers joint ventures, associated undertakings and other significant holdings. Shell companies are covered by Schedule 5 to the extent that they fall within these categories. If subsidiaries, affiliates and shell companies are Companies Act companies they will have to publish their own Companies Act accounts. There are also detailed accounting rules which, depending on the degree of control of the parent company, will require any of these categories to be brought into its consolidated accounts.

Trusts are not specifically covered in the Companies Acts. However, to the extent that a trust or other undertaking qualifies as a quasi subsidiary under Financial Reporting Standard 5, accounting standards require lengthy disclosures relating to the trust. The Urgent Issues Task Force of the Accounting Standards Board has issued UITF abstract38 on accounting for

Employee Share Ownership Plan trusts. This requires the disclosure of information sufficient to enable readers to understand the significance of the ESOP trust in the context of the sponsoring company. Trusts which relate to pension schemes of a company (more specifically, their obligations under the scheme) are subject to lengthy disclosure requirements by accounting standards.

The EU is expected later this year to adopt a directive amending the 4th and 7th company law directives on accounting. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State intends to consult fully on implementation of its requirements, including on the disclosure of off balance sheet arrangements and related party transactions. The latter are also covered by the disclosure requirements of accounting standards.

Consultants/Special Advisers

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* consultants and *(b)* special advisers were employed by his Department in each year since 1997; what the cost of each was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [27423]

Alan Johnson: Specific data on the number of consultants employed by the Department of Trade and Industry is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

With respect to special advisers, this information is published on an annual basis. For the most recent information I refer the hon. Member to the statement made by my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, on 21 July 2005, *Official Report*, columns 158–62WS.

Correspondence

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects to reply to letters from the hon. Member for Canterbury dated *(a)* 3 August 2005 and *(b)* 10 October 2005. [38770]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 20 December 2005]*: I apologise for the long delay in responding to the hon. Member's letters; this was due to an administrative error. The issue he was raising is a matter for HM Treasury and has been transferred to them for reply.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47675]

Alan Johnson: Thirty items of small portable equipment which have a value of £100 or above (21 laptops, one monitor and eight data projectors) have been reported as missing or stolen from all DTI buildings in the last twelve months. No separate record is kept of broken items as these are replaced or repaired as part of the Department's normal maintenance regimes.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997. [39092]

Alan Johnson: Central records indicate that the cost to the Department of engaging external consultants and advisers in each of the following financial years has been as follows:

£ million

	Amount
1999–2000	21
2000–01	36
2001–02	64
2002–03	93
2003–04	112
2004–05	86

I have asked the chief executives of the Executive Agencies to respond directly to the hon. Member.

Further information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Letter from Jeff Llewellyn, dated 13 February 2006:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question regarding how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997.

The total expenditure by NWML on external Consultants and Advisers in each year during the period 1997–1998 to 2004–2005 was:

£

	Amount
1997–98	[1]
1998–99	[1]
1999–2000	[1]
2000–01	64,087
2001–02	80,290
2002–03	71,010
2003–04	68,119
2004–05	53,837

[1] Not available.

Letter from Tim Moss, dated 13 February 2006:

I am responding to your recently tabled Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

Spend on external consultants and advisers by Companies House is as follows:

£

	Amount
2004–05	664,000
2003–04	931,000
2002–03	674,000
2001–02	504,000
2000–01	565,000

Details from earlier years are unavailable due to the disproportionate cost of retrieval.

Letter from Jeanne Spinks, dated 13 February 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) executive agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* independent statutory bodies, organisations and bodies financially sponsored by his Department in each year since May 1997.

The Employment Tribunals Service (ETS) has spent the following amounts on external consultants and advisors in the following financial years:

£

	Amount
2001-02	119,255
2002-03	457,757
2003-04	441,838
2004-05	384,907

Information requested relating to earlier years is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate costs.

Letter from Desmond Flynn, dated 13 February 2006:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (2522/2005) requesting information on money spent on external consultants and advisors since May 1997.

The Insolvency Service Executive Agency of the Department of Trade and Industry spent the following amounts on external consultants and advisors:

£000

	Amount
1997-98	Nil
1998-99	[1]5
1999-2000	Nil
2000-01	Nil
2001-02	[2]125
2002-03	Nil
2003-04	[3]34
2004-05	Nil
2005-06	[4]20

[1] Training strategy.
[2] E-business.
[3] £18,000 race equality impact study and £16,000 help line study.
[4] Publishing to the Intranet.

Letter from Ron Marchant, dated 13 February 2006:

I am responding to this parliamentary question, tabled on 19 December 2005, concerning how much was spent on external consultants and advisers in each year since May 1997.

The Patent Office response is:

£

	Amount
1997-98	39,000
1998-99	8,000
1999-2000	16,000
2000-01	26,000
2001-02	53,000
2002-03	69,000
2003-04	32,000
2004-05	10,400
2005-06[1]	17,500

[1] To date.

Departmental Groups

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff are employed by *(a)* the Human Resources and Change Management Directorate, *(b)* Legal and Enforcement Unit, *(c)* Information and Workplace Directorate and *(d)* the Legal Group in (i) England and (ii) London; and what the (A) salary bill and (B) accommodation costs of each were in 2004-05. [48833]

Alan Johnson: The number of staff in post, taken from DTI's headcount monitoring system, as of 1 February 2006, and the full pay cost (including superannuation and employers NI contributions) for the financial year 2004-05, in the requested directorates are as follows:

	Staff	*Full pay cost 2004-05 (£)*
HR and Change Management Directorate		
England	61	n/a
Of which in London	61	
Legal and Enforcement Unit		
England	110	4,274,793.38
Of which in London	40	
Information and Workplace Directorate		
England	206	8,586,985.56
Of which in London	206	
Legal Group (excluding Legal and Enforcement Unit)		
England	132	8,754,785.66
Of which in London	132	

n/a = Not available.

Pay costs are only available for all UK employees which would disproportionably skew the 'full pay cost figure' for HR and Change Management Directorate due to the large number of employees based in Cardiff. Separated costs for HR in England and London could be achieved only at disproportionate cost.

Specific data on the accommodation costs of separate directorates is not kept by the Department and this information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff work in the *(a)* Employment Tribunals Service, *(b)* Insolvency Service and *(c)* Companies House in (i) England and (ii) London. [48851]

Alan Johnson: The following table shows a breakdown of the number of staff that work in England and London in their respective agencies as at 31 January 2006.

Number

	Permanent	*Casual*
Employment Tribunals Service		
England	669	9
Of which, London	269	6
Insolvency Service		
England	1,883	394
Of which, London	419	116
Companies House		
England	7	0
Of which, London	7	0

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff work in *(a)* the Women

and Equality Group, *(b)* the Women's National Commission, *(c)* the Export Control and Non-proliferation Directorate, *(d)* UK Trade and Investment, *(e)* the Consumer and Competition Policy Directorate, *(f)* Corporate Law and Governance and *(g)* the energy (i) industries and technology, (ii) markets, (iii) strategy and (iv) resources and development units; and what the total salary costs in each case were in the last year for which figures are available. [48896]

Alan Johnson: The number of staff in post, taken from DTI's headcount monitoring system, as of 1 February 2006, and the full pay cost (including, superannuation, and employers NI contributions) for the financial year 2004–05, in the requested directorates are as follows:

	Staff	*Full pay cost 2004–05 (£)*
Women and Equality Group	36	2,652,545.40
Womens National Commission	12	332,000
Export Control and Non-proliferation Directorate	133	5,995,830.91
UK Trade and Investment (DTI posts only)	507	23,226,000
Consumer and Competition Policy Directorate	88	5,271,976.51
Corporate Law and Governance	103	5,969,567.45
Energy		
(i) industries and technology	90	5,718,587.50
(ii) markets unit	60	2,763,915.24
(iii) strategy unit	99	3,750,685.59
(iv) resources and development unit	141	6,356,625.11

Departmental IT Systems

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much his Department has spent on IT systems in each year since 1997; what the purpose of each system is; what the outturn against planned expenditure of each system was; and what the *(a)* planned and *(b)* actual date of completion was of each system. [41323]

Alan Johnson: Due to a change in the Department's accounting system during 2003–04 and the devolved nature of the Department's ICT up until 2006, consistent information as requested cannot be obtained without disproportionate cost.

However, since 1997 the Department's IT services have been provided through a PFI agreement with Fujitsu Services covering desktop services, web infrastructure services, document management and HR systems. The annual running costs for 2004–05 was £32 million.

Departmental Property

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from buildings occupied by his Department in the past 12 months. [43439]

Alan Johnson: Thirty items of small portable equipment which have a value of £100 or above (21 Laptops, one monitor and eight data projectors) have been reported as missing or stolen from all DTI buildings in the last 12 months.

Departmental Recruitment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many job advertisements were placed by his Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in print newspapers and magazines and *(c)* on a recruitment website in each year since 1997; and at what (i) total and (ii) average cost in each case. [50743]

Alan Johnson: When placing job advertisements, my Department uses the most appropriate advertising media; be it national, regional, local, trade magazine or website, depending on the nature of the posts to be filled. Any combination of these may be used in each exercise. Data on the total number of advertisements placed is not collected centrally.

The costs of recruitment advertising are generally met from individual management units from their own delegated budgets and there are no centrally held records of the breakdown of advertising costs.

Departmental Staff

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff work in his Department's *(a)* the Employee Relations Directorate, *(b)* the European World Trade Directorate, *(c)* Finance and Resource Management and *(d)* the Energy Resources and Development Unit; and what the total salary costs in each case were in the last year for which figures are available. [49686]

Alan Johnson: The number of staff in post, taken from DTI's headcount monitoring system, as of 1 February 2006, and the full pay cost (including superannuation and employers NI contributions) for the financial year 2004–05, in the requested directorates are as follows:

	Staff	*Full pay cost 2004–05 (£)*
Employee Relations Directorate	94	4,379,519.96
European World Trade Directorate	79	4,614,225.83
Finance and Resource Management	124	4,741,095.77
Energy Resources and Development Unit	141	6,356,625.11

Departmental Website

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost of maintaining his main departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46308]

Alan Johnson: The support costs for the Department's websites is included in the overall service charge paid monthly under the IT service contract in place since 1 April 1999. There is no separation of website costs in this charge. The number of visits to dti.gov.uk in the last 12 months was as follows:

	Number of visits
February 2005	975,173
March	804,671
April	790,981
May	915,573
June	667,124
July	671,397

	Number of visits
August	795,329
September	786,446
October	1,121,153
November	833,252
December	602,885
January 2006 (2–13)	925,430

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many departmental employees have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46774]

Alan Johnson: The number of staff who have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years are as follows:

	Number of ill-health retirements
2001	11
2002	11
2003	8
2004	6
2005	[1]

[1] Fewer than five, so information not provided on grounds of confidentiality.

Electricity Generation Licences

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what discussions he has had with Ofgem regarding a review of electricity generation licences; [50771]

(2) what discussions he has had with Ofgem regarding a review of SLC 14 and SLC 15 with regards to electricity generation licences; [50772]

(3) if he will place a moratorium on applications for compulsory purchase powers by electricity generating companies until Ofgem has completed its review of SLC 14 and SLC 15; [50773]

(4) when Ofgem will undertake its reviews of *(a)* SLC 14 and SLC 15 and *(b)* the electricity generation licence. [50774]

Malcolm Wicks: I understand that Ofgem are anticipating publishing a consultation document in relation to SLCs 14 and 15 in April. The review will consider whether or not the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority should bring SLCs 14 and 15 into effect in all Electricity Generation Licences in order to allow Electricity Generation Licence holders to seek compulsory purchase powers from my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State.

Ofgem does not have any immediate plans to publish a consultation document in relation to a wider review of the generation licence.

DTI officials are in touch with Ofgem and expect to be fully involved in the review process. There are no plans for a moratorium on applications for compulsory purchase powers in the interim.

Employee Pension Schemes

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will introduce legislation under which large companies, as defined in the Companies Act 1985, would be required to contribute at least 5 per cent. of their profits to employees' pension schemes. [49733]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

We have no plans to do so. The Pensions Commission published their report on 30 November 2005 containing recommendations for reform. This includes a recommendation that employers should make a financial contribution to the pensions of employees who are themselves contributing to a workplace scheme. The Government are now reflecting on the report and are committed to consulting with the public and stakeholders on the key issues as part of the national pensions debate. There is much to be discussed and decided on the detail of the recommendations and our response must meet the five tests we have set out—that is that the overall package of reforms must promote personal responsibility; must be fair, affordable, simple and sustainable.

As far as the specific recommendations are concerned, the Government are ruling nothing in and nothing out. Ministers have asked the Pensions Commission to continue their involvement in the public debate over the next few months.

The Government plan to publish a White Paper in the spring in response to the Pensions Commission's report. The White Paper will set out what legislation will be needed and a planned timetable for reforms.

Energy Review

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment his Department has made of the impact of the projected increases in the population of England upon demand for energy. [50794]

Malcolm Wicks: Work to update UK energy and emissions projections is ongoing and includes a review of all key assumptions on fossil fuel prices and economic growth (including demographic projections on population and the number of households). The latest projections will be published shortly.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for what reason evidence submitted to the Energy Review is not available on a publicly accessible Department of Trade and Industry website. [50806]

Malcolm Wicks: All responses that are not subject to a confidentiality provision will be published on the DTI website together with a summary of the responses.

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the National Assembly for Wales Government's energy strategy of March 2003 is being considered as part of the Energy Review. [50250]

Malcolm Wicks: In bringing forward policy proposals to help the UK meet its medium and long-term energy policy goals, the Review will be working closely with the Devolved Administrations. My officials are meeting their counterparts from the Welsh Assembly Government on a regular basis and will be engaging directly with stakeholders in Wales.

Equitorial Guinea

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total value was of exports to Equitorial Guinea in *(a)* 2000 and *(b)* 2005. [50765]

Ian Pearson: Information on the UK's exports of goods is not yet available for the whole of 2005.

The latest data available is for the period January to November 2005. In 2000, the UK's exports of goods to Equatorial Guinea amounted to £28.1 million. In January to November 2005 the UK's exports of goods amounted to £35.9 million.

Estate Agents

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many estate agent businesses there were in each year since 1997 in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England. [49739]

John Healey: I have asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the national statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 13 February 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your question concerning how many estate agents businesses there were in each year since 1997 in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England. (49739)

The figures for estate agents (SIC 7031) are provided in the attached table.

These figures are based on the criteria used in the National Statistics publication "UK Business: Activity, Size and Location" (formerly known as PA1003: Size Analysis of United Kingdom Businesses), published on the National Statistics website: www.statistics.gov.uk/ukbusiness, and relate to the number of local units operated by businesses registered for VAT as at March 1997 through to 2005.

All figures have been rounded to the nearest five to avoid disclosure.

Analysis shows the count of VAT based local units in England and Leicester UA from 1997 to 2005 for SIC2003.7031, real estate

Data as at March of each year

Local unit count by specified year	*England*	*Leicester UA*
1997	11,530	50
1998	11,275	45
1999	11,720	50
2000	11,770	50
2001	12,955	60
2002	11,785	55
2003	12,550	60
2004	13,725	65
2005	14,725	70

EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the scale of windfall profits made by the energy generating sector as a result of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme; and if he will make a statement. [51175]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to my hon. Friend the member for Morley and Rothwell (Colin Challen) on 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1511W.

Fair Trade

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much and what proportion of his Department's catering budget was spent on Fair Trade produce in the last period for which figures are available. [49971]

Alan Johnson: Sales of fairly traded products on DTI premises including sales in the staff restaurants and coffee bars is estimated at approximately £700,000 which equates to 38 per cent. of total sales.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what his Department's policy is on the procurement of Fair Trade produce for consumption on its premises. [49972]

Alan Johnson: DTI has adopted a policy to use fairly traded produce within its catering operations for a number of years and includes clauses within its service contract specification with its catering service provider.

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what total sum has been received by his Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48489]

Alan Johnson: My Department did not charge for information released under the Freedom of Information Act during 2005.

The Freedom of Information Act allows for public authorities to determine when the cost of processing a request will exceed the appropriate limit, which for central Government is set at £600 and for the wider public sector £450. In this instance the public authority may decide to either approach the applicant to help them refine their request and where possible to bring it under the appropriate limit. Alternatively, public authorities may charge the applicant the cost of processing the request. There is, however, no obligation for Departments to provide information if the cost of processing the request exceeds the appropriate limit.

Public authorities may also charge for disbursements when handling requests where it is deemed appropriate. Further information on the FOI fees regime can be found on the DCA website at http://www.foi.gov.uk/feesguide.htm.

Fuel Poverty

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of how many people fall into fuel poverty for each percentage point increase in energy prices; and if he will make a statement. [50537]

Malcolm Wicks: We estimate that for each percentage point real increase across energy prices a further 40,000 vulnerable households would become fuel poor in England, with a proportionate increase in the devolved administrations. Each percentage point real increase in income reduces the number of vulnerable households in fuel poverty by about 40,000 households.

Work on the best ways to tackle fuel poverty in the light of rising energy prices is being taken forward in the context of the energy review.

Gas Storage Capacity

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to increase the UK's gas storage capacity. [48613]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government's policy is to ensure an effective gas market, to provide the price signals that incentivise commercial gas storage projects. Some 10 new projects are currently being developed, which (if they all proceed to commissioning) would more than double GB's gas storage capacity; the projects are listed in my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's "First Report to Parliament on Security of Gas Supply and Electricity Supply in Great Britain", available at www.dti.gov.uk/energy. The reports of JESS (the Joint Energy Security of Supply Working Group), also on the Department's website, help the market to work effectively by publishing information about the potential contribution of proposed gas infrastructure projects to gas supply. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has announced that the Government are reviewing the onshore consents regime for gas supply infrastructure, with new legislation if appropriate; and that the Government propose to introduce legislation to facilitate the construction of offshore salt caverns for gas storage. In addition, my right hon. Friend is preparing for submission to Parliament a statement of the national need for additional gas supply infrastructure, including storage facilities, to reinforce the existing arrangements for informing planning authorities. The Energy Review, and the Barker Review of the Planning and Land Use System, are also considering related issues.

Harlow North Sustainability Symposia

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the representatives from his Department and public bodies for which his Department is responsible who attended the Harlow North Sustainability Symposia on 6 June. [37446]

Alan Johnson: No representatives from this Department or its public bodies attended the Harlow North Sustainability Symposia.

Home Credit Companies

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what is the status of the consultation on improving the transparency of the process used by home credit companies to obtain written permission to offer a cash loan; and if he will make a statement. [50082]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government announced their intention to consult stakeholders seeking views on ways to improve the transparency of the process whereby home credit companies gain the written permission needed to offer a cash loan on the doorstep through the credit agreement on another product, in "Promoting Financial Inclusion" which was published alongside the pre-Budget report 2004. Subsequently the Office of Fair Trading referred the supply of home credit to the Competition Commission and an inquiry is ongoing. The canvassing of loans is one issue being considered by the Competition Commission as part of this inquiry. The Government will decide what further action may be necessary following the publication of the findings of this inquiry.

Home Information Pack

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government have taken to publicise to consumers the provisions of the Home Information Pack redress scheme. [49573]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* In approving a redress scheme for estate agents under Part 5 of the Housing Act 2004, we expect the Secretary of State to take into account applicants' proposals for raising awareness among consumers and members of the existence, content and scope of the redress scheme.

The Government plan an extensive public information campaign about Home Information Packs before they are implemented in June 2007.

Identity Cards

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1667W, on identity cards, whether his Department has finalised the current best estimates of the cost of using the identity card scheme to support the services which it oversees. [50317]

Alan Johnson: My Department does not at present anticipate a need to use the identity card scheme to support the services which it oversees and so has not made any estimate of the cost of using them. However, we will keep this matter under review.

Internet Services

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received regarding charges for internet services provided by mobile telephone companies. [49646]

Alun Michael: To date, the Department has received no representations as regards to charges for internet services provided by the mobile network operators. Regulation of the mobile telecommunications sector, including pricing, is primarily a matter for the independent regulator Ofcom which has the power to review such matters if there is evidence of a need to do so.

Inward Investment/International Trade

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what schemes his Department employs to encourage *(a)* inward investment and *(b)* international trade; and what the annual cost has been of each. [48922]

Ian Pearson: The major schemes employed by UK Trade and Investment to encourage inward investment

and in trade development activity, with the actual direct programme expenditure for those schemes in 2004–05, are as follows:

	£ million
(a) Inward Investment Schemes	
Grants to Regional Development Agencies	13.2
Promotional Expenditure	9.7
(b) Trade Development Schemes	
Support for exhibitions and seminars	19.5
International Trade Advisors	14.7
Sector Support in Markets	11.5
Promotional Expenditure	9.0
Passport	5.2
Enterprise Scholarship Scheme	2.2
Export Promoters	1.9
Export Market Research Scheme	1.1
Outward Missions	1.0
Overseas Project Fund	0.6
Sales Lead Service	0.4

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what his Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46765]

Alan Johnson: The Department does not centrally organise celebrations for religious or cultural events. All staff are encouraged to observe or celebrate the dates of such events via announcements on a weekly intranet bulletin, and many choose to do so.

Guidance aimed at increasing staff awareness of a wide range of diversity, faith and cultural issues is also available on the Department's intranet.

Launch Investment

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will extend launch investment to British non-prime contractors. [49958]

Alun Michael: British non-prime contractors are not excluded from launch investment which is available to all civil aerospace manufacturers in the UK for the design and development of new civil aerospace projects. However, the provision of launch investment is entirely discretionary. There is no budget for launch investment and each application is considered on its merits against a range of established criteria and against public expenditure constraints.

London Allowance

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans his Department has to change the London allowance of its staff; and if he will make a statement. [49997]

Alan Johnson: There are no London Allowances for staff in DTI. For non-SCS staff there are London and national rates of pay. The London rates of pay are currently £3,500 higher than the equivalent national rates of pay. Under delegated pay bargaining changes to the pay system for non-SCS staff are subject to negotiation with the trade unions. Negotiations for pay in 2006 have not yet begun.

Mineworkers' Compensation Claims

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 289–90W, on mineworkers' compensation claims, which solicitors were retained by the Department for advice relating to mineworkers' compensation claims. [49515]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department has received advice from Nabarro Nathanson and McClure Naismith solicitors relating to the mineworkers' compensation schemes since 2002.

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many parliamentary questions tabled in the last 12 months for answer by him on a named day *(a)* were transferred and *(b)* received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named. [49880]

Alan Johnson: The information requested is as follows:

Named day questions

	Number
Transferred	[1]38
Answered on the day	211
Answered after the day	405

[1] Includes questions transferred before, on and after the answer date.

Departments aim to ensure that Members receive a substantive response to their named day question on the named day and to endeavour to answer ordinary written questions within a working week of being tabled. Unfortunately, this is not always possible but this Department makes every effort to achieve these time scales.

Political Donations

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will introduce legislation requiring company employees to vote on all political donations made by their companies. [49732]

Alun Michael: The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 implemented the recommendation by the Committee on Standards in Public Life that any company intending to make a donation to a political party or organisation should be required to have the prior authority of its shareholders. We do not believe that there is any justification for legislating to require employees to vote on such donations.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will introduce legislation requiring companies to disclose all donations made to *(a)* political organisations and *(b)* parliamentarians. [49734]

Alun Michael: Companies are required to disclose donations to political organisations, including registered political parties, in the directors' report under the reporting requirements of Schedule 7 to the Companies Act 1985. Such disclosure is not required if the aggregate amount of donations and political expenditure did not exceed £200 in the relevant financial year.

A "political donation" for the purposes of this reporting requirement is defined by reference to sections 50 to 52 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. Section 50(6) of that Act provides that anything given or transferred to any officer, member, trustee or agent of a registered party in his capacity as such (and not for his own use or benefit) is to be regarded as given or transferred to the party.

The Company Law Reform Bill and regulations made under it will largely restate the current regime relating to the authorisation and disclosure of political donations by companies, but the Government has announced its intention to raise the £200 threshold for disclosure to £2,000.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with banks which do not have agreements with Post Office Ltd. on offering access to their current account customers through the Post Office branch network. [48719]

Barry Gardiner: None. Access to current accounts at post offices is a commercial matter between the Post office and individual banks.

Post Offices

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the average number of transactions in the last three years of trading at each *(a)* rural and *(b)* urban post office which has closed in each of the last five years; and what the average distance is that customers travel to the nearest post office following such closures. [50622]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. (POL). The chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Public Bodies

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff the *(a)* Business and Innovation Groups, *(b)* British National Space Centre and *(c)* Business Relations and Support Unit had in the last year for which figures are available; how much each spent on (i) salaries and (ii) accommodation in that year; and whether these costs are identifiable or non-identifiable for the purpose of public expenditure statistical analysis. [50032]

Alan Johnson: The number of staff in post, taken from DTIs headcount monitoring system, as of 1 April 2005, and the full pay cost (including superannuation and employers NI contributions) for the financial year 2004–05, in the requested directorates are as follows:

	Staff	*Full pay cost 2004–05 (£)*
Business and Innovation Groups	718	43,385,531.90
British National Space Centre	30	1,376,384.95
Business Relations and Support Unit	373	17,408,241.79

Specific data on the accommodation costs of separate directorates is not kept by the Department and this information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

These costs are non-identifiable for the purpose of public expenditure statistical analysis.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff the *(a)* Regions Directorate, *(b)* Strategy Communications Unit and *(c)* Strategic Policy Analysis Unit of his Department had in the last year for which figures are available; how much each spent on (i) salaries and (ii) accommodation in that year for which figures are available; and whether these costs are identifiable or non-identifiable for the purpose of public expenditure statistical analysis. [50033]

Alan Johnson: The number of staff in post, taken from DTI's headcount monitoring system, as of 1 April 2005, and the full pay cost (including superannuation and employers NI contributions) for the financial year 2004–05, in the requested directorates are as follows:

	Staff	*Full pay cost 2004–05 (£)*
Regions Directorate	63	2,918,048.22
Strategy Communications Unit	57	n/a
Strategy Policy Analysis Unit	54	n/a

n/a = Not available.

Pay costs are only available as a group total for Strategy Communications Unit and Strategy Policy Analysis Unit combined. Due to the distribution of cost centres the specific information requested could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Specific data on the accommodation costs of separate directorates is not kept by the Department and this information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

These costs are non-identifiable for the purpose of public expenditure statistical analysis.

Queen's Awards

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how judges are selected and appointed for the Queen's Awards; and who the judges will be for the Queen's Awards in 2006. [47413]

Alan Johnson: The business Awards are made by the Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister. The most senior Queen's Award selection committee is the Prime Minister's Advisory Committee, chaired by the Cabinet Secretary. The Advisory Committee is the only committee where the entire membership is made public, and is served by three separate Panels of Judges, one for each business Award category. Each Panel is chaired by a Permanent Secretary or equivalent position: Department of Trade & Industry (Innovation), Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Sustainable Development), and the chief executive of UK Trade & Investment (International Trade).

The Queen's Awards for Enterprise Promotion (an Award to individuals) are made by the Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister, who is advised by an Enterprise Promotion Assessment Committee (EPAC). EPAC is chaired by the director-general of Business Group, Department of Trade & Industry, and includes representatives of Government Departments and Agencies including the Small Business Service, the Department for Education and Skills, DTI, as well as the Small Business Council.

Other than Government appointments, Queen's Award panel members are chosen on an ex-officio basis (i.e. it goes to a Chairman, president, or chief executive of a chosen organisation identified as a relevant body for a particular Award category. The PM's Advisory Committee has two independent members. Membership of junior panels is deliberately excluded from the public domain to avoid direct lobbying of panel members.

Membership of the Prime Minister's Advisory Committee

	Organisation
Cabinet Secretary	Head of the Home Civil Service (Chairman)
Permanent Secretary	Department of Trade & Industry
Permanent Secretary	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Chief Executive	UK Trade & Investment
President	Confederation of British Industry
Chairman	International Financial Services London
Chairman	The Engineering Council UK
General Secretary	Trades Union Congress
Independent Member	—
Independent Member	—

Regional Development Agencies

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 7 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 45W, on regional development agencies, when he will write with the relevant information. [47553]

Alun Michael: I replied to the hon. Member on 4 February 2006. Copies of the letter and accompanying tables have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry where each Regional Development Agency office is located; and how much *(a)* inward investment and *(b)* trade each brought to its region in the last period for which figures are available. [49155]

Alun Michael: The location of each Regional Development Agency (RDA) and the number of inward investment successes and associated employment that each secured in 2004–05 is detailed in the following table:

RDA	*Location (Head Office)*	*2004–05 Investments*	*New jobs*	*Safeguarded jobs*
Advantage West Midlands	Birmingham	34	2,645	461
East of England Development Agency[1]	Histon	33	994	819
East Midlands Development Agency	Nottingham	37	1,238	1,371
London Development Agency[2]	London	77	1,882	359
North West Regional Development Agency	Warrington	54	3214	2,389
ONE North East	Newcastle	44	1,912	3,999
South East England Development Agency	Guildford	57	2,059	1,056
South West of England Regional Development Agency	Exeter	12	1,053	847
Yorkshire Forward	Leeds	35	2,107	569

[1] Inward Investment co-ordinated by East of England International based in Cambridge
[2] Inward Investment co-ordinated by Think London also based in London

UK Trade and Investment, not the RDAs, is tasked with developing international trade in the English regions, where it operates as the "international trades arm" for RDAs.

Renewable Power

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Government supports co-firing biomass with coal in power stations as a method of reducing carbon dioxide emissions. [50780]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government identified co-firing of 5–10 per cent. biomass with coal as an option for reducing carbon dioxide emissions from coal-fired generation in its Carbon Abatement Technology Strategy published in June 2005.

Co-firing of biomass is supported through the Renewables Obligation and contributes to the Government's renewable electricity and climate change targets.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what arrangements are in place to ensure joined-up cross-departmental working with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on incentives to use bio-mass for electricity generation. [50782]

Malcolm Wicks: Cross-departmental working on sustainable energy is co-ordinated through the Sustainable Energy Policy Network.

In the biomass area, officials from DTI and Defra work closely together—particular issues on which we have worked together include the Energy White Paper, assessment of Bioenergy Capital Grants Scheme proposals, the Biomass Task Force, the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution's Biomass Report, the EU Biomass Action Plan, and the Renewables Obligation Review.

Smaller Companies

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures the Department has taken to make it easier for smaller companies to win orders from Government Departments. [51487]

Alun Michael: Together with the Office of Government Commerce, and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) the Department has taken forward the recommendations of the Better Regulation Task Force/Small Business Council Report 'Government: Supporter and Customer?' (May 2003). A progress report was issued in December 2005[1]. Highlights include:

delivery of training to help procurers in the public sector across the English regions to understand the benefits of procurement from small businesses, social enterprises and the voluntary and community sector;

working with the regional development agencies to deliver training across all the English regions to small businesses and social enterprises;

awarding the contract to develop a national opportunities portal to be launched in spring 2006 to improve the visibility of public procurement opportunities to simplify the process for bidders and to enable public sector buyers to identify potential suppliers;

implementing the mandatory requirement that at least 2.5 per cent. of public sector external research will be with small businesses;

production of guidance on effective supply chain management for procurers and work with key suppliers to Government to make their sub contracting opportunities more visible to smaller companies;

the launch of the simplified national pre-qualification questionnaire which will reduce the time businesses have to spend providing information when bidding for Government contracts;

an investigation of the public sector's use of third party accreditation services; publication of research which demonstrates that removing barriers to the participation by small businesses in the public procurement market helps achieve efficiency[2].

[1] http://www.supplyinggovernment.gov.uk/pdf/SBS_progress_rep_Dec_05.pdf.

[2] http://www.sbs.gov.uk/SBS_Gov_files/services/sme-procurement-study.pdf.

Strategic Nuclear Assets and Capabilities

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what he defines as the United Kingdom's strategic nuclear assets and capabilities. [50327]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* We have carried out no specific exercise covering civil nuclear power to define which assets and capabilities could be defined by the terms "strategic" or "non-strategic". However, consistent with our policy of Keeping the Nuclear Option Open, we have sought to maintain those skills, facilities and capabilities that might be required in the future.

Task Forces

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list each task force set up by his Department since 1997; who the members of each task force are; and with which businesses each non-departmental member is affiliated. [49729]

Alan Johnson: My Department has had involvement in a large number of task forces since 1997 and full details of the various business affiliates could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

UK Exports

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value was of United Kingdom exports to Liechtenstein in 2005. [49298]

Ian Pearson: Information on the UK's exports of goods is not yet available for the whole of 2005. The latest data available is for the period January to November 2005. In this period, the UK's exports of goods to Liechtenstein amounted to £3.4 million.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value was of UK exports to North Korea in *(a)* 1998 and *(b)* 2005. [49299]

Ian Pearson: Information on the UK's exports of goods is not yet available for the whole of 2005. The latest data available is for the period January to November 2005.

In 1998, the UK's exports of goods to North Korea amounted to £10.8 million. In January to November 2005 the UK's exports of goods amounted to £0.3 million.

UK Trade and Investment

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the running cost was of each UK Trade and Investment office in the last period for which figures are available; and how much *(a)* inward investment each attracted and *(b)* trade each produced for UK businesses in that period. [48923]

Ian Pearson: Running costs are not separately broken down for each of UK Trade and Investment regional and overseas offices, so figures are not available in the form requested. In the financial year 2004–05, £14.7 million was paid to support trade development work by the organisation's regional network, and some £3 million was made available by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for the salary costs of Government office civil servants providing administrative support. UK Trade and Investment paid £13.2 million through the DTI single pot for the provision of inward investment services by the regional development agencies.

UK Trade and Investment's resource accounts for 2004–05 (Stationery Office HC785: available from the Libraries of the House) show that total UK Trade and Investment resource deployed overseas through the Foreign and Commonwealth office was £118 million on trade and £20 million on inward investment work.

The remainder of UK Trade and Investment's resource is deployed for operations housed in the headquarters buildings in London and Glasgow.

UK Trade and Investment does not record at local, regional or national level, information about the monetary value of trade or inward investment generated by its individual offices. In practice, individual companies may deal with regional, head office and overseas arms of the organisation. In addition, an individual company's performance in international

trade, or its investment location decisions, are influenced by many external factors beyond UK Trade and Investment's control, including support services from other sources, as well as general economic factors.

Universal Banking Services

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with banks and building societies who signed the agreement with the Government on the provision of universal banking services on the future of those services. [48675]

Barry Gardiner: None. Discussions about the future of the universal banking services are commercial matters for Post Office Limited and the individual banks.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the banks and building societies which signed the agreement with the Government on the provision of universal banking services. [48762]

Barry Gardiner: The following financial institutions signed up to the concept of universal banking: Abbey National Group, Alliance and Leicester, Bank of Ireland, Barclays, Co-operative Bank, First Trust, Halifax—Bank of Scotland, HSBC, Lloyds-TSB, National Australia Group, Nationwide Building Society, Northern Rock, Royal Bank of Scotland Group.

Vandalism

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list the acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of his Department's buildings in the last 12 months. [49498]

Alan Johnson: There have been no acts of vandalism on DTI buildings in the last twelve months.

Voice Stress Software

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions his Department has had in the last two years on the use of voice stress software in the assessment of claims for compensation under schemes for which his Department is responsible; and if he will make a statement. [49992]

Malcolm Wicks: In view of the increasing use of voice stress software in the insurance industry, discussions involving the Department's contractors took place in October 2004. The decision was taken not to proceed with the use of such technology and no further discussions have taken place.

WEEE Directive

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what date the draft regulations in respect of the waste electronic and electrical equipment directive will be published; and for what reason publication has not yet taken place. [50811]

Malcolm Wicks: As I announced on 14 December 2005, we are currently reviewing progress on implementation of the WEEE directive. We expect to be able to publish new draft regulation for public consultation in the spring once the review has concluded.

Working Time Legislation

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will list those categories of personnel exempted from European working time legislation as not being classified as workers. [50539]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following categories of people are not regarded as "workers" under the European Working Time Directive (and the Working Time Regulations 1998 which implement the directive)—holders of political and elected office, voluntary workers and the self-employed. Domestic servants are also expressly excluded.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Asbestos

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to ensure that consultees are able to respond fully to *(a)* the consultation on the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 and *(b)* the Health and Safety Executive's newly commissioned research; and what the time scales are for the consultations. [47013]

Mrs. McGuire: The consultation on proposed amendments to the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 was widely publicised and the Consultative Document was distributed to the Health and Safety Executive's list of stakeholders and partners at the start of the consultation period. The document was available on the Health and Safety Executive's website, and responses were accepted by email. I am informed by HSC that key stakeholders have submitted their views.

When agreeing to the publication of the Consultative Document the HSC questioned whether the research into work with textured decorative coatings reflected the way this work is actually carried out. In response to this the Health and Safety Executive has arranged for the work to be peer reviewed and commissioned a piece of further research. The Health and Safety Executive will announce the results of this research when these become available. They will discuss this with stakeholders or their representatives as part of the consultation analysis. This, with the original responses to the consultation, will inform any recommendations the Health and Safety Executive makes to the Health and Safety Commission for new regulations.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the timescale for removing asbestos from buildings; what assessment he has made of where in the country is worst affected by asbestos; what penalties are in place for those who disregard the new asbestos regulations; and where the safe disposal of asbestos will take place. [48680]

Mrs. McGuire: The information requested is as follows:

(a) A Risk Assessment provided as Annex D(A) of the Consultative Document on "Proposals for Revised Asbestos Regulations and an approved Code of Practice" (CD205) contains an estimate that about one third of installed asbestos has already been removed and the remaining asbestos material would be removed over a 50-year period. This is an overall estimate and the amount removed will vary for particular products.

(b) Asbestos is present in buildings widespread throughout Great Britain. Figures are not available on the worst affected areas.

(c) The penalties for breach of the proposed new asbestos regulations are as follows:

on summary conviction, a fine not exceeding the prescribed sum, currently £5,000; or

on conviction on indictment an unlimited fine.

In the case of licensing offences the penalty may be imprisonment for up to two years.

There is also the possibility of prosecution under the Health and Safety at Work Act and the penalties are as follows:

on summary conviction, a maximum fine of £20,000, or

on conviction on indictment and an unlimited fine.

For breach of an improvement or prohibition notice, similar penalties are available with the addition of imprisonment for up to six months on summary conviction or two years on conviction on indictment.

(d) Asbestos waste goes to landfill. Regulation 16 of the 2004 Landfill Regulations sets out the criteria for land filling of asbestos waste and construction materials containing asbestos.

Benefit Fraud

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the savings from detected benefit fraud for *(a)* his Department and *(b)* local authorities were in each of the last six years. [42548]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available for local authorities as data is not collated centrally.

The available information for DWP is in the table.

Monetary Value Adjustments (MVA)[1] by DWP

	MVA (£)
1999–2000	27,984,245
2000–01	22,109,627
2001–02	16,382,983
2002–03	16,057,813
2003–04	14,588,905
2004–05	10,722,213

[1] Previously Weekly Benefit Savings.

Note:
The MVA scheme was introduced from 1 April 1999. MVA is the difference between the weekly amount of benefit that would have been paid or would have continued to be paid, and the benefit paid following the decision maker's decision on the information gathered. It includes both increases and decreases.

Source:
Fraud Information by Sector (FIBS) and General Matching Service (QMS).

The overall figures for MVA have reduced each year. This is due to a reduction in the amount of Instrument of Payment (IOP) fraud detected over this period. Non IOP related MVA has remained stable at around £6 million. Detected IOP frauds have fallen because of the Department's success in reducing the prevalence of this type of fraud through detection and, more recently, changes to the methods of payment that prevent this type of fraud. As at April 2005, 98 per cent. of pensioners and 95 per cent. of working age customers were paid by Direct Payment.

The MVA figures do not relate to the published fraud and error overpayment figures used for the PSA target. This is because the published fraud and error figures use a sampling system to estimate how much has been overpaid or underpaid in fraud and error. This includes overpayment that has not been uncovered and identified but is estimated to exist. MVAs only relate to adjustments made to a claim after a fraud investigation and so will not include any figures for error, or any estimates of fraud that has not been uncovered and investigated.

Benefit Payments

Mr. McFall: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will make a statement on delays in payment of new benefit claims in *(a)* West Dumbartonshire and *(b)* the UK for (i) jobseeker's allowance, (ii) income support and (iii) incapacity benefit in the last 12 months; [46638]

(2) what his Department is doing to reduce the backlog of claimants waiting for their correct entitlement of *(a)* jobseeker's allowance, *(b)* income support and *(c)* incapacity benefit. [46639]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your questions asking if he will make a statement on delays in the payment of new benefit claims in West Dumbartonshire, and the UK, for Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support and Incapacity Benefit in the last 12 months; and what his department is doing to reduce the backlog of claimants waiting for a decision on their claim for these benefits. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Claims for Income Support and Incapacity Benefit made in Great Britain were within our profile clearance times of 12 and 19 days respectively in December 2005. They were also within profile for the year to December 2005. Claims processed at the Clydebank Combined Social Security Office (CSSO) were also within these profiles.

The time taken to clear a Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claim (the Actual Average Clearance Time) increased between April and November 2005. In Clydebank CSSO, JSA clearance times were consistently within the planning assumption up until September resulting in a year to date figure that is also within the planning assumption.

A JSA taskforce has been created to address fluctuating clearance times and set in place immediate recovery measures, whilst longer term and more fundamental issues are also being taken forward. More immediate measures include the more effective distribution of workloads amongst the Contact Centre network to improve performance.

Building on the taskforce work, the Jobcentre Plus Chief Operating Officer will shortly launch a National Action Plan. The Action Plan is built around a mandatory series of "health checks", taking local managers through the whole end to end process, identifying key risk elements and, where a part of the process fails the health check, directing managers to appropriate good practice products and tool-kits.

This will be strengthened by regular senior management attention particularly in this area. Where performance is below expectation, Districts and Contact Centres will be required to draw up their own individual recovery plans.

I hope this is helpful.

Benefit Statistics

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the Kettering constituency received *(a)* widow's benefit, *(b)* housing benefit, *(c)* council tax benefit and *(d)* income support in each year since 1997. [22605]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer on 28 October 2005]:* The available information is in the tables.

Bereavement benefit and widows benefit recipients in the Kettering parliamentary constituency: May 2000–2005

As at August	Bereavement benefit	Widows benefit
2000	n/a	400
2001	n/a	400
2002	100	300
2003	100	300
2004	100	200
2005	100	200

n/a = Not applicable.

Notes:

1. Bereavement benefit replaced widows benefit for new claims in April 2001.
2. Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
3. Breakdown by parliamentary constituency is not available prior to May 2000.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study.

Housing benefit and council tax benefit caseloads in Kettering borough council: May 1997 to May 2005

As at August	Housing benefit	Council tax benefit
1997	4,400	6,100
1998	4,300	5,900
1999	4,000	5,500
2000	3,400	4,800
2001	4,000	5,400
2002	3,500	4,800
2003	3,800	5,100
2004	3,800	5,400
2005	3,900	5,500

Notes:

1. Figures for housing benefit and council tax benefit are not available for parliamentary constituencies.
2. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
3. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.
4. Council tax benefit totals exclude any Second Adult Rebate cases.
5. Housing benefit figures exclude any Extended Payment cases.

Source:

Housing benefit and council tax benefit Management Information System. Quarterly 100 per cent. caseload stock-count taken between August 1997 and August 2005.

Income support claimants in the Kettering parliamentary constituency: May 1997 to May 2005

As at August	Claimants
1997	2,400
1998	2,200
1999	2,400
2000	2,400
2001	2,400
2002	2,400
2003	2,300
2004	2,200
2005	2,100

Notes:

1. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.
2. For comparison purposes, the income support figures do not include pensioners. Income support has not been payable to pensioners since October 2003.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate, combination of Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study and 5 per cent. sample data.

Benefits

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what arrangements are made for assessing over time the *(a)* quality of advice and *(b)* delivery to claimants of benefit systems adopted by the Department. [45199]

Margaret Hodge: The Department monitors the quality and effectiveness of service delivery to customers through a set of targets and key management indicators. Our mystery shopping monitoring programme measures the speed, accuracy and quality of the advice given and other targets measure the efficiency and accuracy of six key processes against a set of agreed standards. Together they provide an overall assessment of performance at a local, regional or national level.

We also regularly analyse customer complaints data about the advice and information we provide to enable us to target areas for improvement; and additionally the Department's disability and carers service works with voluntary sector organisations to enable them to provide consistent and accurate information about benefits available to disabled people.

Child Poverty

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether progress towards the target of halving child poverty by 2010 will be measured *(a)* before and *(b)* after taking into account housing costs. [43819]

Margaret Hodge: The document 'Measuring child poverty' published in December 2003 outlines the Government's measure of UK child poverty for the long term. This measure forms the basis for the Public Service Agreement (PSA) target set in the 2004 spending review to halve the number of children in relative low-income households between 1998–99 and 2010–11, on the way to eradicating child poverty by 2020.

The new measure will consist of three tiers; absolute low income, relative low income and material deprivation and low income combined. In 2006, we are planning to set the material deprivation and relative low income measures.

Across all three tiers income is equivalised, that is, adjusted to take into account variations in both size and composition of the household, and aiming to match current European conventions to make international comparisons easier, as we aim to be among the best in Europe. The modified Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) equalisation scale will be used; this scale is used with income on a before housing costs basis.

The Government will continue to monitor progress on an after housing costs basis in order to monitor the impact of high housing costs on child poverty. Meanwhile the new material deprivation tier contains a range of items which capture housing deprivation including: the number of bedrooms for children, heating adequacy, and keeping the home in a decent state of decoration.

Housing is also an important part of the Government's overall strategy on poverty and social exclusion. Our annual opportunity for all report monitors the proportion of children in non-decent homes, and includes an indicator that monitors the proportion of families with children in temporary accommodation.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress has been made to date in meeting the Government's child poverty targets *(a)* before and *(b)* after taking into account housing costs. [43823]

Margaret Hodge: The Prime Minister made a pledge in March 1999 to eradicate child poverty within 20 years. Since then the Government have succeeded in arresting and reversing the previous trend in rising child poverty.

The most recent data shows that between 1998–99 and 2003–04 the number of children in relative low-income households fell from 3.1 million to 2.6 million on a before housing cost basis (BHC) and from 4.1 million to 3.5 million on an after housing cost basis (AHC).

The Government are broadly on track to meet their target, set in the 2002 spending review, to reduce the number of children in low-income households by at least a quarter by 2004–05, as a contribution towards the broader target of halving child poverty by 2010 and eradicating it by 2020.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the Government's plans to end child poverty. [47106]

Margaret Hodge: The seventh annual 'Opportunity for all' report (Cm 6673) sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and reports progress against a range of indicators.

The Government's target, set in the 2002 spending review, is to reduce the number of children in low-income households by at least a quarter by 2004–05, as a contribution towards the broader target of halving child poverty by 2010 and eradicating it by 2020.

The technical note setting out details of how the child poverty PSA target announced in the 2004 spending review will be measured has now been published on the DWP and HM Treasury websites. We have made a clear commitment to set a target on the new material deprivation measure when data on material deprivation becomes available. All of these targets will need to be met for us to have fully realised our ambition to halve child poverty by 2010.

We will continue to report progress on the target to decrease the number of children living in relative low income by 2004–05. Final data for this target will be published later this year.

As set out in Households Below Average Income (HBAI), between 1998–99 and 2003–04 (the latest data available) the number of children living in relative low-income households fell by 500,000 on a before housing costs basis and by 600,000 on an after housing costs basis.

The Government are broadly on track to meet its 2004–05 target. Final data for the 2004–05 target will be available in March 2006.

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what proportion of children were living in families which received below 60 per cent. of median household income in *(a)* England, *(b)* each English region, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* Wales in 2004–05. [49189]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer on 6 February 2006]:* The information requested is in the tables.

Proportion of children living in households with less than 60 per cent. of contemporary median household income 2001–02 to 2003–04

	Percentage
Before housing costs	
England	20
of which:	
North East	27
North West and Merseyside	23
Yorkshire and Humberside	24
East Midlands	22
West Midlands	24
Eastern	14
London	23
South East	13
South West	17
Wales	23
Scotland	23
After housing costs	
England	29
of which:	
North East	32
North West and Merseyside	30
Yorkshire and Humberside	30
East Midlands	27
West Midlands	31
Eastern	22
London	38
South East	21
South West	27
Wales	29
Scotland	27

Source:
Family Resources Survey

Number of children living in households with less than 60 per cent. of contemporary median household income—2001-02 to 2003-04

	Million
	Number
Before housing costs	
England	2.2
of which	
North East	0.1
North West and Merseyside	0.4
Yorkshire and Humberside	0.3
East Midlands	0.2
West Midlands	0.3
Eastern	0.2
London	0.4
South East	0.2
South West	0.2
Wales	0.1
Scotland	0.2
After housing costs	
England	3.1
of which	
North East	0.2
North West and Merseyside	0.5
Yorkshire and Humberside	0.3
East Midlands	0.3
West Midlands	0.4
Eastern	0.3
London	0.6
South East	0.4
South West	0.3
Wales	0.2
Scotland	0.3

Source
Family Resources Survey

Child Support Agency

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Child Support Agency new scheme cases were stockpiled in the year to March 2003; how many of these cases are still waiting to be processed; what proportion of these cases originated from *(a)* parents with care on income support or income-related jobseeker's allowance and *(b)* parents with care not on income support or income-related jobseeker's allowance; how many are in (i) the pre-application stage, (ii) the application stage, (iii) the information-gathering stage and (iv) the calculation and collection set-up stage prior to first payment being received; and what average time these stockpiled cases have spent at each stage. [19631]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive, as Stephen Geraghty is on leave I am replying on his behalf.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many new scheme cases were stockpiled in the year to March 2003; how many of these cases are still waiting to be processed; what proportion of these cases originated with concern *(a)* parents with care on income support or income-related job seeker's allowance and *(b)* parents with care not on income support or income related job seeker's allowance; how many are in (i) the pre application stage (ii) the application stage (iii) the information gathering stage and (iv) the calculation and collection set-up stage prior to first payment being received; and what the average time is these stockpiled cases have spent at each stage.

5,500 new scheme applications had a date for first contact with the Agency between 1st January and 2nd March 2003. Of these, 1000 of were still waiting to be cleared at the end of September 2005, where an application is defined as cleared if it:

has had a calculation and a payment arrangement set up;

has been closed;

is identified as having had a good cause decision accepted;

is identified as being subject to a reduced benefit decision;

is identified as a change of circumstances to an existing case, as opposed to a new application.

In 25 per cent. of these 5,500 cases, the parent with care had applied for income support or income-related jobseekers allowance and had been referred to the Agency by Jobcentre Plus, with the remaining 75 per cent. having applied direct to the Agency in a private capacity.

The table below details the current status of the 1,000 cases that were waiting to be cleared—as at September 2005.

Status of uncleared CSA new scheme applications received between 1 January and 2 March 2005 as at end September 2005

Application Stage	*Number of cases*
1st contact to pre-application clearance	Less than 50
Awaiting application clearance	500
Awaiting post calculation clearance	500

There were an additional 500 cases that had cleared the application process, but were still awaiting the first payment.

The average time the 5,500 cases had spent in each stage of the application process, and also the subsequent first payment stage, can be split between cases that had cleared that particular stage and those that were still in that stage. These figures are detailed in the table below:

Average time spent in particular stages of the application process by cases received between 1 January and 2 March 2005 as at end September 2005

	Average number of days spent in particular stages	
Application stage	*Cases that have cleared this stage*	*Cases that have not cleared this stage*
1st contact to pre-application clearance	95	979
Application intake to application clearance	193	775
Post calculation intake to post calculation clearance	51	634
Post calculation clearance to first payment	91	540

Notes to tables:
1. The pre-application stage is where a potential application is screened to establish whether it is valid. Pre-application clearance is where the case either progresses to the application stage, a reduced benefit decision (RBD) is applied, good cause is accepted, or the case is closed.
2. A case enters application stage where it has been accepted as valid at the pre-application stage. An application clearance occurs when a calculation is carried out, a RBD is subsequently applied, good cause is subsequently accepted or the case is subsequently closed.
3. A case enters post calculation stage where clearance at the application stage results in a calculation being carried out. Post calculation clearance is where a collection schedule is set up, an MD arrangement is set up immediately after calculation, a RBD is subsequently applied, good cause is subsequently accepted, the case is subsequently closed, or the calculation is classified as being a nil liability meaning that no further action is required.

4 The first payment stage is the time between a collection schedule being set up and a first payment being made to the PWC, or a Maintenance Direct arrangement being put in place. Additionally, there are a small number of cases where payment was made to the PWC prior to a schedule or Maintenance Direct arrangement being agreed (i.e. voluntary payments), which have been excluded from the analysis aforementioned.

5 There are 161,000 cases received via the Jobcentre Plus interface for which we do not currently have sufficient management information to decide how many of them would or would not fall within the scope of this analysis.

6 Figures are rounded to either the nearest day or hundred cases.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the total pensions liability for senior civil servants at the Child Support Agency; and if he will make a statement. [30014]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the total pensions liability for senior civil servants at the Child Support Agency, and if he will make a statement.

The latest estimate of the total pensions liability for Department for Work and Pensions senior civil servants working in the Child Support Agency, was calculated at 31 March 2005, to be

	£
Total Pension	165,239
Total Lump Sum	428,634
Total Cash Equivalent Transfer Value	2,297,143

I hope you find this response helpful.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many court cases have been commenced by the Child Support Agency in respect of non-payment of assessed maintenance by non-resident parents in Scotland in each of the last five years, broken down by parliamentary constituency; [39539]

(2) how many cases are under consideration for court action by the Child Support Agency for non-payment of assessed maintenance by non-resident parents in Scotland, broken down by parliamentary constituency; [39540]

(3) how many cases of non-payment of maintenance by non-resident parents in Scotland have been reported by the Child Support Agency for prosecution in each of the last five years, broken down by parliamentary constituency; [39541]

(4) how many of the cases of non-payment of maintenance reported by the Child Support Agency in Scotland for possible prosecution in each of the last five years have resulted in proceedings being commenced; [39542]

(5) for what reasons proceedings have been dropped in cases reported by the Child Support Agency for prosecution due to non-payment of maintenance by non-resident parents in Scotland in which no prosecution has been commenced in each of the last five years; [39543]

(6) what the average penalty imposed against non-resident parents for non-payment of assessed child maintenance where prosecutions have been commenced after report by the Child Support Agency in Scotland was in each of the last five years, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [39544]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is matter for the Chief Executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Hilary Reynolds:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions about enforcement activity in the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive, as he is currently on leave I am responding on his behalf.

I will respond to each question sequentially.

(1) You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many court cases have been commenced? v the Child Support Agency in respect of non-payment of assessed maintenance by non-resident parents in Scotland in each of the last five years broken down by parliamentary constituency [39539].

It is not possible to provide historical information according to Parliamentary constituency as this could only be provided at a disproportionate cost. The information provided covers all cases held which fall within Scottish legal jurisdiction, that is where the non-resident parent is domiciled in Scotland irrespective of where the parent with care is resident within Great Britain.

The commencement of civil debt recovery action requires that a liability order is obtained from the Magistrates courts in England and Wales or the Sheriff courts in Scotland. The liability order is legal recognition that the debt exists and enables the Secretary of State to use enforcement measures to recover the debt.

The table below shows the number of Liability Order applications submitted to the Sheriff courts in Scotland during the last five years.

	Liability Order applications
2000-01	116
2001-02	110
2002-03	282
2003-04	459
2004-05	731
2005 to November 2005	827
Total	2,525

(2) You asked how many cases are under consideration for court action by the Child Support Agency for non-payment of assessed maintenance by non-resident parents in Scotland broken down by parliamentary constituency [39540].

As at 22 December 2005 there were 15 cases under consideration for liability orders through the Scottish legal system. The following table breaks the information down by Scottish Parliamentary constituency area and is based on the domiciliary address of the non-resident parent resident in Scotland.

Scottish parliamentary constituency area	Cases under consideration for court action for non-payment of assessed maintenance
Edinburgh, South	1
Central Ayrshire	1
North Ayrshire and Arran	3
Ochill and South Perthshire	2
Edinburgh, East	1
West Dumbartonshire	1
Paisley and Renfrewshire, South	1
Edinburgh, North and Leith	1
Falkirk	2
Perth and North Perthshire	1
Glasgow, East	1
Total	15

Note

The reason for the low volume of cases awaiting action is due to there being an internal target in place to have any case progressed within 2 days of receipt by the Enforcement Directorate to ensure swift commencement of legal proceedings.

(3) You asked how many cases of non-payment of maintenance by non-resident parents in Scotland have been reported by the Child Support Agency for prosecution in each of the last five years broken down by parliamentary constituency [39541].

There is no difference in the total number of cases reported for committal or disqualification from holding or obtaining a driving licence, and the total number commenced for which figures are shown in my response to the next question.

(4) You asked how many of the cases of non-payment of maintenance reported by the Child Support Agency in Scotland for possible prosecution in each of the last five years have resulted in proceedings being commenced [39542].

Detailed below are the number of non-resident parents who have been issued with a citation to attend an initial hearing date in the Sheriff Courts in Scotland for commitment to prison or disqualification from holding or obtaining a driving licence.

Non-resident parents referred to solicitors for committal/disqualification from holding or obtaining a driving licence

	Number of non-resident parents cited to attend committal hearings in Scotland
September 2003 to March 2004	1
2002-05	19
2005 to November 2005	74
Total	94

(5) You asked for what reasons proceedings have been dropped in cases reported by the Child Support Agency for prosecution due to non-payment of maintenance by non-resident parents in Scotland in which no prosecution has been commenced in each of the last five years [39543].

Cases withdrawn or dismissed from court will be at the Agency's request either as a result of the debtor entering into an agreement to pay or settling his debt in full or as a result of the non-resident parent providing information which allows the Agency to reassess his liability which wipes out his arrears.

(6) You asked what the average penalty imposed against non-resident parents for non-payment of assessed child maintenance where prosecutions have been commenced after report by the Child Support Agency in Scotland was in each of the last five years broken down by Parliamentary constituency [39544].

In the period to the end of November 2005 there has been one suspended prison sentence, two suspended driving licence withdrawals and two suspended driving licence sentences. The information is broken down by Parliamentary constituency in the table below.

Scottish parliamentary constituency area	Sentences passed	Year
Airdrie and Shotts	1 driving licence withdrawn for 180 days	2004-05
Glasgow, South	1 suspended driving licence withdrawal (180 days)	April to November 2005
Livingston	1 suspended committal sentence (21 days)	April to November 2005
Paisley and Renfrewshire, South	1 driving licence withdrawn for180 days	April to November 2005
Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk	1 suspended driving licence withdrawal (91 days)	April to November 2005
Total	5	

I hope this response is helpful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the compliance rate for deduction of earnings orders issued by the Child Support Agency were in each reporting period since 1 January 2000; and if he will make a statement. [41370]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is the matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency, the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the compliance rate for deduction of earnings orders issued by the Child support Agency were in each reporting period since 1st January 2000; and if he will make a statement.

The information requested can be found in the annex.

To place these figures into context, it should be noted that, whilst the general trend in the compliance rate for deduction from earnings orders has been negative, the rate of compliance as a whole has been stable since April 2004, with the Agency obtaining some form of payment from 70 per cent. of cases in which maintenance was due via the collection service, with the remainder of non resident parents not taking any financial responsibility for their children.

I hope you find this helpful.

Quarterly compliance rate for deduction of earnings orders, February 2000 to August 2005

	Percentage
February 2000	80
May 2000	82
August 2000	82
November 2000	83
February 2001	83
May 2001	84
August 2001	84
November 2001	85
February 2002	83
May 2002	86
August 2002	86
November 2002	86
February 2003	87
May 2003	—
August 2003	—
November 2003	—
February 2004	—
May 2004	80
August 2004	78

Quarterly compliance rate for deduction of earnings orders, February 2000 to August 2005

	Percentage
November 2004	78
February 2005	76
May 2005	77
August 2005	76

Notes:

1. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.
2. Robust information covering the period May 2003 to February 2004 is not currently available.
3. The above includes those old scheme cases with a full maintenance assessment, and those new scheme cases with either a full maintenance calculation, or a default maintenance decision. Old scheme cases with a punitive interim maintenance assessment (an imposed assessment due to the non co-operation of the Non Resident Parent), a small number of which would have deductions from earnings orders in place, are excluded from this analysis in line with the Agency's target definitions, as are new scheme cases being processed clerically.
4. Compliance is defined here as all those cases that are currently open and have paid money via the collection service over the preceding quarter expressed as a percentage of all those (currently open) cases with a collection service maintenance liability over the same quarter.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 274–75W, in how many of the 5,673 cases in the last five years where the Independent Case Examiner found failure by the Child Support Agency and recommended that the Agency should pay compensation, the Child Support Agency paid compensation; and in how many of those cases the amount of compensation was in excess of £1,000. [48894]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Independent Case Examiner makes recommendations for the award of financial redress, but has no authority to specify the amount of such payments. This decision remains the responsibility of the Child Support Agency. The following information reflects data held by the Independent Case Examiner's Office.

Number

	Financial redress recommendations	Awards made	Awards over £1,000
2000–01	1,117	n/a	n/a
2001–02	1,080	n/a	n/a
2002–03	868	1,306	126
2003–04	1,004	1,163	104
2004–05	1,604	1,800	160

Notes:

1. Information on awards made is only available from 2002–03, since when ICE has collated relevant data from information provided by the Child Support Agency.
2. Case review may lead to more than one recommendation should multiple instances of maladministration be identified.
3. More than one award can be made on a case, in respect of different types of financial redress.
4. For similar reasons, case resolution/reports may include more than one recommendation for financial redress. Financial redress may include consolatory payments, ex-gratia payments, payments for actual financial loss, deferment of arrears, advance payments of maintenance, interest payments, or refunds of maintenance paid.

Civil Servants

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many civil servants working in his Department are aged between 18 and 25 years. [38530]

Mrs. McGuire: As at 31 October 2005, a total 10,123 civil servants were working in the Department who were aged between 18 and 25 years. This figure includes temporary staff.

Consultants

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the main *(a)* technology suppliers, *(b)* consultancy firms and *(c)* strategy consultants engaged by the Department in each year since 1997; and how much was spent on each. [44505]

Margaret Hodge: Information is provided for the years since the Department for Work and Pensions was formed in 2001. The Department's information systems categorise expenditure into IS/IT suppliers and consultancy. The consultancy category will also contain strategy consultants but this expenditure could not be isolated without incurring disproportionate cost. The Department's expenditure with its top five IS/IT and consultancy suppliers by expenditure in 2004–05 and the expenditure with these firms in the three earlier years is provided in the following table. The figures provided relate to IS/IT and consultancy expenditure with these suppliers in the year, a number of suppliers provide both types of service to the Department.

DWP expenditure with its top five IS/IT and consultancy suppliers since 2001–02

£ million

IS/IT suppliers	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
EDS	439.7	715.6	834.7	705.6
BT	103.5	135.7	201.6	172.9
IBM	0.2	19.4	59.3	52.0
Computacentre	55.5	95.2	77.1	34.4
Oracle Corporation	0	0	0.3	18.7
Consultancy				
ATOS Origin[1]	58.7	44.2	8.2	25.9
Accenture	0	0	4.0	45.9
Capgemini	2.3	23.5	7.8	17.9
Booz Allen Hamilton	0	0	30.7	16.9
PA Consulting	4.9	12.3	17.5	13.6

[1] ATOS Origin acquired SchlumbergerSema in September 2003, figures for 2001–02 relate to SchlumbergerSema.

Council Tax Benefits (West Midlands)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in *(a)* Coventry, South and *(b)* the West Midlands region are (i) entitled to council tax benefits and (ii) receiving council tax benefits; and if he will make a statement. [50074]

Mr. Plaskitt: The latest available information on unclaimed council tax benefit is in "Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take Up in 2003/2004", a copy of which is in the Library.

Information on council tax benefit claimants is not available by parliamentary constituency. As at August 2005 there were 488,200 households in the West Midlands and 32,100 households in the Coventry city council area receiving council tax benefit.

Deduction from Benefits

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the impact on the extent of financial

exclusion has been of the introduction of the scheme to enable lenders to recover debts through deduction from benefits. [49261]

Mr. Plaskitt: DWP plays an active part in contributing to the Government's aims of ensuring that people who are financially excluded have access to low cost credit in a way that does not encourage vulnerable people into unsustainable debt.

In addition to administration of the Growth Fund, the Department is working with the Treasury to set up a facility whereby certain low cost lenders will be able to apply for deductions from benefits in the event of default. These measures should help increase the supply of affordable credit and reduce the need for people without access to mainstream banking to rely on high cost lenders.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by his Department in Forest of Dean constituency. [47256]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department's estate has been sold or transferred under a PFI partnership deal to Land Securities Trillium (LST) and in return for the payment of a unitary charge, LST is responsible for providing a full facilities management service across the estate. Therefore the Department does not own any *(a)* land or *(b)* property in the Forest of Dean constituency.

The Rent Service and The Health and Safety Executive are not part of the Department PFI arrangement, but neither owns any *(a)* land or *(b)* property in the Forest of Dean constituency.

Departmental Relocation

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many staff in his Department have been relocated into London and the South East in each of the last five years for which records are available; [31761]

(2) what plans he has to relocate staff in his Department and related agencies into London and the South East. [31762]

Mrs. McGuire: No staff within the Department for Work and Pensions have been relocated into London and the South East since June 2003. Information is not available on relocations prior to this date.

The Department has no plans to relocate staff into London and the South East.

Departmental Running Costs

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the running costs of his central Department for 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [44760]

Mrs. McGuire: Information on departmental running costs in resource terms, including a breakdown by client group, is published on an annual basis in the Department's Departmental Report, which can be found in the Libraries of the House. The 2005 Departmental Report was published in June 2005 (Cm 6539).

Departmental Staff

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department takes to support staff with mental ill-health. [36866]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) recognises that mental health conditions are one of the major causes of certified sickness absence among working age people. The Department has a number of policies, procedures and other interventions in place which aim to identify and support our own staff who may be suffering from such conditions.

The Department's Attendance Management policy is designed to help managers deal with all kinds of absences, including those which are due to mental ill health. The policy requires managers to keep in touch with staff while they are absent, and conduct welcome back discussions on their return to work. It also provides guidance to managers on how to spot symptoms of possible mental ill health and how to consider what adjustments might be necessary in order to support the member of staff in doing their job. Adjustments might include changes to the job role or duties, a change of job, additional support or considering part time working or use of the flexible working hours arrangements. The Department's Occupational Health Contractor (Atos Origin) provides advice on reasonable adjustments and the impact the medical condition may have on the member of staff's ability to work effectively.

The Department also has an Employee Assistance service provided by Right Corecare which provides counselling and support to staff on a range of issues including stress (whether at work or at home) and health. Corecare can also advise and support managers who have staff who are experiencing mental ill health. In addition, DWP introduced a Well-being at work policy in September 2004 in order to prevent, identify and address the causes of work-related stress. The policy is based on the HSE Management Standards and aims to assess stress at both an organisational and individual level.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the action he is taking to improve the security of the *(a)* payroll and *(b)* other personal data relating to staff of his Department. [38218]

Mrs. McGuire: DWP has robust policies and systems in place that deal with data protection and the security of payroll and other personal data relating to its staff. These are subject to rigorous managerial checks and regular internal and external auditing. In the light of recent events we have reviewed all our processes and security arrangements.

Where recommendations are made for improvements these are taken seriously and acted upon.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many civil servants in his Department worked from home for at least one day a week in the last year for which figures are available. [40280]

Mrs. McGuire: There are currently six DWP employees who are contracted as home workers. However, DWP employees may make ad-hoc arrangements to work from home for a variety of reasons, for example, to complete performance appraisal reports; to complete reports of home visits carried out; as reasonable adjustments for disabled employees; to avoid travel disruption during industrial action on public transport.

Managers also have discretion to authorise employees to work from home for domestic reasons that may otherwise have required their absence from duty.

Statistical data have never been collected about ad-hoc home working arrangements, which are treated the same as any other absence from the normal work place on official duties.

Because no official records are kept, and none are required to be kept by individuals, any data that may be gathered could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what arrangements are in place to assess the morale of departmental staff. [45190]

Mrs. McGuire: The DWP carries out a departmental staff survey annually, inviting all staff to say how they feel about a comprehensive range of issues affecting their working lives. This includes indicators that allow staff morale to be assessed.

Because morale is a multi-faceted issue, DWP uses its survey to collect data on a range of issues to gain a reliable assessment, rather than rely on a single indicator, such as staff satisfaction. Over time, it has developed a more informed view of what drives staff morale and incorporated these factors into the survey questionnaire. These include areas such as how people feel about their job, the support they get from colleagues and managers, opportunities to develop skills and pursue a career, their confidence in handling challenging aspects of their job, terms and conditions and how they perceive the culture of the organisation.

The DWP has also adopted the Health and Safety Executive's Management Standards model as the basis of its Well-being at Work policy to measure and help manage pressures and demands in the workplace; to minimise the risks of stress; and to continually assess the levels of pressure placed on its people.

The fourth DWP survey was completed in October 2005. In addition to the centralised DWP survey, business areas and teams carry out smaller scale reviews which include consideration of staff attitudes connected to Investors in People, Excellence or performance improvement initiatives locally.

Disability Rights Commission

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total budget was of the Disability Rights Commission in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06; how much funding the Commission received to support its work with public bodies to promote equality for disabled people in each year; and how much it will receive in 2006–07 for that work. [44874]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 25 January 2006]:* Grant-in-aid paid to the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) in 2004–05 was £16.597 million and its grant in aid allocation for 2005–06 is £21.641 million. These figures reflect the expansion of the DRC's remit as a result of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 which includes the Disability Equality Duty. The figures include some £0.9 million in 2004–05 and some £4.7 million in 2005–06 for work deriving from the DDA 2005. My Department's planning assumption is that the Commission's grant-in-aid for 2006–07 will be £20.902 million to cover all its work including that in respect of the DDA 2005.

The actual amount of resource which the Commission allocates to its work with public bodies in relation to the duty to promote equality for disabled people is an operational matter for decision by the DRC in the light of its statutory duties.

Disabled People (Life Chances)

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects to publish the next annual progress report on the objectives set out in Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People. [49789]

Mrs. McGuire: The Office for Disability Issues will report annually to the Prime Minister on cross-government progress in implementing the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report, Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People. The first report is due to be published in summer 2006.

Energy Review

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the source was of the funds earmarked by the Health and Safety Executive to pay for the comparative risk review of energy sources commissioned by the Department of Trade and Industry in January as part of the Energy Review; and whether he expects the Health and Safety Executive to apply cost recovery in respect of the Nuclear Reactor Safety Review to be conducted as part of the review. [46568]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department of Trade and Industry has asked the Health and Safety Executive for an expert report on health and safety risks arising from recent and potential energy developments and HSE's approach to ensuring that these risks are sensibly managed by industry. The report will not seek to compare the risks of different energy sources. The cost of producing the report is expected to be small and will be met from existing resources by reprioritising other work. HSE does not intend to recover any of this cost from nuclear site licensees.

Health and Safety

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what action he has taken in conjunction with the Health and Safety Executive to respond to the four high level themes identified in the Government's strategy for workplace health and safety. [45240]

Mrs. McGuire: As the sponsoring Department for the HSC/E, DWP Ministers are very supportive of the workplace strategy and its themes, and committed to working with the Commission and Executive to facilitate delivery of our targets for health and safety improvement. The strategy has four themes designed to encourage good practice and increase understanding of health and safety requirements: partnership working; effective health and safety management; focusing on our core business and the right interventions; and communicating effectively. A report on the first year of the strategy was published in March 2005 and a report of the second year is due towards the end of March.

There are several examples of partnership working being successfully employed. The Health, Work and Well Being strategy, HSE's Stress Management standards and the soon to be launched Workplace Health Connect have all benefited from partnership working across a wide range of stakeholders. These initiatives will help to deliver HSE's occupational health targets and will also contribute to the Government's wider health agenda.

HSE has developed two specific programmes of work to help others benefit from effective health and safety management. The Business Involvement Strategic Enabling Programme promotes effective health and safety management as an integral part of effective business management. HSE has published relevant case studies to help demonstrate this. The Worker Involvement Strategic Enabling Programme encourages more and better worker involvement in sensible health and safety risk management. The Worker Safety Adviser Challenge fund targeting those workers—particularly in small organisations—that do not have access to trade union safety representatives, made £3 million available to partnerships who could demonstrate innovative ways for getting workers and managers to solve health and safety issues together.

HSE has also been concentrating on their core work and being clear about their priorities—risk and poor performers. They have consulted publicly on the role they should play in protecting the public rather than just workers, from work-related risks. The consultation was designed to promote and ensure a coherent overall approach to public safety, with greater clarity of responsibilities for the many agencies involved in protecting the public. The consultation has now closed and HSE will be publishing their findings shortly. HSE have also consulted on how they and local authorities can make best use of their resources to deliver health and safety improvements. This culminated in an account of the regulatory methods they employ, why they intervene and what they aim to achieve with each intervention.

Over the last two years, all of this good work has been underpinned by strong HSE communications. This has been evident in their Backs 2005 campaign where they have successfully raised the profile of back pain as a major contributor to work-related ill health and the sensible risk debate they have been running since last summer where they have emphasised the key message of managing risks sensibly, not completely eliminating them. HSE continues to provide authoritative health and safety information using its website as the main point of contact. Since 2002 they have seen a three-fold increase in traffic on their website.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what action his Department is taking in conjunction with the Health and Safety Executive *(a)* to improve liaison on and *(b)* to foster sharing of good practice in health and safety regulation with local authorities. [45241]

Mrs. McGuire: Local authorities (LAs) have responsibility for health and safety both as employers (dutyholders) and also as enforcing authorities, in the latter case mainly for health and safety regulation of the service industries.

As employers:

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has established a Local Authority Forum, which has representatives from the Local Government Associations (LGAs) in England, Scotland and Wales and from trade unions, where debate and discussion takes place about health and safety issues in LAs, including examples of good practice.

At a regional level regular contact is made with LA Chief Executives, either directly or through the Chief Executive local liaison groups, to discuss issues around the Health and Safety Commission's priorities and to share good practice.

As enforcing authorities:

HSE has been developing partnership arrangements with LAs through work on the 'LAs and HSE Working Together strategic programme'. A Statement of Intent, agreed by HSC/HSE and each of the LGAs in England, Scotland and Wales has set out the principles of such partnership working.

LGA representatives at both officer and elected member level form part of the governance of the partnership arrangements and are involved at the earliest stages in developing policy and delivery around the HSC health and safety priorities. LGA representatives are also involved in the governance of all the HSE strategic programmes.

Regional partnership structures are in place, which allow for joint planning and delivery by both HSE field staff and LA enforcement officers—there are many examples of such joint working around the country.

In May 2005 a 'Good Practice Guide' was launched to share examples of good practice between LAs and between HSE and LAs. This has been supplemented by the creation of a web base 'Extranet' that all LAs can access for information held by HSE on its intranet but also as a means of logging and sharing good practice.

Lord Hunt met with CEO of the LGA in October last year and subsequently met with the chair of the LGA and other key members, on 16 January. Further liaison meetings are planned.

HIV

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what guidelines his Department has produced to assist employers in developing good practice concerning the employment of people with HIV. [48588]

Mrs. McGuire: My Department undertakes a wide range of publicity activity to raise awareness of employers' responsibilities under the Disability

Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005. A series of recent campaigns has focused on the duties of employers and service providers. In particular, a major campaign aimed at small and medium-sized businesses was undertaken during 2004, involving direct mailings to over one million businesses. In the last financial year alone, around £3 million was spent on raising awareness of the Act.

A new campaign, also aimed at small and medium-sized businesses, started in December 2005 and will run to May 2006. In this campaign, we are working closely with business, trade organisations and third parties such as accountants, as our research shows that small businesses are turning more and more to these sources of advice for information about legislation that affects their business.

We are also working closely with key stakeholders, including organisations like the National Aids Trust and "Ensuring Positive Futures", to communicate messages about changes made by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. Our aim is to help ensure that employers, and employees, are aware that, for the purposes of the DDA, a person with HIV infection is treated as a disabled person from the point at which they have the infection, effectively from the point of diagnosis. Therefore, they have a legal right to be treated fairly, and to have reasonable adjustments made to accommodate them, in the workplace.

The Department's awareness raising activity complements that of the Disability Rights Commission, which is sponsored by my Department. The Commission has a statutory duty to provide advice and guidance on rights and responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act. It publishes codes of practice and a range of guidance on the employment duties under the Act. These include examples relating to people who are infected with HIV.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants left incapacity benefit at the *(a)* four month and *(b)* 12 month stage of their claim in each quarter since January 2003 in (i) pathways to work pilot areas and (ii) non-pathways areas. [43347]

Margaret Hodge: Pathways to work pilots were introduced in October 2003. The available figures are in the tables.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) terminations in Pathways areas, by duration of claim

	All durations	Up to 4 months	Over 4 up to 12 months	Over 12 months
February 2003	16,000	5,200	4,200	6,700
May 2003	14,600	5,000	4,000	5,500
August 2003	16,400	4,900	4,600	6,800
November 2003	16,100	5,100	4,300	6,700
February 2004	16,300	5,500	4,100	6,800
May 2004	17,900	6,100	4,300	7,500
August 2004	17,900	5,700	4,500	7,700
November 2004	16,400	5,300	3,900	7,200
February 2005	16,600	5,200	3,600	7,800
May 2005	15,900	5,400	3,700	6,800
August 2005	11,400	3,900	2,400	5,100

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) terminations in non-Pathways areas, by duration of claim

	All durations	Up to 4 months	Over 4 up to 12 months	Over 12 months
February 2003	154,200	48,900	40,000	65,400
May 2003	151,300	50,000	43,400	57,900
August 2003	166,600	50,600	42,700	73,300
November 2003	170,700	52,800	43,700	74,300
February 2004	156,400	45,500	42,400	68,500
May 2004	156,600	44,500	42,100	70,100
August 2004	159,300	42,600	44,500	72,100
November 2004	159,300	45,600	44,500	69,200
February 2005	160,400	42,300	43,700	74,300
May 2005	164,000	43,700	43,900	76,500
August 2005	111,100	32,400	30,700	48,000

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
2. Figures for the latest quarter do not include any late notifications and are subject to major changes in future quarters.
3. Earlier quarters have been updated to include late notified terminations, including terminations for State Pension.
4. Pathways to work pilot areas were introduced in October 2003 and expanded in April 2004.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. Samples.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions under what circumstances a person may receive incapacity benefit without having passed the personal capability assessment; how many such people there were in each of the last three years; and what the procedure is for the withdrawal of benefits from people deemed fit for work. [44203]

Mrs. McGuire: Claims to incapacity benefit are initially paid on the basis of supporting medical evidence until such time as the Own Occupation Test or the Personal Capacity Assessment is carried out. People with certain severe medical conditions and those in receipt of the highest rate care component of disability living allowance are exempt from the Personal Capability Assessment.

The Personal Capability Assessment is usually carried out after a person has been incapable of work for 28 weeks. If they do not meet the threshold of incapacity, their benefit stops, form IB65 is issued which gives details of the decision, and entitlement to incapacity benefit ceases from the next available payment date. No one can continue to receive incapacity benefit if they fail to satisfy the Personal Capability Assessment.

Form IB65 gives details of the disallowance and the scoring applied, and is accompanied by a notes section on what to do next and leaflet IB203 "Incapacity Benefit Getting Back to Work".

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions who will decide under the proposed legislation which claimants will have their incapacity benefits withdrawn; and if he will make a statement. [44417]

Margaret Hodge: Our proposals are about extending opportunity, not cutting benefits. Where a sanction on an individual's benefit is considered necessary, we have yet to determine the exact process and indeed will only do so following extensive consultation. However, the

checks and balances we have in place in our successful Pathways to Work pilots have proven to be reliable and provide a good starting point.

Our experience in the Pathways to Work pilots is that, because many claimants wish to return to work, the number of occasions when it was necessary to apply a sanction were small.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions he has had with employers on his proposals to reform incapacity benefit, with particular reference to extending employment opportunities. [46373]

Margaret Hodge: The Government acknowledge that working with employers to expand employment opportunity is crucial for getting incapacity benefit claimants into work, and have recognised this in both "Health, Work and Well-Being" and the recent Green Paper "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work".

Each of the Pathways to Work Pilots has developed an Employer Engagement Strategy to establish a closer business relationship with employers to both influence their recruitment practice and to ensure that the support services understand employers' recruitment needs.

We now look forward to the participation of employers in the formal consultation on the Green Paper, which will be run until 21 April 2006.

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what use is made of occupational psychology in reducing the number of people claiming incapacity benefit. [47978]

Margaret Hodge: Occupational psychology and consultation with occupational psychologists have been used in the design, staff training and delivery of services that help people claiming incapacity benefit return to employment.

For example, occupational psychologists were part of the team that designed the training for Jobcentre Plus staff involved in our successful Pathways to Work programme (the recently published green paper, A New Deal for Welfare: Empowering people to work Cm 6730, gives more detail about Pathways to Work). Also in Jobcentre Plus, incapacity benefit personal advisers and disability employment advisers are able to refer people to occupational psychologists where there is a need for the types of specialist assistance that those psychologists can provide.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average payment of incapacity benefit was in each year since 1995. [48428]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Average weekly amount of incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance in payment: Great Britain

	£
August 1995	76.79
August 1996	76.44
August 1997	75.62
August 1998	76.49
August 1999	77.04
August 2000	76.32
August 2001	77.42
August 2002	78.12
August 2003	78.56
August 2004	79.79
August 2005	81.59

Notes:
1. Amount in payment is average of all incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance beneficiaries, and excludes incapacity benefit credits-only cases.
2. All amounts are in nominal terms.
Source:
DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples.

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants of incapacity benefit there were in each social services authority *(a)* in 2001 and *(b)* in the most recent year for which figures are available. [51318]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available in the format requested. The information for local authorities in Great Britain has been placed in the Library.

Income Support

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people received *(a)* income support on the grounds of incapacity, *(b)* income support disability premium, *(c)* income support enhanced disability premium and *(d)* income support severe disability premium in each year since 1995. [48429]

Mr. Plaskitt: The available information is in the following table.

Income support (IS) paid for incapacity and disability, by type of disability premium in Great Britain

August	IS and IB/SDA, no DP	IS with DP only	IS with DP and EDP	IS with DP and SDP	IS with DP and EDP and SDP
1995[1]	244,100	666,800	n/a	63,200	n/a
1996[1]	251,000	720,400	n/a	78,200	n/a
1997	272,600	765,400	n/a	93,900	n/a
1998	229,600	809,500	n/a	103,400	n/a
1999	230,100	829,100	n/a	115,100	n/a
2000	228,500	872,200	n/a	126,200	n/a
2001	223,400	838,500	77,400	92,600	48,800
2002	186,900	873,200	77,200	103,800	54,100
2003	184,200	868,800	81,900	114,700	60,700
2004	159,000	865,100	83,100	124,900	66,500
2005	146,300	837,800	80,800	128,300	68,600

n/a = not applicable.
[1] Figures for 1995 and 1996 exclude the unemployed—income-based JSA replaced IS for the unemployed in October 1996.
Notes:
1. Figures have been derived by applying 5 per cent. proportions to 100 per cent. totals with the exception of August 2005 which has been taken directly from the DWP Work and Pension Longitudinal Study.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.
3. Figures exclude minimum income guarantee (MIG)—pension credit replaced MIG on 6 October 2003.
4. Enhanced disability premium was introduced in April 2001.
5. DP = disability premium; EDP = enhanced disability premium; SDP = severe disability premium.
6. Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) 'claimant' figures include IB credits only cases.
Source:
DWP Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) and Information Directorate 5 per cent. samples.

IT Equipment

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his Department's policy is on depreciation of IT equipment. [45709]

Mrs. McGuire: Depreciation is provided on IT equipment, using the straight-line method, at rates calculated to write off, in equal instalments, the current replacement cost of each asset over its expected useful life, in this case five years. The assets are depreciated from the month following acquisition. No depreciation is charged in the month of disposal.

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46769]

Mrs. McGuire: My Department publishes an annual religious calendar for all staff on its intranet site. The calendar includes information on all the major religions, including Judaism, and provides dates and background to all the key religious festivals and events. We take into consideration the religious festivals and events when arranging interviews with our customers.

My Department allows all staff to:

request time off work to celebrate any religious festival;

take time away from desks during the working day if individuals need access to designated areas in order to pray;

apply for an advance of salary for any religious festival.

My Department delivers faith awareness training for our staff via a learning and development toolkit, which provides information on religious beliefs, observances and practices.

Jobcentres

Mr. McFall: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether further reductions in numbers of jobs for jobcentre workers in West Dumbartonshire are planned. [46640]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking whether further reductions in numbers of jobs for jobcentre workers in West Dunbartonshire are planned. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

As announced in the 2004 Spending Review, the Department has plans to reduce overall staff numbers by 30,000 by 31 March 2008. Our staffing plans for West Dunbartonshire take account of the challenging headcount targets Jobcentre Plus has to meet annually up to 2008 as part of the wider DWP Efficiency Challenge.

By way of background, Jobcentre Plus had 223.8 full time equivalent staff in West Dunbartonshire at the end of April 2005. The latest available month end figure, for December 2005, was 226.2 full time equivalent staff. Just over 13 per cent. of staff included in the December figure are employed on temporary contracts.

The budget allocation for 2006/07 for our Highland, Islands, Clyde Coast & Grampian District, which includes West Dunbartonshire, has yet to be finalised. At the moment, planning assumptions are, however, that staffing in West Dunbartonshire will reduce by approximately 5 per cent. by the end of 2006/07.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) whether the amount of jobseekers' allowance to which 16-year-olds are entitled varies between regions; [50096]

(2) what unemployment benefit is available to people aged 16. [50101]

Mr. Plaskitt: Jobseeker's allowance (JSA) is intended for those people seeking work. 16-year-olds are not normally entitled to JSA, as the policy intention is to encourage young people of that age to be in education or training rather than become dependent on the benefits system.

However, as a safety net for the most vulnerable, income based JSA may be paid for a limited period in certain circumstances while a young person looks for suitable training, education or employment that involves training. JSA rates, payable in such cases, are prescribed nationally and are not subject to regional variations.

Language Support

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the departmental target is for the time taken to process a benefit application when a customer requires language support or documentation from other Government Departments; and how many days applications took in the last period for which figures are available. [48985]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie, dated 13 February 2006:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply direct to your question asking what the departmental target is for the time taken to process a benefit application when a customer requires language support or documentation from other Government departments; and how many days applications took in the last period for which figures are available. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus does not have a separate target for the processing of benefit claims that involve language support or documentation from other Government Departments.

Lone Parents

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress has been made in helping lone parents back to work in the last three years. [47104]

Margaret Hodge: Considerable progress has been made in helping lone parents back into work in the last three years. The lone parent employment rate rose 3.3 percentage points between spring 2002 and spring 2005, and, since it started in 1998, new deal for lone parents has been successful in helping more than

423,000 lone parents into work, 230,810 of whom have gone into work through the programme in the last three years.

In October, we introduced a requirement for lone parents whose youngest child is aged at least 14 to participate in quarterly work focused interviews. We are also piloting a number of measures to help lone parents, including the new deal plus for lone parents, which is testing whether a range of additional support will help lone parents to find and to stay in work.

In our recently published Green Paper 'A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work', we have proposed increased contact with lone parents through more frequent work focused interviews, as well as the intention to pilot a work-related activity premium to encourage lone parents with older children to take serious steps to return to work.

Mr. Rooney: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents moved from income support to incapacity benefit when their youngest child reached age 16 in the last five years. [48296]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* The information is not available in the format requested; the available information is in the table.

Time period during which the customer left income support	*Number of lone parents leaving income support within three months of their youngest child turning 16*	*Number of these claiming incapacity benefit (IB) within 12 months*	*Proportion that claimed IB within 12 months of leaving IS (percentage)*
August 1999-July 2000	12,000	2,000	16.4
August 2000-July 2001	13,900	2,100	15.9
August 2001-July 2002	12,800	2,000	16.0
August 2002-July 2003	12,500	2,100	17.2
August 2003-July 2004	11,400	2,100	18.6

Note:
1. The figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.
2. The actual figures have been used to calculate the percentages.
Source:
DWP 100 per cent. benefits database (data to July 2005).

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents whose youngest child is aged between 11 and 16 years are caring for a child who is sick or disabled in *(a)* Coventry, South and *(b)* the West Midlands region. [50075]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available in the format requested. Figures are only available for those receiving income support.

As at August 2005, there were 1,600 lone parents in receipt of income support in the West Midlands, whose youngest child was aged between 11 and 16 years, and whose benefit included a disabled child premium.

Due to the very small numbers of claimants involved it is not possible to accurately estimate the number of such claimants in the Coventry, South parliamentary constituency.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents whose youngest child is 14 years had received benefits for more than a year in Coventry, South in the last year for which figures are available. [50076]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available in the format requested.

As at August 2005, there were 100 lone parents whose youngest child is 14 who had been in receipt of income support for a year or more in the Coventry, South parliamentary constituency. The number of such claimants in receipt of other benefits is too small to provide accurate estimates.

MPs (Outside Appointments)

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the former hon. Members who left Parliament in 2005 who have since been appointed to public bodies by his Department, broken down by party; and who was responsible for making each appointment. [36690]

Mrs. McGuire: Information about the political activity of appointees is recorded and publicised in accordance with the independent Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice. This shows that no former hon. Members who left Parliament in 2005 have since been appointed to public bodies sponsored by this Department.

New Deal

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of New Deal leavers in Beverley and Holderness have gained sustained unsubsidised employment. [48484]

Margaret Hodge: The available information is in the table.

New Deal in Beverley and Holderness—percentage of leavers to a sustained unsubsidised job

Programme	*Percentage*
New Deal for Young People	56
New Deal 25 plus	29
New Deal for Lone Parents	30

Notes:
1. A measure of job sustainability is not available for new deal 50 plus and new deal for partners.
2. Information on new deal for disabled people is not available at constituency level.
3. For the purposes of new deal for young people and new deal 25 plus, a job is regarded as sustained if a person gaining a job through these new deals does not claim jobseeker's allowance for at least 13 weeks after gaining employment.
4. Since October 2005, employment sustainability for those participating on new deal for lone parents, which is a voluntary programme, has been measured through the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study. If a job gained through the programme lasts at least 13 weeks, it is regarded as sustained. A measure of sustainability was not available prior to October 2005.
5. Figures are to August 2005.
Source:
Department for Work and Pensions Information Directorate.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* over 25s, *(b)* lone parents, *(c)* over 50s and *(d)* young people in Peterborough have participated in the New Deal in each year since its inception. [50429]

Margaret Hodge: The available information is in the table.

Participants on New Deal in Peterborough since 1998

	New Deal 25 plus	New Deal for Lone Parents	New Deal 50 plus	New Deal for Young People
1998	100	20	—	380
1999	180	190	—	400
2000	170	160	—	390
2001	170	200	—	350
2002	180	240	—	400
2003	140	270	—	400
2004	160	340	10	340
2005	150	340	50	330

Note:
1. New Deal 25 plus started in July 1998.
2. New Deal for Lone Parents started in October 1998.
3. Starts to the New Deal 50 Plus programme are only available from January 2004.
4. New Deal for Young People started in January 1998.
5. All data is up to the end of November 2005 and is rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
Department for Work and Pensions Information Directorate.

Pathways to Work

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many professionals are involved in condition management programmes in each of the Pathways to Work pilots, broken down by profession; what the annual cost of the work of healthcare professionals has been in each pilot; how many people in each pilot have been receiving incapacity benefit for *(a)* less than six months, *(b)* between six and 12 months and *(c)* 12 months or longer; and what assessment he has made of the implications for the number of healthcare workers needed if Pathways to Work is extended to all areas. [44205]

Margaret Hodge: Condition management programmes (CMPs) are jointly delivered by Jobcentre Plus and the NHS. Actual spend figures for the provision of services via health care professionals are not available. The funding agreed between individual districts and primary care trusts (PCTs) is set out in the following table:

District	2004-05 (£)	2005-06 (£)
Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, Argyll and Bute	1,526,079	1,845,027
Bridgend, Rhondda, Cynon and Taff	767,979	1,209,800
Derbyshire	1,380,000	1,921,621
Essex	2,126,516	3,029,072
Gateshead	929,260	1,267,528
East Lancashire	504,627	1,215,946
Somerset	640,500	870,515

Information on how many people in each pilot have been receiving incapacity benefit for *(a)* less than six months *(b)* between six months and 12 months and *(c)* 12 months or longer, is in the following table.

IB/SDA Claimants in Pathways to Work areas, by duration May 2005

District	Less than 6 months	6 months to 1 year	1 year or over	Total
Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, Argyll and Bute	2.5	1.6	22.5	26.6
Bridgend, Rhondda, Cynon and Taff	2.7	1.8	30.0	34.5
Derbyshire	3.9	2.7	39.7	46.3
Essex	5.8	3.7	47.0	56.5
Gateshead	2.3	1.4	21.0	24.7
East Lancashire	3.2	2.1	29.0	34.2
Somerset	1.4	1.0	12.4	14.8

Notes:
1. Figures are shown in thousands and rounded to the nearest 100.
2. Pathways to Work areas are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant postcode directory.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study, 100 per cent. data.

Delivery is not standardised in the pilot areas. The services within the CMPs are provided by a range of healthcare professionals, including: occupational therapists, mental health practitioners, GPs, physiotherapists, speech therapists, health psychologists, and nurses. The number and type of healthcare professionals varies between each pilot and is set locally.

We will continue to work with the NHS to deliver this vital element of our Pathways to Work initiative. We will also seek to ensure our proposals deliver the pilots in innovative and more cost-effective ways as we roll out to the rest of the country. We have set out our proposals in the Green Paper "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work" (Cm 6730) published on 24 January 2006.

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many general practitioner surgeries are participating in the Pathways to Work pilots; and in how many of them employment advisers have been placed. [44431]

Margaret Hodge: As part of the Pathways to Work approach Jobcentre Plus has been working closely with a wide range of NHS professionals in surgeries and other health settings to promote the health and employment message. Many non-governmental organisations have already placed employment advisers in general practitioner surgeries across the country and our proposals came from this experience.

We want to build on the knowledge gained from these experiments and will be running pilots in five of the seven current Pathways to Work Pilot areas, where we will place employment advisers in general practitioner surgeries. We do not have information at this stage on the number of advisers we will place. However, two surgeries in the pilot areas are already using the services of employment advisers.

The lessons learned from these pilots will help to ensure the success of our proposals recently published in our Green Paper; "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work" to place an Employment Adviser service in GPs' surgeries.

Pensions

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of people likely to switch from current occupational or private pension schemes into the proposed National Pension Savings Scheme, if it is implemented. [49580]

Mr. Timms: The Government is in the process of examining the recommendations made by the Pensions Commission in detail. This includes recommendations on a National Pension Savings Scheme. At this stage, nothing is ruled in and nothing is ruled out. In looking at options we will of course take account of the possible impacts on existing schemes.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will commission research into the likely impact on economic growth in the UK of the national pension savings scheme proposed in the Pensions Commission's second report. [49581]

Mr. Timms: The Government are in the process of examining the recommendations made by the Pensions Commission in detail. At this stage, nothing is ruled in and nothing is ruled out. We will give careful consideration to the need for additional research into the likely impact of the NPSS on economic growth in the UK.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the persistency levels for *(a)* regular premium personal pensions and *(b)* group and individual personal pensions was in each of the last 10 years. [49582]

Mr. Timms: Such information as is available is contained in an annual survey on persistency of life and pension policies produced and published by the Financial Services Authorities (FSA). The latest publication is the 2004 survey and it can be found on the FSA's website at:

http://www.fsa.gov.uk/pubs/other/Persistency_2004.pdf

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will commission research into the likely levels of persistency if a national pension savings scheme were to be established as proposed in the Pensions Commission Report. [49583]

Mr. Timms: The Government are in the process of examining the recommendations made by the Pensions Commission in detail. At this stage, nothing is ruled in and nothing is ruled out. As part of this process we will be giving careful consideration to the need for additional research into the likely levels of persistency if the NPSS were to be established.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will introduce legislation requiring companies who have taken a pensions contribution holiday since 1997 to make the payments not made. [49724]

Mr. Timms: We have no plans to do so. The level of contributions paid by the sponsoring employer of a private sector defined benefit pension scheme is determined and reviewed under the rules of the scheme, subject to overriding legislation. From April 1997 schemes were required to be funded above the level of the minimum funding requirement (MFR) before the sponsoring employer could take a contribution holiday.

New scheme funding requirements, replacing the MFR, came into force from 30 December 2005. Pension scheme trustees now have greater powers to frame their scheme's funding strategy and determine the appropriate level of contributions payable by the employer.

In addition, from 6 April 2006 current HM Revenue and Customs requirements for pension schemes to reduce an actuarial surplus will be abolished. This will remove a factor which may have played a part in some decisions to allow pension fund contribution holidays in the past. Under the revised requirements sponsoring employers will still be able to take a contribution holiday where the scheme is sufficiently well-funded, but only where the trustees agree that it is appropriate.

Perceived Disability

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will extend existing Disability Discrimination Acts to protect groups and individuals from discrimination on the basis of perceived disability in addition to actual disability. [48589]

Mrs. McGuire: The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 significantly extended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in a number of important areas. It fulfilled the Government's commitment to put in place a comprehensive and enforceable package of civil rights for disabled people. We have no current plans to make any additional amendments to this legislation.

Post Office Card Accounts

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which areas have been selected as pilots for the replacement of the Post Office card account. [50706]

Mr. Plaskitt: DWP is not undertaking any pilots of a "replacement" for the Post Office card account. Rather we are undertaking some small-scale pilots to test various approaches to moving people from having their benefit or pension paid into a Post Office card account to payments into a bank account.

The three DWP pilot schemes will involve:

(a) Not promoting the option for some customers to open a Post Office card account when they make a new claim to benefit. The pilots will cover a small number of customers making a new claim to jobseeker's allowance in three Jobcentre Plus Offices in the North East of England and a small number of customers claiming retirement pension or pension credit nationwide.

(b) Writing to some existing Post Office card accounts customers asking for bank account details. This will be a random sample of customers in England and Wales.

(c) Converting some customers who have one benefit paid by Post Office card account and another already paid into a bank account. This will be a random sample of customers in England and Scotland.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people use the Post Office card account for the payment of benefits and pensions, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [50707]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available in the format requested.

Information showing the number of DWP benefit and pension payment accounts paid by direct payment into a Post Office card account for each parliamentary constituency has been placed in the Library.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what alternatives to the Post Office card account he plans; and what income streams will be received by the Post Office as a result. [51485]

Mr. Plaskitt: It will be for Post Office Ltd. to bring forward proposals for new products and services, and I understand they currently have some under development. There are already some 25 bank and building society accounts which can be used at post offices, with each transaction at the post office generating income for Post Office Ltd. We want to work with the post office to ensure customers are fully aware of developments and continue to have a range of choices in how they access their money.

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people are using the Post Office card account to withdraw their benefits and pensions; and how many people the Government estimate will be using the Post Office card account by the end of *(a)* 2006 and *(b)* 2007. [48941]

Mr. Plaskitt: There were 4.27 million Post Office card accounts in use at December 2005.

We would expect this number to decline over time as customers move on to other accounts which offer more features. However, we have made no estimates of the precise volumes at specific points in time.

Poverty

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the relationship between disability and poverty; and how many disabled people his Department defined as poor in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Stroud constituency in each year since 1997. [39185]

Mrs. McGuire: Specific information regarding low income for Great Britain is available in "Households Below Average Income 1994/95–2003/04", available in the Library. The threshold of below 60 per cent. contemporary median income is the most commonly used in reporting trends in low income.

The data source does not allow us to provide robust estimates below regional level.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the number of *(a)* pensioners, *(b)* disabled people, *(c)* couples, *(d)* single people and *(e)* children living in (i) absolute poverty and (ii) relative poverty in each year since 1996–97; and if he will make a statement. [44736]

Margaret Hodge: We are making sustained progress against poverty—41 of our 60 indicators now show an improving trend over time, compared with 35 last year. There are fewer children living in relative, absolute and persistent poverty (700,000 fewer children in relative low income than in 1997); there are fewer children in workless households (400,000 fewer than in 1997); there are fewer older people fewer living in relative, absolute and persistent poverty (700,000 fewer people of state pension age in relative low income and 2 million fewer in absolute low income compared with 1997) and for those living in deprived communities there have been improvements in employment, education and housing. The information requested is in the tables.

Absolute numbers of disabled adults and children with incomes below 60 per cent. median AHC

Million

	Children	*Adults*
1996–97	0.3	2.4
1997–98	0.3	2.5
1998–99	0.3	2.5
1999–2000	0.2	2.2
2000–01	0.2	2.0
2001–02	0.1	1.7
2002–03	0.1	1.5
2003–04	0.1	1.4

Absolute numbers of disabled adults and children with incomes below 60 per cent. median BHC

Million

	Children	*Adults*
1996–97	0.2	1.7
1997–98	0.2	1.8
1998–99	0.2	1.9
1999–2000	0.1	1.6
2000–01	0.1	1.6
2001–02	0.1	1.3
2002–03	0.1	1.2
2003–04	0.1	1.1

Relative numbers of disabled adults and children with incomes below 60 per cent. median AHC

Million

	Children	*Adults*
1996–97	0.3	2.4
1997–98	0.3	2.6
1998–99	0.3	2.7
1999–2000	0.2	2.6
2000–01	0.3	2.7
2001–02	0.2	2.6
2002–03	0.2	2.5
2003–04	0.2	2.3

Relative numbers of disabled adults and children with incomes below 60 per cent. median BHC

Million

	Children	*Adults*
1996–97	0.2	1.7
1997–98	0.2	1.9
1998–99	0.2	2.1
1999–2000	0.2	2.0
2000–01	0.2	2.1
2001–02	0.1	2.1
2002–03	0.2	2.1
2003–04	0.1	2.0

Absolute numbers of couples and singles with incomes below 60 per cent. median AHC

Million

	Singles	*Couples*
1996–97	4.7	2.4
1997–98	4.3	2.3
1998–99	4.1	2.2
1999–2000	3.8	2.0
2000–01	3.2	1.8
2001–02	2.8	1.5
2002–03	2.6	1.4
2003–04	2.6	1.4

Absolute numbers of couples and singles with incomes below 60 per cent. median BHC

Million

	Singles	Couples
1996-97	3.0	2.0
1997-98	2.9	1.9
1998-99	2.7	1.9
1999-2000	2.5	1.7
2000-01	2.4	1.5
2001-02	2.1	1.3
2002-03	1.2	1.2
2003-04	1.9	1.2

Relative numbers of couples and singles with incomes below 60 per cent. median AHC

Million

	Singles	Couples
1996-97	4.7	2.4
1997-98	4.4	2.4
1998-99	4.4	2.3
1999-2000	4.5	2.3
2000-01	4.2	2.3
2001-02	4.0	2.3
2002-03	4.0	2.3
2003-04	3.9	2.3

Relative numbers of couples and singles with incomes below 60 per cent. median BHC

Million

	Singles	Couples
1996-97	3.0	2.0
1997-98	3.0	2.0
1998-99	3.0	2.1
1999-2000	3.1	2.0
2000-01	3.0	1.9
2001-02	3.0	2.0
2002-03	3.1	2.0
2003-04	3.0	2.0

Absolute numbers of pensioners with incomes below 60 per cent median

Million

	BHC	AHC
1996-97	2.2	2.8
1997-98	2.2	2.6
1998-99	2.1	2.4
1999-2000	1.9	2.0
2000-01	1.6	1.6
2001-02	1.5	1.2
2002-03	1.2	1.0
2003-04	1.1	0.9

Relative numbers of pensioners with incomes below 60 per cent median

Million

	BHC	AHC
1996-97	2.2	2.8
1997-98	2.3	2.7
1998-99	2.4	2.7
1999-2000	2.3	2.6
2000-01	2.2	2.5
2001-02	2.0	2.3
2002-03	2.3	2.3
2003-04	2.2	2.0

Absolute numbers of children with incomes below 60 per cent median

Million

	BHC	AHC
1996-97	3.2	4.2
1997-98	3.0	4.0
1998-99	2.8	3.9
1999-2000	2.4	3.6
2000-01	2.0	3.0
2001-02	1.6	2.5
2002-03	1.5	2.2
2003-04	1.4	2.2

Relative numbers of children with incomes below 60 per cent median

Million

	BHC	AHC
1996-97	3.2	4.2
1997-98	3.1	4.1
1998-99	3.1	4.1
1999-2000	3.0	4.1
2000-01	2.7	3.8
2001-02	2.6	3.7
2002-03	2.6	3.6
2003-04	2.6	3.5

Source:
Family Resources Survey (FRS).

Realising Health and Safety Strategy

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress there has been in meeting targets for major reductions in fatal accidents and severe injuries in each year since the publication of the Realising Health and Safety Strategy in 2000. [42657]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is as follows.

Progress on fatal and major injuries

The mid-point 'Revitalising' Health and Safety target (2004-05) for fatal and major injuries is to reduce the incidence rate by 5 per cent. from the base year (1999-2000).

Since 2000, HSE has concentrated on priority areas in partnership with industry. This has resulted in significant improvements in, for instance, construction and falls from height where targets have been met. This activity has not yet shown through as a clear change to the overall fatal and major injuries rate. HSE continues to prioritise its programmes, focussing on delivering targets.

The figures for each year are shown in the following table, and further detailed information is available from the HSE website.

Rate of reported fatal and major injuries to employees

	Rate of reported injury (per 100,000 employees)		
	Fatal injury	Major injury	Fatal and major injury
1999-2000	0.7	116.6	117.3
2000-01	0.9	110.2	111.1
2001-02	0.8	110.9	111.7
2002-03	0.7	111.1	111.8
2003-04	0.7	120.4	121.1
2004-05	0.7	117.7	118.4

Retirement Age

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the oral answer to the hon. Member for Bury St. Edmunds (Mr. Ruffley) of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 7, whether it is the case that no one who is *(a)* a teacher, *(b)* a national health service employee and *(c)* in the civil service, and remains so until the age of 60 years, will be required to defer their retirement beyond the age of 60 years. [48360]

Mr. Timms: No one, in any occupation, in the private or public sector, can be required to defer their retirement beyond a particular age – individuals always retain the right to retire at a time of their choosing (subject to any compulsory maximum retirement age imposed by the employer).

I assume that the hon. Gentleman is in fact referring to normal pensionable ages, the age from which an unreduced pension is available.

Under the agreement on public sector pensions announced last October, a current teacher, NHS employee or civil servant who is already a member of their occupational pension scheme and who does not leave that employment at any subsequent point in their career will retain their existing normal pensionable age of 60. However, the probability is that, of public sector workers aged 20 today 90 per cent. (source: Government Actuary's Department) will not meet this criterion (i.e. they will not remain in the same employment until age 60).

Social Security Fraud

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the annual cost to the public purse resulting from social security fraud in each of the last three years. [50629]

Mr. Plaskitt: In recent years, benefit fraud has been reducing and now stands at £0.9 billion per year – less than 1 per cent. of total benefit expenditure.

The Department produces estimates for the amount overpaid through fraud across the benefits system. Previously published results are in the table.

	Estimate of benefit overpaid	*Comment*
1998–99 to 2002–03	£2 billion per annum	Figure rounded to nearest £1.0 billion.
2003–04 revised estimate	£1.0 billion	Figure rounded to nearest £0.1 billion. Development work to improve the quality of the estimate suggested that the original figure of £1.5 billion was an overstatement.
2004–05	£0.9 billion	Figure rounded to nearest £0.1 billion.

The estimates in the table refer to fraudulent payments of benefit. Some overpayments will be subsequently recovered, so the net loss to the public purse will be less than the level of overpayments.

On 13 October 2005, the Department published our achievements in reducing levels of fraud in the benefit system and plans to reduce it further in 'Reducing fraud in the benefit system: Achievements and ambitions.' Copies are available in the Library.

Stakeholder Pensions

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the lapse rate of stakeholder pension contributors was in each year between 2000 and 2005. [50017]

Mr. Timms: This information is not available. Stakeholder pensions are designed to be flexible, with policy holders being permitted to take breaks in contributions without incurring penalty charges. The Financial Services Authority (FSA) publishes a yearly survey on persistency of life and pension policies which has a table on the levels of persistency for stakeholder pensions. The latest publication is the 2004 survey and it can be found on the FSA's website at http://www.fsa.gov.uk/pubs/other/Persistency_2004.pdf

Sunbeds

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent discussions he has had with the Health and Safety Executive on the operation of unstaffed coin-operated sunbed retail outlets. [48745]

Mrs. McGuire: There have been no recent discussions with HSE on the operation of unstaffed coin-operated sunbed retail outlets; no recent concerns have been expressed to HSE regarding serious injuries at such outlets.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what guidelines the Health and Safety Executive has issued to operators of unstaffed coin-operated sunbed tanning salons. [48747]

Mrs. McGuire: Leaflet INDG209, Controlling Health Risks from the use of UV Tanning Equipment applies to the risks from sunbeds generally.

No guidance has been issued specifically on unstaffed coin-operated tanning salons. However, the guidance in INDG209, including the advice aimed at customers, provides a sensible approach to controlling the risks from using such facilities.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what inspections of sunbed tanning retail outlets the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) undertakes; and what period of notice is given by the HSE for such an inspection. [48753]

Mrs. McGuire: HSE is not responsible for the inspection of retail tanning outlets. This is a local authority responsibility. Each local authority decides on the relative priority of such inspections. Many local authorities also require these facilities to be licensed for public health purposes, and a licensing visit will be made on receipt of the necessary application.

Mrs. James: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the Health and Safety Executive has taken enforcement action against companies operating sunbed tanning salons since 1995; and if he will make a statement. [48759]

Mrs. McGuire: No enforcement action has been taken by HSE against companies operating tanning salons as enforcement responsibility for these premises is allocated to local authorities. HSE only holds voluntary submissions of local authority activity; these records show no enforcement against tanning outlets under health and safety legislation.

Telephone Helplines

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the response rates against targets were for telephone helplines for (*a*) incapacity benefit, (*b*) jobseekers allowance and (*c*) crisis loans in each region in the UK in the last period for which figures are available. [42561]

Margaret Hodge: Jobcentre plus is introducing a new approach to claiming working age benefits, including incapacity benefit and jobseeker's allowance in which customers call a contact centre to make their claim for benefit. This approach is being gradually introduced across the country.

The information provided in the following table relates only to those areas of the country where the new service has been introduced, and it details the percentage of calls answered by each contact centre during December 2005.

It is not possible to identify the response rates for calls by region as calls are not necessarily answered by the nearest geographical contact centre to the customer. We also do not hold information on the individual benefits that each call relates to and, therefore, I am unable to provide information on the response rates specifically for incapacity benefit and jobseekers allowance.

Contact centre	*Region in which the contact centre is based*	*Percentage of calls answered*
Derby	East Midlands	95.2
Grimsby	Yorkshire and Humber	98.4
Halifax	Yorkshire and Humber	93.5
Lincoln	East of England	96.7
Lowestoft	East of England	96.7
Sheffield	Yorkshire and Humber	94.9
Blackburn	North West	93.4
Bootle	North West	97.2
Coventry	West Midlands	93.9
Garston	North West	93.9
Marton Mere	North West	97.2
Telford	West Midlands	94.1
Banbury	South East	96.3
Dundee	Office for Scotland	93.8
Hastings	South East	94.7
Middlesbrough	North East	96.5
Newcastle	North East	93.0
Paisley	Scotland	97.1
Bridgend	Office for Wales	88.2
Cwmbran	Office for Wales	92.1
Pembroke Dock	Office for Wales	93.3
Poole	South West	96.3
Taunton	South West	87.7
Torquay	South West	92.5

Our aim is to answer 90 per cent. of calls. We are aware that two contact centres are not meeting this aim. Measures have been put in place to improve performance, including temporary adjustments to our processes, further recruitment and improved training programmes. These activities have already produced positive results and we are confident that the week-on-week improvements in customer service will continue.

We do not have a specific target for answering calls to Crisis Loan helplines. Specific information on call response time is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Winter Fuel Payments

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people are receiving winter fuel payments in each constituency in Scotland. [51309]

Mr. Timms: This winter's figures are not yet available. The table below gives the number of winter fuel payments made in each constituency in Scotland in winter 2004–05. We expect the numbers to be similar for this winter.

Constituency	*Payments made*
Aberdeen Central	10,775
Aberdeen North	12,485
Aberdeen South	15,455
Airdrie and Shotts	13,455
Angus	17,175
Argyll and Bute	15,950
Ayr	17,155
Banff and Buchan	15,430
Caithness Sunderland and Easter Ross	12,015
Carrick Cumnock and Doon Valley	18,360
Central Fife	14,810
Clydebank and Milngavie	14,185
Clydesdale	16,415
Coatbridge and Chryston	12,220
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	6,345
Cumbernauld and Kilsyth	10,490
Cunninghame North	16,810
Cunninghame South	11,850
Dumbarton	14,155
Dumfries	18,810
Dundee East	15,620
Dundee West	13,835
Dunfermline East	13,250
Dunfermline West	12,880
East Kilbride	16,645
East Lothian	16,620
Eastwood	18,465
Edinburgh Central	11,255
Edinburgh East and Musselburgh	15,285
Edinburgh North and Leigh	11,750
Edinburgh Pentlands	14,690
Edinburgh South	13,990
Edinburgh West	17,670
Falkirk East	14,600
Falkirk West	14,085
Galloway and Upper Nithsdale	17,825
Glasgow Anniesland	12,930
Glasgow Baillieston	10,870
Glasgow Cathcart	11,460
Glasgow Govan	9,340
Glasgow Kelvin	9,090
Glasgow Maryhill	10,300
Glasgow Pollok	12,190
Glasgow Rutherglen	12,855
Glasgow Shettleston	10,425

Constituency	Payments made
Glasgow Springburn	12,200
Gordon	15,095
Greenock and Inverclyde	12,710
Hamilton North and Bellshill	12,160
Hamilton South	10,980
Inverness East Nairn and Lochaber	18,155
Kilmarnock and Loudoun	15,595
Kirkcaldy	14,040
Linlithgow	13,070
Livingston	12,175
Midlothian	12,525
Moray	16,720
Motherwell and Wishaw	13,895
North East Fife	16,870
North Tayside	19,715
Ochil	14,285
Orkney and Shetland	8,570
Paisley North	12,130
Paisley South	13,775
Perth	17,700
Ross Skye and Inverness West	15,670
Roxburgh and Berwickshire	14,885
Stirling	14,450
Strathkelvin and Bearsden	17,045
Tweeddale Ettrick and Lauderdale	14,075
West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine	14,840
West Renfrewshire	12,260

Notes:
1. Figures rounded to the nearest five.
2. Parliamentary constituencies are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant ONS postcode directory.

Source:
Information Directorate, 100 per cent. sample.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will extend winter fuel payments to those people who are severely disabled. [51310]

Mr. Timms: There are no plans to extend the winter fuel payment scheme to severely disabled people under age 60. Help is already available through disability benefits and the disability premium in income-related benefits in recognition of the extra costs, including heating, which disabled people may have.

Workless Households

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what target he has for reducing *(a)* the number and *(b)* the proportion of children in workless households; and what progress has been made against those targets. [43821]

Margaret Hodge: As a result of this Government's successful policies and stewardship of the economy there are 700,000 fewer children living in relative low income than in 1997, and 400,000 fewer children in households where no one works.

The Spending Review 2002 Public Service Agreement (SR02 PSA) target is to reduce the proportion of children in households (CIWH) with no one in work over the three years from spring 2003 to spring 2006 by 6½ per cent.

The Spending Review 2004 Public Service Agreement (SR04 PSA) target is to reduce the proportion of children living in workless households by 5 per cent. between spring 2005 and spring 2008.

At the beginning of the SR02 PSA target period (spring 2003) the proportion of children living in workless households was approximately 16.1 per cent. (1.8 million). Achieving the SR02 PSA target will require a reduction of 1 percentage point to 15.1 per cent., equivalent to a reduction in the number of CIWH of approximately 150,000 by spring 2006.

At spring 2005 the proportion of children living in workless households was 15.7 per cent. (1.75 million), representing a reduction of 0.4 percentage points from the baseline. A further reduction of 0.6 percentage points would have to be achieved in 2005–06 to meet this target.

The spring 2005 figures form the baseline for the CIWH SR04 PSA. Achieving this target will require a reduction of 0.7 percentage points to 15 per cent. by spring 2008 equivalent to a reduction in the number of CIWH of approximately 128,000 by spring 2006.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Religious Festivals

15. **David T.C. Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans the Home Office has to celebrate religious festivals over the coming 12 months. [50404]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office has lead responsibility for race equality, diversity and cohesion. At various times throughout the year we celebrate the contribution made by all the main faiths including Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu and Sikh. We are still considering our programme of events for the next 12 months.

Incitement to Violence

17. **Mr. Heathcoat-Amory:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to amend the law relating to incitement to violence. [50406]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Existing law already makes it an offence to incite murder or other crimes of violence. However, we are strengthening our law by creating a new offence of encouragement to terrorism. This will cover both direct and indirect encouragement and the Government believes it should also encompass glorification of terrorism.

Commissioner for Victims and Witnesses

18. **Rosie Cooper:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made in establishing a commissioner for victims and witnesses; and if he will make a statement. [50407]

Andy Burnham: The recruitment campaign to appoint a new Commissioner for victims and witnesses was launched on 25 January.

The Commissioner will build on our recent reforms to the criminal justice system and be an independent voice for victims and witnesses in Government, influencing policy and championing their rights.

The Commissioner's role will include keeping the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime under review, making recommendations on funding of services to victims and their families via the victims' fund, and ensuring criminal justice system partners work together more effectively to meet the needs of victims and witnesses.

We aim to announce an appointment in April.

Departmental Accounting

19. **Adam Afriyie:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has commissioned to establish whether good accounting practices are followed in his Department. [50408]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office is in the process of commissioning a review of the factors that caused the delay to the accounts, an analysis of the current state of financial accounting environment; an assessment of the existing improvement plans; and recommendations for additional steps that need to be taken. This short-focussed review is due to commence in early March and initial conclusions will be reported to the Home Office Audit Committee on 27 March 2006.

25. **James Brokenshire:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the decision of the National Audit Office not to sign off his Department's accounts. [50414]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I am disappointed at the National Audit Office's (NAO) decision. A great deal of work has already been done to put right the problems which arose from the introduction of the new accounting system.

Although the NAO could not sign off the Home Office resource accounts, they did confirm that no fraudulent payments were made during 2004-05. Both our systems and financial control frameworks are being strengthened and we are recruiting additional qualified accountants to improve our financial accounting capability.

I will be appointing a firm of accountants to undertake an urgent review to establish whether any additional steps need to be taken.

Prisons

20. **Paul Flynn:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes have taken place in the number of *(a)* males and *(b)* females imprisoned since 1991. [50409]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The number of people imprisoned, which includes those remanded in custody, was 45,626 in 1991 of whom 44,082 were males and 1,544 female. In 2005 there were 76,190 people imprisoned, 71,676 males and 4,514 females.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the drop-out rate for prison officers within two years of recruitment at each prison; and if he will make a statement. [44352]

Fiona Mactaggart: The proportion of prison officers leaving the service within two years of beginning their careers as officers is 11.2 per cent. This figure includes both newly recruited officers and existing Prison Service staff who converted to the officer grade. The nature of the prison officer role means that the Prison Service considers it acceptable that eight out of nine new officers stay in post for more than two years. A breakdown of the drop-out rates within two years of starting, by geographic area is shown in the table. Highest drop out rates are recorded in London and the South East, where more competitive and fluid employment markets operate.

Drop out rates for prison officers between January 2002 and December 2003

Establishment on joining	*Number of newly recruited officers and conversions January 2002 to December 2003*	*Percentage who left within two years*
Acklington	37	2.7
Albany	25	12.0
Ashwell	25	12.0

Drop out rates for prison officers between January 2002 and December 2003

Establishment on joining	*Number of newly recruited officers and conversions January 2002 to December 2003*	*Percentage who left within two years*
Askham Grange	10	10.0
Aylesbury	23	13.0
Bedford	16	18.8
Belmarsh	94	9.6
Birmingham	203	11.3
Blakenhurst	63	12.7
Blundeston	14	7.1
Brinsford	29	6.9
Bristol	34	5.9
Brixton	63	22.2
Brockhill	18	22.2
Buckley Hall	18	0.0
Bullingdon	73	27.4
Bullwood Hall	13	30.8
Camp Hill	23	8.7
Canterbury	2	0.0
Cardiff	23	13.0
Castington	19	0.0
Channings Wood	15	0.0
Chelmsford	26	19.2
Coldingley	12	0.0
Cookham Wood	13	15.4
Deerbolt	42	0.0
Dorchester	9	0.0
Dover	2	0.0
Downview	28	21.4
Drake Hall	38	21.1
Durham	35	0.0
East Sutton Park	3	0.0
Eastwood Park	29	3.4
Edmunds Hill	36	8.3
Elmley	43	2.3
Erlestoke	41	24.4
Everthorpe	9	0.0
Exeter	26	7.7
Featherstone	7	0.0
Feltham	191	17.3
Ford	2	50.0
Foston Hall	26	34.6
Frankland	38	0.0
Full Sutton	83	2.4
Garth	21	4.8
Gartree	19	10.5
Glen Parva	23	13.0
Gloucester	17	35.3
Grendon	25	4.0
Guys Marsh	43	9.3
Haslar	11	9.1
Haverigg	13	0.0
High Down	38	5.3
Highpoint	72	11.1
Hindley	27	3.7
Hollesley Bay	8	12.5
Holloway	98	13.3
Holme House	19	0.0
Hull	84	7.1
Huntercombe	45	22.2

Drop out rates for prison officers between January 2002 and December 2003

Establishment on joining	*Number of newly recruited officers and conversions January 2002 to December 2003*	*Percentage who left within two years*
Kingston	7	0.0
Kirkham	3	0.0
Kirklevington Grange	7	14.3
Lancaster	9	0.0
Lancaster Farms	21	4.8
Latchmere House	1	0.0
Leeds	48	10.4
Leicester	23	4.3
Lewes	29	6.9
Leyhill	2	0.0
Lincoln	27	3.7
Lindholme	14	14.3
Littlehey	23	21.7
Long Lartin	26	3.8
Low Newton	38	2.6
Maidstone	28	28.6
Manchester	34	8.8
Moorland	34	2.9
Morton Hall	46	13.0
New Hall	47	14.9
North Sea Camp	13	0.0
Northallerton	9	22.2
Norwich	31	12.9
Nottingham	28	3.6
Onley	48	10.4
Parkhurst	34	2.9
Pentonville	107	21.5
Portland	17	23.5
Preston	14	14.3
Ranby	28	3.6
Reading	18	33.3
Risley	64	7.8
Rochester	18	11.1
Send	13	23.1
Shepton Mallet	1	0.0
Shrewsbury	8	0.0
Stafford	20	5.0
Standford Hill	6	0.0
Stocken	23	4.3
Stoke Heath	43	9.3
Styal	39	7.7
Sudbury	4	0.0
Swaleside	75	16.0
Swansea	8	0.0
Swinfen Hall	9	0.0
The Mount	38	23.7
The Verne	2	0.0
Usk/Prescoed	1	0.0
Wakefield	31	0.0
Wandsworth	85	17.6
Warren Hill	32	18.8
Wayland	21	0.0
Wealstun	22	9.1
Weare	16	18.8
Wellingborough	29	10.3
Werrington	18	16.7
Wetherby	30	0.0
Whatton	23	0.0
Whitemoor	66	4.5
Winchester	25	16.0

Drop out rates for prison officers between January 2002 and December 2003

Establishment on joining	*Number of newly recruited officers and conversions January 2002 to December 2003*	*Percentage who left within two years*
Woodhill	88	6.8
Wormwood Scrubs	59	15.3
Wymott	22	4.5
Prison Service total	3,895	11.2

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which prison wings, having been closed awaiting refurbishment, have been reopened this year without work being completed. [47569]

Mr. Charles Clarke: No prison wings have been taken out of use for refurbishment and brought back into use this year without any work being completed on them.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have been *(a)* tested and *(b)* found positive for alcohol at each prison for each month since April 2005; and if he will make a statement. [48417]

Fiona Mactaggart: This information is not collated centrally.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* passive and *(b)* active dogs are deployed at each prison; and if he will make a statement. [48421]

Fiona Mactaggart: Passive and active drug dogs are a part of the Prison Service drug supply reduction policy. The following table shows how many of each type of dogs are deployed at each prison in England and Wales.

Breakdown of dog allocation across the Prison Service

	Passive	*Active*
North West area		
Buckley hall	1	—
Garth	2	2
Haverigg	2	2
Hindley	—	—
Kirkham	—	—
Lancaster castle	—	—
Lancaster farms	—	—
Liverpool	—	—
Preston	—	—
Risley	1	3
Styal	1	1
Thorn Cross	—	—
Wymott	3	3
Area office	15	11
North East area		
Acklington	2	1
Castington	2	2
Deerbolt	2	2
Durham	6	5
Holme House	2	2
Kirklevington	—	—
Low Newton	2	3
Yorkshire and Humberside		
Askham Grange	—	—
Everthorpe	—	—
Hull	—	—

Breakdown of dog allocation across the Prison Service

	Passive	*Active*
Leeds	—	—
Lindholme	—	—
Moorland Closed	—	—
Moorland Open	—	—
New Hall	1	1
Northallerton	—	—
Wealstun	—	—
Wetherby	—	—
Area office	15	14
East Midlands		
Ashwell	2	2
Foston Hall	2	2
Gartree	2	2
Glen Parva	3	2
Leicester	1	2
Lincoln	2	2
Morton Hall	1	1
North Sea Camp	—	—
Nottingham	—	2
Onley	2	1
Ranby	3	2
Stocken	3	3
Sudbury	2	2
Wellingborough	2	2
Whatton	—	—
Area office	1	—
West Midlands		
Birmingham	3	3
Blakenhurst	2	1
Brinsford	1	—
Brockhill	—	—
Drake Hall	1	1
Featherstone	1	1
Hewell Grange	—	—
Shrewsbury	1	1
Stafford	1	2
Stoke Heath	1	2
Swinfen Hall	1	2
Werrington	—	—
Area office	—	—
Wales		
Cardiff	1	1
Swansea	1	12
Usk/Prescoed	—	—
Eastern		
Bedford	2	2
Blundeston	2	2
Bullwood Hall	1	1
Chelmsford	2	2
Edmunds Hill	2	2
Highpoint	3	2
Hollesley Bay	1	1
Littlehay	2	2
The Mount	2	2
Norwich	3	3
Warren Hill	1	1
Wayland	3	2
Area office	—	—
London		
Brixton	2	2
Feltham	—	2
Holloway	2	2
Latchmere House	—	—
Pentonville	2	3

Breakdown of dog allocation across the Prison Service

	Passive	Active
Wandsworth	1	1
Wormwood Scrubs	—	1
Kent		
Blantyre House	—	—
Canterbury	—	—
Cookham Wood	—	—
Dover	—	—
East Sutton Park	—	—
Elmley	—	—
Maidstone	—	—
Rochester	—	—
Standford Hill	—	—
Swaleside	—	—
Area office	6	7
Surrey and Sussex		
Coldingley	1	1
Downview	2	2
Ford	—	—
High Down	1	1
Lewes	—	—
Send	2	1
Thames Valley/Hampshire/IOW		
Albany	1	2
Aylesbury	1	1
Bullingdon	2	2
Camp Hill	1	1
Grendon/Spring Hill	2	1
Haslar	—	—
Huntercombe	1	1
Kingston	2	1
Parkhurst	1	2
Reading	1	—
Winchester	3	3
South West		
Bristol	3	2
Channings Wood	2	2
Dartmoor	1	2
Dorchester	2	2
Eastwood Park	2	2
Erlestoke	1	1
Exeter	2	2
Gloucester	—	2
Guys Marsh	1	—
Leyhill	1	1
Portland	1	2
Shepton Mallet	1	1
The Verne	1	1
Area office	1	3
Contracted prisons		
Altcourse	3	3
Ashfield	1	—
Bronzefield	1	1
Doncaster	2	2
Dovegate	2	1
Forest Bank	2	1
Lowdham grange	1	1
Pare	2	2
Peterborough	1	1
Rye Hill	3	2
Wolds	2	1
High Security		
Belmarsh	6	6
Frankland	5	6
Full Sutton	2	3
Long Lartin	2	3
Manchester	3	3
Wakefield	3	6
Whitemoor	4	5
Woodhill	3	3
National Dog and Technical Support Group	0	7
Total	222	242

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many serving staff in the Prison Service are in receipt of a Long Service Award; and if he will make a statement. [48425]

Fiona Mactaggart: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, approximately 2,900 staff are eligible for the Director General's Long Service Award, having served 25 years in the Prison Service (or 25 years in the civil service, with 20 of those years in the Prison Service).

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps are being taken to reduce the supply of *(a)* controlled drugs and *(b)* mobile telephones into HMP Wandsworth; what assessment he has made of their effectiveness; and if he will make a statement. [48510]

Fiona Mactaggart: Wandsworth has developed robust anti-trafficking measures, using intelligence and visible deterrence including wall patrols and dogs. All visitors to prisoners are warned of the risks they are taking if they try to smuggle drugs. All visitors are subject to standard search procedures using prison staff and passive drug dogs. The prison works closely with the Metropolitan police in action against organised drug gangs. Regular searching of prison staff takes place to check that contraband is not being brought into the prison. Intelligence is assessed against individuals suspected of corruption. A substantial number of mobile phones have been seized over the past 12 months as a result of a combination of searching and intelligence. The number of mobile phones seized has impacted on the trade of drugs. This is evidenced by a year on year reduction in the Mandatory Drug Testing (MDT) rate. MDT failure rates in November 2004 were at 18 per cent. compared with 12 per cent. in November 2005.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which prisons in *(a)* England and *(b)* the north east hold more prisoners than their normal certified level; and by how much each is over its limit. [48662]

Fiona Mactaggart: As at 3 February 2006 there were no prisons in *(a)* England or *(b)* the north east that held more prisoners than their certified operational capacity.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the number of prisoners in *(a)* England and *(b)* London who (i) enter and (ii) successfully complete education training and employment upon release. [48703]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office routinely collects data on the proportions of prisoners in England and Wales reporting having employment, training or

education (ETE) arranged on release. The latest figures for November 2005 show that 35 per cent. of prisoners about to be discharged reported having ETE arranged.

The figure for prisoners being released from London prisons (not the same as returning to live in London) is also 35 per cent. It should be noted that the figures refer to the proportions of prisoners reporting having ETE arranged and no checks are routinely made to examine the proportions who actually do enter ETE on release or how soon after release this occurs. No information is currently collected on the proportions or numbers of discharged prisoners who successfully complete any training or education after release or how long discharged prisoners stay in employment.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners in *(a)* England and *(b)* each prison in London entered education training and employment in each year since 1996–97. [48705]

Fiona Mactaggart: There are no records kept of the numbers entering education, training or employment (ETE) in custody. Education is measured in outcomes as opposed to entries, and employment and training in prisons are not measured as specific activities during custody. Information is recorded for prisoners leaving establishments in England with ETE arranged.

ETE outcomes also include those who attended FRESHSTART appointments at Jobcentre Plus. FRESHSTART is the initiative whereby prisoners who do not have a job or training place to go to on release are linked into employment, training and benefits advice and support immediately after release. Figures for ETE are available for the last three years and are recorded in the table.

Figures for England and London for prison service area

	Discharges	*ETE at discharge*
2002–03		
England	81,748	20,451
London		
Brixton	1,013	71
Feltham	577	151
Latchmere House	185	147
Pentonville	1,701	226
Wandsworth	1,795	266
Wormwood Scrubs	776	164
London total	6,047	1,025
2003–04		
England	83,801	32,512
London		
Brixton	1,015	113
Feltham	520	176
Latchmere House	147	100
Pentonville	1,779	536
Wandsworth	1,587	357
Wormwood Scrubs	991	400
London total	6,039	1,681
2004–05		
England	82,031	39,361
London		
Brixton	788	144
Feltham	351	147
Holloway (F)	663	192
Latchmere House	151	143
Pentonville	1,719	630
Wandsworth	1,477	631
Wormwood Scrubs	1,251	585
London total	6,400	2,471

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have been released from Bronzefield Prison, Ashford in each month since it opened. [49872]

Fiona Mactaggart: The figures in the table are for final discharges only and do not include discharges to court or hospital.

	Number
2004	
June	1
July	28
August	33
September	50
October	46
November	52
December	51
2005	
January	46
February	49
March	48
April	61
May	51
June	61
July	54
August	45
September	45
October	47
November	45
December	42
2006	
January	35
Total	890

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reasons are for the underestimate of the overall cost of the building programme at HMP Chelmsford; why the underestimate was discovered as early as one month after building work commenced; what steps are to be taken to rectify the situation; and if he will make a statement. [48369]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) is currently carrying out a review to establish the reasons for the underestimate. The outcome of the review should be available early in the new financial year.

Police Restructuring

21. **Michael Gove:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on progress with his plans for the reorganisation of police services. [50410]

Hazel Blears: The Home Secretary made a Written Ministerial Statement on the progress of police force restructuring on 6 February.

Under-age Drinking

23. **Helen Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made in tackling under-age drinking. [50412]

Paul Goggins: The Government have put in place a number of measures to tackle under-age drinking. Through initiatives like Challenge 21 it has worked closely with the alcohol industry to ensure that drinks retailers reduce sales to under-18s. Targeted enforcement has reduced the number of illegal sales to children. In the latest Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign, the failure rate for supermarkets was 17 per cent., down from 50 per cent. in summer 2005.

Volunteering

24. **Sarah McCarthy-Fry:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to increase opportunities for volunteers. [50413]

Paul Goggins: The numbers of volunteers in England are at record levels. During the Year of the Volunteer in 2005 over 3,000 events were held across 12 themed months with over 2.2 billion volunteering minutes pledged by the public.

But too many people still face barriers to volunteering, particularly those at risk of exclusion. That is why the Government will invest at least £3 million over the next two years to identify and break down those barriers, making volunteering accessible to all through funding projects across country.

Asylum/Immigration

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers who had *(a)* signed up for and *(b)* not signed up for section 4 support have returned home since the introduction of section 4 support, broken down by country of origin. [49090]

Mr. McNulty: Statistics on the number of unsuccessful asylum seekers who have left the UK do not distinguish between those who have received section 4 support and those who have not. The available information on the number of unsuccessful asylum seekers who have returned in the last quarter for which figures are available is contained in the table. During this period the total number on section 4 support increased from 6,715 to 7,630 excluding dependants. Asylum statistics can be found on the Home Office website at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds

Top 10 asylum removal nationalities (principal applicants)

	Number
Serbia and Montenegro	440
Afghanistan	325
Iraq	255
Turkey	225
Pakistan	180
Nigeria	170
Iran	155
Albania	145
India	120
China	100
Other nationalities	1,350
Total	3,460

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what status failed asylum seekers have whose country of origin has refused to accept them on deportation and who have been returned to the UK; what provision is made by the Department in such cases; and if he will make a statement. [50018]

Mr. McNulty: Failed asylum seekers whose country of origin has refused to accept them on removal and who have been returned to the UK will not be granted leave to enter or remain. If they are granted temporary admission we will make further attempts to remove them through re-documentation or the use of international instruments as appropriate.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers with dental qualifications entered the UK in each of the last three years. [50656]

Mr. McNulty: Information on how many asylum seekers with dental qualifications have entered the UK is not available.

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he gives to his officials on the time in which they should respond to requests for information to process entry clearance applications from overseas posts. [50063]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* There exists a Service Level Agreement between UKvisas and IND (Evidence & Enquiry Unit), which sets a process time of 25 days from receipt of straightforward written inquiries from posts abroad to the despatch of responses.

Mr. Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether those convicted of offences involving incitement to violence will be covered by his powers to deprive people of *(a)* citizenship and *(b)* abode as set out in the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Bill; and if he will make a statement. [50174]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* This kind of offence might well lead us to explore the possibility of taking deprivation action. It would depend on the precise circumstances of the offence and the full context. We would need to make a judgment about the seriousness of the offence and whether it was conducive to the public good to take such action.

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many *(a)* immigration and *(b)* asylum applications switched to spouse status in each year since 1992, broken down by country of origin; [49072]

(2) how many asylum applicants switched to migration applications in each year since 1992. [49110]

Mr. McNulty: Migrants who wish to vary the basis of their stay while in the UK must meet the relevant requirements of the immigration rules. There has never been any provision for asylum applicants to switch into managed migration routes, including marriage. Statistics on switching into the marriage category from other immigration categories are not available.

However, each case is considered on its individual merits, and caseworkers have discretion to grant leave where there are particular compelling circumstances. To compile statistics would require review of individual cases and hence the information requested is available only at disproportionate cost.

John Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* work permit recipients and *(b)* immigration applicants switched to asylum applications in each year since 1992. [49109]

Mr. McNulty: Any migrant who is in the UK under an Immigration Rules category such as work permit holder can make a claim for asylum if they believe they have a well founded fear of return under the UN Convention. There are no published statistics on the numbers of people in the UK in another capacity who subsequently make a claim for asylum.

The number of work permit recipients who switched to asylum applications in each year since 2003 (according to our CID records) are:

	Number
2003	41
2004	33
2005	49

The number of other immigration applications who switched to asylum applications in each year since 2003 (according to our CID records) are:

	Number
2003	897
2004	778
2005	719

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when Joseph Thabet, reference LR1921 00 5904, will receive notification of his immigration status. [50307]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) wrote to Mr. Thabet advising him of his immigration status on 6 February. IND also wrote to the hon. Member to advise him of the outcome of this case on 8 February.

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list ports and airports which have had a permanent presence of immigration officials in each year since 1999–2000. [49753]

Mr. McNulty: Immigration coverage of international arrivals is based upon a range of factors, including the nature and frequency of traffic and the numbers of passengers requiring leave to enter at each port. There are currently 41 manned ports, of which 16 are staffed 24 hours a day in the UK. These ports are Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, East Midlands, Edinburgh, Gatwick, Glasgow, Heathrow, Liverpool, Luton, Manchester, Robin Hood, Stansted, Harwich and Portsmouth. All except Robin Hood have been staffed permanently since 1999. Robin Hood opened in 2005 and has been staffed 24 hours a day since then. Other ports are covered on a risk assessed and intelligence basis. Officers are deployed to unmanned ports to meet specific arrivals where necessary.

Child Protection

Bob S[illegible]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he has issued to police on the use of cautions in respect of the offence of having indecent pictures of children. [48539]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 2 February 2006]*: Guidance on the cautioning of adult offenders is contained in the Cautioning of Adult Offenders Circular 30/2005 issued by the Home Office. The circular offers a framework to help police officers exercise their discretion and professional judgment, but does not provide guidance in relation to individual offences.

The questions to consider in each case are whether a caution is appropriate to the offence and the offender, and whether a caution is likely to be effective in the circumstances. Broadly, the criteria for cautioning are that there should be sufficient evidence of guilt and a clear and reliable admission of the offence, that it is in the public interest to use a caution as the appropriate means of disposal, and that the suspect should be 18 years or over.

Indictable-only cases must be referred to the Crown Prosecution Service. If all the above requirements are met, the police officer must consider whether the seriousness of the offence makes it appropriate for disposal by a caution. In order to assist with this decision, officers have been provided with a Gravity Factors Matrix, which is available on the Police National Legal Database. The guidance offers general advice in relation to sexual offences, which include the offence of possessing indecent images of children under 16.

It advises that a decision to issue a caution in cases involving such offences should not be taken without consulting other relevant agencies. Currently a caution received on or after 1 May 2004 for a relevant sexual offence makes the offender subject to the notification requirements of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 for two years from the date of the caution.

Community Policing

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to develop community policing. [50411]

Hazel Blears: The Government wants local policing services to be driven by neighbourhood and community needs. We want local people to have a say in what the priorities are, and to know, trust and have confidence in their local policing team.

We are therefore committed to ensuring that, by 2008, every area in England and Wales will benefit from dedicated, accessible and visible neighbourhood policing teams—led by police officers but involving special constables, community support officers, volunteers, neighbourhood wardens and others too. A programme to deliver on this commitment is well under way.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 25 October from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Razia Sultana. [38422]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I replied to the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton on 20 December 2005.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, of 23 September 2005 on behalf of Corene, Germane and Jeremy Williams, children of Conrad Williams (Home Office Reference W1018091, acknowledgement reference B2263815). [49851]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood on 8 February 2006.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his Department will reply to the letter of 6th December from the hon. Member for Warley regarding Mr. Faisal Ahmed of Smethwick. [50840]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to the right hon. Member for Warley on 8 February 2006.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his Department will reply to the letter of 15 November 2005 from the hon. Member for Warley regarding Mr. Tirath Singh of Oldbury. [50841]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate replied to the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Warley on 10 February 2006.

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his Department will reply to the letter of 14 November 2005 from the right hon. Member for Warley regarding Mr. Santokh Singh Dhanda, of Smethwick. [50843]

Mr. McNulty: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate wrote to my right hon. Friend on 6 February 2006.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 22 November 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Ms A. Khalik. [41842]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 12 January 2006.

Credit Cards

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to compel credit card companies to report the *(a)* theft and *(b)* misuse of credit cards to the police; and if he will make a statement. [47218]

Paul Goggins: It is for credit card companies and individuals to decide whether to report theft or misuse of credit cards to the police and I have no plans to introduce powers to compel them to do so. The banking industry, which maintains comprehensive statistics on the level of plastic card fraud, works closely, with the police to tackle fraud and is funding a successful specialist police unit (The Dedicated Cheque and Plastic Crime Unit) to tackle organised cheque and card fraud.

Criminal Injuries Compensation

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average length of time taken to settle applications for criminal injuries compensation was in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [49046]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority advise that the median average elapsed time from the date of receipt of an application to the date of first offer was 248 days in 2004, and 291 days in 2005.

Departmental Finance

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* England and *(b)* London; and what administrative costs associated with these functions were for each area in the last year for which figures are available. [39820]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Home Office functions cover a wide range of activities across the United Kingdom and it is not possible, without incurring disproportionate costs, to identify these in the way that has been requested.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which functions of his core Department are carried out in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* Wales; and what administrative costs were associated with these functions for each area in the last year. [39945]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Home Office functions cover a wide range of activities across the United Kingdom and it is not possible, without incurring disproportionate costs, to identify these in the way that has been requested.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what functions in his Department are carried out in Scotland; and what the administrative costs of these functions were in the last year for which figures are available. [40014]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Home Office functions cover a wide range of activities across the United Kingdom and it is not possible, without incurring disproportionate costs, to identify these in the way that has been requested.

Departmental Property

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* personal computers, *(b)* laptops, *(c)* servers, *(d)* printers, *(e)* scanners, *(f)* photocopiers and *(g)* fax machines (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in each English region owned in (1) 2003–04 and (2) 2004–05. [40074]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The large majority of IT equipment used by the Department is leased from IT provider, Sirius.

The large majority of IT equipment used by the Department does not therefore appear on the asset register as the Home Office does not own it.

IT items of equipment owned outright by Home Office Core are listed, using the same lettering sequence as the question *(a)* in both 2003–04 and in 2004–05, three were owned *(b)* in both 2003–04 and in 2004–05, 620 were owned *(c)* in 2003–04, 181 were owned; in 2004–05, 182 were owned *(d)* in both 2003–04 and 2004–05, five were owned *(e)* in both 2003–04 and 2004–05, 54 were owned *(f)* in 2003–04, 0 were owned; in 2004–05, two were owned *(g)* in both 2003–04 and 2004–05, one was owned.

This response does not include items owned by non-departmental public bodies, Executive agencies or other public bodies.

Detention, Escort and Population Unit

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many requests for reasons of detention were received by the Detention, Escort and Population Management Unit in each of the last three years. [50647]

Mr. McNulty: None.

DNA

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what response he *(a)* has made and *(b)* plans to make to the recommendations in the Select Committee on Science and Technology's Seventh Paper, Forensic Science on Trial, HC96 2004–05, that independent research should be undertaken to assess (i) the public attitude towards retention of DNA samples from convicted criminals and others and (ii) the evidence of benefits associated with retaining DNA samples. [47538]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Government's response to the recommendations in the Select Committee's report was placed in the House Library on 25 July 2005. The benefits of retaining DNA profiles on the national DNA database is evidenced by the number of matches with crime scene stains which provide vital intelligence to the police in the investigation of those offences.

Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on progress in implementing section 14 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004. [37750]

Fiona Mactaggart: Section 14 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 has not yet been implemented.

Drug Offences

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of people arrested tested positive for *(a)* opiates, *(b)* cocaine and *(c)* any drug at the time of their arrest in each of the last five years. [47716]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We cannot currently provide this information on a national basis, or for the specified years. However, some indication is provided by research published by the Home Office in 2004 from the New English and Welsh Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Programme (NEW-ADAM).

This provided information on the proportion of arrested persons testing positive for drugs who had voluntarily agreed to an interview and to provide a urine specimen for analysis. The research was undertaken in selected large custody suites in 16 police force areas between 1999 and 2001 involving approximately 3,000 arrestees, 95 per cent. of whom agreed to provide a urine sample.

The research showed that for those arrestees voluntarily providing a urine sample, *(a)* 31 per cent. tested positive for opiates *(b)* 22 per cent. for cocaine and *(c)* 69 per cent. for any drug excluding alcohol.

The NEW-ADAM survey programme has been replaced by a new, continuous, nationally-representative Arrestee Survey. Results from the first year of the survey, covering interviews with about 7,500 arrestees in 60 custody suites from around the country conducted between October 2003 and September 2004, will be published shortly. The survey is on-going and will provide information on trends in drug use among all arrestees in the future.

The Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) was introduced by this Government to break the links between drugs and crime. The intensive form of the programme operates in 97 areas with a history of high levels of drug related crime. Individuals charged with a range of trigger offences, identified through research to be closely linked to drug misuse, are drug tested for specified class A drugs.

New provisions contained in the Drugs Act 2005 were successfully implemented in three police force areas on 1 December 2005. Testing on arrest now becomes an alternative to testing on charge for those adults arrested for a "trigger offence", enabling adults misusing specified class A drugs to be identified earlier in their contact with the criminal justice system, so that they may be steered into treatment and away from crime as soon as possible. Those testing positive will be required to attend an assessment of their drug use. The provisions will be rolled out to the remaining intensive areas in England on 31 March 2006.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were sentenced to 14 years imprisonment for dealing in *(a)* cannabis, *(b)* heroin and *(c)* cocaine in each year since 1993. [48444]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 2 February 2006]*: The information requested is contained in the table.

Number of persons sentenced to immediate custody for a period of exactly 14 years for the offence of dealing[1] in cannabis, heroin and cocaine, in England and Wales—1994 to 2004

Offenders

	Cannabis	*Heroin*	*Cocaine*
1994	—	2	—
1995	—	2	1
1996	—	1	—
1997	—	3	—
1998	—	—	—
1999	—	1	—
2000	—	2	2
2001	—	—	3
2002	—	3	1
2003	—	—	2
2004	—	1	1

[1] Interpreted as supplying or offering to supply or being concerned in supplying or being concerned in offering to supply and having possession of a controlled drug with intent to supply.

Source:
RDS NOMS 2 February 2006

Drug Testing/Treatment Programmes

John Penrose: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals were tested for drugs in North Somerset in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004 and *(c)* 2005; and how many tests were (i) positive and (ii) negative in each year. [45249]

Paul Goggins: The Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) is a critical part of the Government's strategy for tackling drugs. Intensive elements of the programme are operational in 97 high acquisitive crime areas and include testing for class A drugs on charge for certain trigger offences.

From 1 December 2005 new provisions contained in the Drugs Act 2005 have been implemented in three police force areas: Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire and Nottingham. These give police powers to test for specified class A drugs on arrest and to require persons who have tested positive for a specified class A drug to attend an assessment of their drug use (an initial assessment). Whilst the DIP provisions for drug testing are not operational in North Somerset but other key elements of the programme are. Offenders can be tested for drug use as a requirement of a community sentence, either as part of a drug treatment and testing order (DTTO) or, since April 2005, a drug rehabilitation requirement (DRR) of the community order. The number of DTTOs and DRRs made in North Somerset from 2003–05 were:

	DTTOs	*DRRs*
2003	5	—
2004	22	—
2005	24	8

The results of drug tests on offenders subject to DTTOs/DRRs within North Somerset from 2003–05 is not centrally available. Drug testing of prolific and other priority offenders (PPOs) on licence was introduced across England and Wales from April 2005. Three PPOs within North Somerset had been made subject to such a licence condition up to 31 December 2005. Aggregated drug test data for PPOs on licence within North Somerset are not routinely collected centrally.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2892W, on drug testing (drivers), what discussions he has had with his Australian counterpart on the use of tests on saliva for the presence of drugs. [R] [48120]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office Scientific Development Branch is currently developing a device to test for the presence of drugs via analysis of saliva. The branch keeps fully abreast of relevant work in other countries, including the recent developments in Australia. An official from the branch attended in December a conference reporting the Australian experience and other findings worldwide. All relevant material will be taken properly into account as work continues.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug testing and treatment conditions have been attached to *(a)* action plan orders and *(b)* supervision orders. [47713]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Government remain committed to exploring as many avenues as possible to ensure that young people receive appropriate provision to address their substance misuse. Drug treatment and testing conditions attached to action plan orders and supervision orders are part of a range of available interventions.

The latest monitoring data (December 2005), shows that 14 drug treatment and testing conditions have been attached to supervision orders in the five areas where this intervention has been piloted. To date, courts have not applied either a treatment option, or a treatment and testing option to an action plan order. It is recognised that not all young people will be assessed as needing the rigours of an on-going drug treatment or drug treatment and testing requirement to address their substance misuse. The important principle remains to make the widest range of interventions available to young people.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have committed an offence within a year of completing a drug treatment programme in each of the last five years. [47714]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Information on reoffending following completion of a programme is not routinely collated on an individual basis. Research evidence shows that drug treatment can lead to a significant reduction in drug taking and associated offending. In prisons, research into the effectiveness of drug interventions shows that completion of an intensive treatment programme can lead to significantly lower rates of reconviction (up to 10 per cent.) after two years, provided treatment was continued on release.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many referrals were made to the Cambridgeshire probation area regarding *(a)* drug treatment and testing orders and *(b)* drug rehabilitation requirements in the last period for which figures are available. [48145]

Fiona Mactaggart: 31 drug treatment and testing orders (DTTOs) and 62 community orders with a drug rehabilitation requirement (DRR) were made in Cambridgeshire between April-December 2005, the last period for which figures are available.

Drugs

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funds his Department has contributed to UK efforts to halt the import of illegal drugs from Afghanistan. [47725]

Paul Goggins: In 2005-06 £380 million is going towards reducing the availability of illegal drugs in the UK. It is not possible to disaggregate the amount by origin of the drugs.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what policies his Department has developed to deal with the flow of illegal drugs into the UK from Afghanistan. [47727]

Paul Goggins: The Government's Drug Strategy aims to reduce the harms caused by all illicit drugs. It focuses on the most dangerous drugs—heroin, crack and cocaine—the most damaged communities and the problematic drug users who cause the most harm to themselves and others. The Strategy takes a holistic approach which complements efforts to reduce the supply of drugs with action to diminish demand.

The White Paper, "One Step Ahead, a 21st Century Strategy to defeat organised crime" (Cm 6167) set out our plans for tackling organised crime, of which Class A drugs trafficking forms a part. They are based on the principle of reducing harm and include the establishment of the Serious Organised Crime Agency with effect from 1 April.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he is taking with European partners to stem the import of illegal drugs from Afghanistan. [47728]

Paul Goggins: We co-operate closely with police, customs and other law enforcement agencies in Europe, both bilaterally and through Europol, to interdict drug supply from Afghanistan, and to target the criminal groups who profit from this trade, all along the supply chain. We are also seeking to increase the amount of assistance provided by the ED to the counter-narcotics work of the Government of Afghanistan. In 2005 the total assistance given by the European Commission and EU member states rose by 250 million euros.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Department has made of the effects on heroin use in the UK of the illegal drugs trade in Afghanistan. [47729]

Paul Goggins: We estimate that over 90 per cent. of the heroin which reaches the UK originates in Afghanistan.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to ensure that front-line staff in the (a) police and (b) probation services have adequate education and training concerning crack cocaine use and treatment. [47694]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The primary responsibility for the training of police officers and probation officers lies with their respective professional organisations.

To assist both the probation service and police the National Treatment Agency has established a work programme specifically to address this issue, which focuses on: developing a comprehensive training package for front-line staff based on new occupational standards; piloting a range of new materials and tools to enable front-line staff to work more effectively with crack users; evaluating existing specialist services with a view to identifying and disseminating good practice.

Probation officer training has modules on substance misuse, which are consistent with the Drug and Alcohol National Occupational Standards (DANOS).

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his most recent estimate is of the worth of the UK heroin market. [47715]

Mr. Charles Clarke: In 2000 the Home Office published "Sizing the UK Market for Illicit Drugs", www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/occ74-drugs.pdf, which provides estimates of the value of the UK market for illicit drugs in 1998. This estimates that the total value of the UK market for heroin in 1998 was £2,313 million.

Feltham Young Offenders

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many accidents in the security links corridors at Feltham young offenders institution have been experienced by prison officers responding to alarm bells in each of the past five years. [48621]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 2 February 2006]*: The figures are set out in the table. Figures for 2001 to 2003 are drawn from all available accident books, and for 2004-05 from accident investigation documents.

Number of accidents in the security links corridors at Feltham young offenders institution

	Number of accidents
2001	0
2002	6
2003	6
2004	2
2005	5

Financial Fraud

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of financial fraud suffered by individuals was represented by card-not-present fraud in the latest year for which figures are available. [50275]

Paul Goggins: APACS (the UK payments association) figures show that in 2004 card not present fraud represented just under 30 per cent. of all plastic card fraud losses. Card not present fraud accounted for £150.8 million of the £504.8 million total.

Fixed-penalty Notices

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fixed penalty notices have been issued for drunk and disorderly behaviour in each of the last four years, broken down by police authority. [29350]

Mr. Charles Clarke: After being piloted in four police forces between August 2002 and September 2003, penalty notices for disorder were rolled out to all police forces in England and Wales during 2004. The following table gives figures for the number of penalty notices issued for being drunk and disorderly in 2004 by each police force, alongside provisional figures for January to July 2005.

Number of penalty notices for disorder issued for 'drunk and disorderly' behaviour by police force area, England and Wales, 2004 and January-July 2005[1]

	Drunk and disorderly	
Police force Area	*2004*	*2005[1] (January to July)*
Avon and Somerset	176	169
Bedfordshire	144	142
Cambridgeshire	189	147
Cheshire	409	142
Cleveland	368	457
Cumbria	403	393
Derbyshire	372	282
Devon and Cornwall	988	790
Dorset	82	54
Durham	441	421
Essex	714	234
Gloucestershire	282	177
Greater Manchester	333	291
Hampshire	1,074	533
Hertfordshire	208	74
Humberside	604	378
Kent	498	804
Lancashire	2,869	2,567
Leicestershire	67	37
Lincolnshire	174	36
London, City of	32	14
Merseyside	2,728	2,066
Metropolitan	4,081	1,688
Norfolk	79	57
North Yorkshire	373	318
Northamptonshire	246	316
Northumbria	128	640
Nottinghamshire	477	350
South Yorkshire	1,590	1,219
Staffordshire	452	239
Suffolk	267	164
Surrey	80	154
Sussex	1,029	760
Thames Valley	396	132
Warwickshire	250	82
West Mercia	141	145
West Midlands	1,580	739
West Yorkshire	923	790
Wiltshire	346	160
Dyfed-Powys	183	174
Gwent	127	88
North Wales	639	510
South Wales	69	110
England and Wales	26,609	19,043

[1] Provisional data

Source: RDS - Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Home Detention Curfews

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps are being taken to speed up the process for *(a)* tagging criminals and *(b)* prosecuting violators of curfews. [48685]

Fiona Mactaggart: The electronic monitoring contractors must comply with strict Home Office deadlines for tagging people and prosecuting curfew breaches. Any under-performance results in financial deductions from the amount paid to them for delivering the electronic monitoring service.

In December 2005 the contractors met the deadlines for tagging people in 99.5 per cent. of cases and for breaching curfews in 96.0 per cent. of cases. A cross-agency delivery plan is in place to speed up the enforcement of community penalty breaches, which includes cases where curfew requirements have been breached. Prisoners released under the home detention curfew scheme who fail to comply with the curfew conditions are liable to be recalled to prison by the Secretary of State. The National Offender Management Service is required to issue a revocation order within 24 hours of being notified, by the electronic monitoring contractors, of a confirmed breach of curfew. This target is met in 100 per cent. of cases of HDC breach of curfew.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people breached home detention curfew conditions and were subsequently returned to custody in each of the last five years. [48795]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the number of persons recalled to prison from home detention curfew between 1999 and 2004, by reason for recall, can be found in table 10.7 of Home Office Statistical Bulletin 17/05: 'Offender Management Caseload Statistics, England and Wales, 2004'. Copies of this publication can be found in the Library.

Identity Cards

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received from Windsor constituency in support of identity cards. [50186]

Andy Burnham: Since January 2004, the Identity Cards Programme has received one representation in support of the ID Cards Scheme, in which the correspondent's address identifies them as residing within the constituency of Windsor.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Government have undertaken research to test the biometric technology to be used in the proposed identity card scheme; and if he will make a statement. [50258]

Andy Burnham: The specific biometric technology to be used in the identity card scheme will not be finalised until a competitive tendering process is complete. This process cannot commence before the Identity Cards Bill receives Royal Assent. Thus, it is not possible to undertake research to test this technology at this point in time.

However, extensive testing of the technology is planned both during and after the procurement process and market sounding activities have been taking place with potential suppliers in accordance with Office of Government Commerce best practice and in co-operation with Intellect, the UK trade association for the hi-tech industry. Additionally, extensive work has been undertaken in the process of setting relevant requirements around biometrics in advance of the procurement process. A dedicated experienced team are working on this area, who review all latest scientific research in the field and co-operate with experts.

This involves working with leading biometric experts from the US National Institute for Standards and Technology, San Jose University, UK National Physical Laboratory and the Communications-Electronic Security Group among others, who have conducted a significant amount of reputable research into the performance of biometrics.

This work is also informed by the experiences of other biometric schemes both within the UK and outside, such as US Visit and biometric cards schemes in the Philippines and Hong Kong. The findings of this work to date is that biometrics are suitable for use in large scale operations such as the proposed identity cards scheme. Finally, this work is subject to significant oversight by the government's Biometrics Assurance Group, chaired by the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser, Sir David King, and the Home Office Senior Biometric Adviser.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the possibility of incorporating Police National Computer numbers into the National Identity Register is under consideration; and if he will make a statement. [50259]

Andy Burnham: The possibility of incorporating the Police National Computer number into the National Identity Register is not under consideration. At Commons Report stage of the Identity Cards Bill, the Government amended the Bill so that, under Clause 1(6), any number allocated to a person for identification purposes which would reveal personal sensitive data (within the meaning of the Data Protection Act 1998 (c.29)) or whose disclosure would tend to reveal such data was not a registrable fact. This was introduced as a safeguard as it rules out explicitly the possibility of the Police National Computer being recorded on the National Identity Register.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether (*a*) planning work and (*b*) cost estimates have been undertaken regarding the assessment of applications for exemptions when the Identity Card Scheme becomes compulsory; and if he will make a statement. [50260]

Andy Burnham: Detailed planning and cost estimates have not been undertaken in respect of assessments of applications for exemptions. These issues will be considered closer to the time when there is a definitive proposal to implement compulsory registration.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much he estimates it will cost an individual to obtain a replacement identity card if it is (*a*) stolen, (*b*) lost and (*c*) damaged. [50271]

Andy Burnham: No final decisions have been taken regarding the cost of replacement identity cards if an individual's card is lost, stolen or damaged. Any fee charged in these circumstances will require the approval of Parliament.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 946W on identity cards, if he will publish the security risk assessment reports that have been produced. [50315]

Andy Burnham: The Government will not publish these assessments. To do so would put at risk the future security and integrity of the identity cards scheme.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 8 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 344W, on identity cards, what the results were of his Department's further analysis of the estimates for the benefits which are defined as not yet qualified completely in paragraph 25 of the Regulatory Impact Assessment of the identity card scheme of 25 May 2005; and whether that analysis is complete. [50325]

Andy Burnham: The identity cards programme is continuing to identify and quantify benefits alongside detailed benefits realisation planning for those benefits which have already been identified. The analysis is ongoing and the results are fed into the business case at major review points.

Identity Fraud

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his written statement of 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 29–31WS, on identity fraud, what his Department's definition of identity fraud is; and whether it is the same as the definition given by the Cabinet Office in its 2002 report. [50283]

Andy Burnham *[holding answer 9 February 2006]*: The Home Office Identity Fraud Steering Committee (IFSC), a collaboration between UK financial bodies, government and the police to combat the threat of identity theft, has developed a high-level set of identity crime definitions.

The definitions developed by the IFSC evolved from the working definitions and findings in the 2002 Cabinet Office study. The IFSC definition of identity crime is:

1 Identity Crime is a generic term for Identity Theft, creating a False Identity or committing Identity Fraud.

2 False Identity is (*a*) a fictitious (ie invented) identity, or (*b*) an existing (ie genuine) identity that has been altered to create a fictitious identity.

3 Identity Theft occurs when sufficient information about an identity is obtained to facilitate Identity Fraud, irrespective of whether, in the case of an individual, the victim is alive or dead.

4 Identity Fraud occurs when a False Identity or someone else's identity details are used to support unlawful activity, or when someone avoids obligation/liability by falsely claiming that he/she was the victim of Identity Fraud.

Imams

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of imams admitted to the UK since 2000 as ministers of religion who are no longer working as practising imams. [50141]

Mr. McNulty: Anyone granted entry to the UK as a Minister of Religion is admitted on the basis that they will work full time as a Minister of Religion. The first grant of leave is usually for a period of 12 months. Those who apply for further leave to remain or settlement must show that they fully meet the requirements of these Rules.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many files have been lost by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate in each of the past five years; and if he will make a statement. [47162]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information is not available in the format requested. The Immigration and Nationality Directorate's IT System File Tracking indicates that at present there are 15,994 files unaccounted for, wholly or in part, representing 0.2 per cent. of a total file holding of approximately 6.5 million. A range of measures including additional training and targeted exercises to locate files and update records is currently being pursued to reduce this number.

Internet (China)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the scale of (*a*) internet viruses and (*b*) attempts at internet fraud emanating from China which aim to obtain data from public and commercial bodies in the UK; what agencies are involved in its detection; and if he will make a statement. [49701]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 6 February 2006]*: The National Infrastructure Security Co-ordination Centre (NISCC) issued an alert last summer warning of concerted Trojan email attacks from the Far East against UK Government and business interests. NISCC described the scale of attacks as almost 'industrial.' NISCC offered mitigating advice and information that allowed the Anti Virus Software community to block the attacks.

Khat

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he is taking to publicise the health risks of khat. [47707]

Paul Goggins: The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) report on khat, published on 19 January, described the health risks associated with the plant. The report made a number of recommendations including on making users aware of the risks. All of the ACMD's recommendations were accepted and an implementation plan is currently being constructed.

Lyons Inquiry

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Department has sent a written submission to the Lyons Inquiry on local government finance. [47894]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Lyons Inquiry addresses issues which are of significant importance to Home Office business and we are fully engaged with this piece of work. We are working closely with Sir Michael and his team; we have been feeding in views through the Lyons Inquiry High Level Liaison Group; and my officials are currently examining the interim report so we can provide even more input. I will look closely at the implications for the Home Office of any recommendations which the Lyons Inquiry makes when it reports fully at the end of 2006.

Merchant Seamen (Identity Verification)

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff of merchant ships used International Maritime Organisation certificates rather than passports and visas to stay at UK ports in each year since 1999–2000; and whether he has plans to increase the levels of (*a*) personal identification for and (*b*) access controls applied to such staff. [49758]

Mr. McNulty: The information requested about the number of staff of merchant ships using International Maritime Organisation certificates rather than passports and visas to stay at UK ports in each year since 1999–2000 is not available.

The United Kingdom currently accepts identity documents, presented by ship's crew for admission to the United Kingdom, which have been issued under the International Labour Organization (ILO) Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention No. 108 in lieu of a passport. We are however currently considering, in conjunction with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and the Department of Transport, ratifying the new ILO Convention No. 185 adopted in 2003 which aims to introduce measures to improve the security of seafarers' identification including proposals for a new seafarers' identity document.

The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Bill contains provisions which will enable the Immigration Service to effectively respond to the risk posed by unscrupulous persons posing as sea crew. The Bill contains a power for the Secretary of State to introduce secondary legislation to enable an immigration officer to require crew particulars to be provided before the arrival of the ship and by a specified means. This will allow the Immigration Service to administer a more effective flexible clearance policy based on a better evaluation of the risk. We envisage that the routine collection of crew data will ultimately be implemented in the longer term as part of the e-Borders programme. In the interim, and following the implementation of secondary legislation we will require details of arriving sea crew to be routinely provided in advance.

Methylamphetamine

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will *(a)* undertake a public awareness campaign about the impact of the misuse of methylamphetamine and *(b)* set out the risks associated with misuse of the drug. [49296]

Paul Goggins: The risks associated with the misuse of methylamphetamine were clearly set out in the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) report published in November 2005 and available on the Home Office website, www.drugs.gov.uk. I do not plan to undertake a dedicated public awareness campaign about the impact of the drug at this stage but information is readily available at the Frank website www.talktofrank.com.

Ministerial Meetings

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what meetings he and his officials have had since 1 Januafy 2005 with representatives of the United States correctional industry. [46516]

Fiona Mactaggart: Central records are not routinely collated. The following meetings are known to have taken place since one January 2005: The GEO Group was represented at the contracted prisons conference sector held on 12 and 13 January 2006. This conference was attended by officials only. The GEO Group also attended a meeting with officials on 23 January 2006 for private companies interested in delivering services for offenders under the National Offender Management Service.

Ministerial Travel

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions since 7 July he has used the London Underground in connection with his official duties. [35022]

Mr. Charles Clarke: All ministerial travel on official business is undertaken fully in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are in the Library. Like all Cabinet Ministers, I have the use of a Government Car. We do not discuss particular transport arrangements for security reasons.

Murderers

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time served was in each year by those convicted of murder and released in the last five years. [47626]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the average length of time served for mandatory life sentence prisoners released between 1994 and 2004 can be found in table 10.5 of Home Office Statistical Bulletin 17/05: 'Offender Management Caseload Statistics, England and Wales, 2004'. Copies of this publication can be found in the Library.

National Identity Register

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the public sector databases to which the National Identity Register will be linked. [50276]

Andy Burnham: The National Identity Register will not be directly linked to other public sector database. The Identity Cards Bill provides for the provision of information by and to the Secretary of State for the purposes of administrating and operating the ID Cards Scheme. Achieving this does not require particular public sector databases to be linked to the National Identity Register.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans the Government have to implement the recommendation of the Chief Inspector of Prisons that the National Offender Management Service, in conjunction with the Department of Health, should develop a national strategy for older and less able prisoners that conforms to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and the National Service Framework for older people. [47567]

Mr. Charles Clarke: With the introduction of the National Offender Management Information System (NOMIS), the National Offender Management Service will continue the current Prison Service policy of assessing prisoners' individual needs. It will require both the public and private sector prison to provide services that meet the needs of older prisoners on a case-by-case basis. The integration of Prison Service health care within the NHS will ensure that the health care provision for older and less able prisoners will be delivered by and become the responsibility of the primary care trusts.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what additional statutory all-Wales bodies he expects will be established under the National Offender Management Service. [49066]

Fiona Mactaggart: It is not currently envisaged that any new statutory all-Wales bodies will be established under the National Offender Management Service.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made as part of the preparations for the National Offender Management Service of services which might be commissioned in Wales within the 1/4/22 pyramid of templates. [49304]

Fiona Mactaggart: A Pathfinder Project was commissioned by the Home Office with the agreement of the Welsh Assembly Government to examine ways of delivering a reducing re-offending strategy within the specific Welsh context. The outcome has led to the joint launch of Joining Together in Wales: an Adult and Young People's Strategy to Reduce Re-offending on one February 2006 by the Welsh Assembly Government and Home Office Ministers.

The strategy identifies the issues and aims that need to be addressed and forms the basis of a consultation to develop a reducing re-offending action plan for Wales. The outcome of the consultation and the subsequent development of the action plan will help inform future

commissioning by NOMS of services for Wales, taking into account the National, regional and unitary authority levels in Wales to which you refer.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking as part of the preparations for the National Offender Management Service to enable the Wales Offender Manager to engage effectively with stakeholders and partners from the (*a*) courts, (*b*) voluntary community and (*c*) private sectors. [49305]

Fiona Mactaggart: We have appointed a Director for the National Offender Management Service in Wales whose responsibilities include engaging with stakeholders and partners in Wales to tackle re-offending. We are also working closely with the Welsh Assembly Government at both Ministerial and official level to ensure that the development of the National Offender management Service in Wales takes full account of the issues and structures relevant to Wales. There is also a programme of major events being held across England and in Wales to support the effective engagement of all stakeholders and partners.

Non-violent Offences

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what use is made of custodial remand for those charged with non-violent offences; and if he will make a statement. [49864]

Fiona Mactaggart: The decision on whether to grant bail or remand a defendant in custody is one for the courts to make, in each case, in line with the statutory framework primarily set out in the Bail Act 1976.

The court may withhold bail if it is satisfied that there are substantial grounds for believing that, if released on bail, the defendant would abscond, commit an offence, interfere with witnesses or otherwise obstruct the course of justice. The nature and seriousness of the alleged offence forms only part of the consideration of the court when making the decision whether to grant bail or remand in custody.

The court will also consider the weight of the evidence against the defendant, the defendant's character, antecedents, associations, community ties and past record of complying with bail, as well as any other factors which appear relevant.

Offences Against the Person Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many people have been convicted under Section 20 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 in each year since 1997; what their average sentence was in each year; and how many in each year were given a home detention curfew; [48875]

(2) how many people have been convicted of an offence under Section 18 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 in each year since 1997; what their average sentence was; and how many in each year were given a home detention curfew. [48876]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Persons found guilty of grievous bodily harm under sections 18[1] and 20[2] of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861, England and Wales

	Sec 18 (GBH with intent)		*Sec 20 (GBH)*	
	Number of persons found guilty	*Average custodial sentence length (months)*	*Number of persons found guilty*	*Average custodial sentence length (months)*
1997	1,544	44.1	4,582	15.3
1998	1,464	43.9	4,933	15.1
1999	1,402	45.8	4,605	15.5
2000	1,357	45.0	4,443	15.6
2001	1,413	48.0	4,390	16.1
2002	1,527	46.5	4,629	17.0
2003	1,497	50.3	4,500	17.7
2004	1,698	48.6	4,373	17.7

[1] Wounding etc. with intent to do grievous bodily harm etc. or to resist apprehension.
[2] Wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm (inflicting grievous bodily injury with or without weapon).
Source:
RDS-NOMS 6 February 2006.

Number of prisoners serving sentences under sections 18 and 20 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 who were released on HOC between 1999–2005[1]

	Grievous bodily harm (section 20 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861)	*Grievous Bodily Harm, (intent) (section 18 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861)*
1999	1,147	41
2000	1,220	38
2001	1,203	16
2002	1,485	25
2003	1,568	23
2004	1,321	15
2005	1,313	14

[1] Data as recorded on the Prison Service Inmate Information System.
Source:
RDS-NOMS 06/02/2006

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people convicted under Section 18 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 appealed against their sentences in each year since 1997; how many of them had their sentence reduced; and by what amount in each case. [48877]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

The following table shows the position at 2 February 2006.

Year received	*Approximate number of applications received*	*Approximate number where sentence reduced*[1]	*Number still awaiting resolution*
1997	130	18	—
1998	120	31	—
1999	126	19	—
2000	101	23	—
2001	103	26	—

Year received	Approximate number of applications received	Approximate number where sentence reduced[1]	Number still awaiting resolution
2002	98	15	—
2003	102	17	—
2004	152	35	1
2005	118	16	27
Grand total	1,050	201	28

[1] Includes all appeals where there was a reduction to any aspect of the sentence.

The amount by which the above sentences were reduced is shown in the following table. The table does not identify those cases where the change was to an aspect of sentence other than imprisonment or where the tariff was reduced on a life sentence. Also, whilst all the cases involved a charge under s20, the change to sentence may not have related to that charge.

	Trial sentence			Sentence after appeal		
Year received	Years	Months	Days	Years	Months	Days
1997	6	0	0	4	6	0
1997	9	0	0	7	6	0
1997	7	0	0	5	0	0
1997	7	0	0	5	6	0
1997	6	0	0	4	0	0
1997	11	0	0	8	0	0
1997	6	0	0	5	0	0
1997	8	0	0	6	0	0
1997	5	0	0	3	6	0
1997	3	9	0	3	0	0
1997	6	0	0	4	0	0
1997	6	0	0	4	0	0
1997	4	6	0	3	6	0
1997	4	0	0	2	6	0
1997	7	0	0	5	0	0
1997	12	0	0	8	0	0
1997	8	0	0	6	6	0
1997	4	0	0	3	0	0
1998	6	0	0	4	0	0
1998	20	0	0	12	0	0
1998	15	0	0	12	0	0
1998	5	0	0	4	0	0
1998	7	0	0	6	6	0
1998	7	0	0	6	6	0
1998	21	0	0	18	0	0
1998	6	0	0	4	0	0
1998	16	0	0	13	10	0
1998	0	6	0	0	0	42
1998	8	0	0	5	0	0
1998	7	0	0	3	0	0
1998	7	0	0	5	0	0
1998	4	0	0	3	0	0
1998	5	0	0	3	6	0
1998	10	0	0	8	0	0
1998	11	0	0	9	0	0
1998	5	0	0	4	0	0
1998	14	3	0	12	0	0
1998	5	6	0	3	0	0
1998	4	0	0	3	6	0
1998	6	0	0	5	0	0
1998	5	0	0	2	6	0
1998	3	6	0	0	12	0
1998	8	0	0	7	0	0
1998	5	0	0	5	0	0
1998	3	0	0	3	0	0
1998	5	0	0	5	0	0
1998	8	0	0	6	0	0
1998	2	6	0	2	0	0
1998	5	0	0	4	0	0
1999	10	0	0	8	0	0
1999	2	0	0	0	18	0
1999	6	0	0	5	0	0
1999	12	0	0	10	0	0
1999	5	0	0	3	9	0
1999	5	0	0	3	6	0
1999	7	0	0	5	6	0
1999	5	0	0	0	3	0
1999	7	0	0	6	0	0
1999	6	0	0	3	6	0
1999	6	0	0	5	0	0
1999	9	0	0	7	0	0
1999	4	0	0	3	0	0
1999	12	0	0	10	0	0
1999	6	0	0	4	0	0
1999	5	0	0	4	0	0
1999	Life	0	0	4	0	0
1999	12	0	0	10	0	0
1999	4	9	0	3	9	0
2000	0	18	0	0	6	0
2000	7	0	0	5	0	0
2000	4	0	0	3	0	0
2000	4	0	0	3	0	0
2000	0	0	0	0	0	0
2000	8	0	0	6	0	0
2000	4	0	0	3	0	0
2000	2	0	0	0	18	0
2000	0	0	0	0	0	0
2000	8	0	0	6	0	0
2000	13	0	0	10	0	0
2000	0	20	0	0	12	0
2000	4	0	0	3	0	0
2000	0	0	0	3	0	0
2000	2	0	0	0	18	0
2000	9	0	0	6	0	0
2000	11	0	0	9	0	0
2000	6	0	0	5	0	0
2000	10	0	0	8	0	0
2000	10	0	0	8	0	0
2000	10	0	0	8	0	0
2000	10	0	0	8	0	0
2000	5	6	0	3	0	0
2001	24	0	0	3	0	0
2001	2	0	0	0	18	0
2001	10	0	0	8	0	0
2001	5	0	0	4	0	0
2001	8	0	0	7	0	0
2001	7	0	0	6	0	0
2001	7	0	0	6	0	0
2001	12	0	0	10	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0	0	0
2001	7	0	0	6	0	0
2001	3	6	0	3	0	0
2001	7	0	0	5	0	0
2001	3	0	0	2	0	0
2001	3	6	0	2	6	0
2001	6	0	0	4	0	0
2001	7	0	0	3	2	0
2001	9	0	0	7	0	0
2001	7	0	0	4	6	0
2001	6	0	0	4	0	0
2001	3	0	0	0	12	0
2001	0	0	0	0	0	0
2001	8	0	0	5	10	0
2001	13	6	0	11	6	0
2001	0	0	0	0	9	0
2001	4	6	0	3	6	0
2001	1	3	0	0	9	0
2002	4	0	0	3	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0	0	0
2002	4	0	0	3	0	0
2002	12	0	0	10	0	0
2002	4	0	0	3	0	0
2002	8	0	0	6	0	0
2002	3	0	0	0	18	0
2002	9	0	0	9	0	0
2002	0	27	0	0	21	0
2002	Life	0	0	6	0	0
2002	10	0	0	7	0	0
2002	7	0	0	5	0	0
2002	23	0	0	20	0	0

Year received	Trial sentence			Sentence after appeal		
	Years	Months	Days	Years	Months	Days
2002	4	0	0	2	0	0
2002	7	0	0	5	0	0
2003	7	0	0	5	0	0
2003	2	0	0	0	0	0
2003	7	0	0	5	0	0
2003	15	0	0	12	0	0
2003	7	0	0	5	0	0
2003	15	0	0	12	0	0
2003	10	0	0	7	0	0
2003	6	0	0	4	0	0
2003	10	0	0	8	0	0
2003	3	9	0	3	0	0
2003	11	0	0	6	0	0
2003	7	0	0	5	0	0
2003	12	0	0	10	0	0
2003	5	6	0	5	6	0
2003	9	0	0	6	0	0
2003	6	6	0	5	6	0
2003	9	0	0	7	0	0
2004	4	0	0	3	0	0
2004	3	11	0	3	6	0
2004	4	0	0	4	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0	0	0
2004	10	0	0	7	0	0
2004	9	0	0	7	6	0
2004	5	0	0	3	0	0
2004	10	0	0	7	6	0
2004	8	0	0	5	6	0
2004	3	0	0	3	0	0
2004	10	0	0	7	6	0
2004	8	0	0	7	0	0
2004	9	0	0	8	0	0
2004	4	0	0	3	0	0
2004	4	0	0	3	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0	0	0
2004	6	0	0	5	0	0
2004	9	0	0	8	0	0
2004	12	0	0	7	0	0
2004	7	0	0	6	0	0
2004	3	0	0	2	0	0
2004	6	0	0	5	0	0
2004	7	0	0	6	0	0
2004	6	0	0	5	0	0
2004	6	0	0	6	0	0
2004	3	6	0	3	6	0
2004	6	0	0	6	0	0
2004	5	0	0	4	0	0
2004	8	0	0	7	0	0
2004	3	6	0	3	0	0
2004	10	0	0	7	0	0
2004	5	0	0	3	6	0
2004	12	0	0	8	0	0
2004	5	0	0	5	0	0
2004	13	0	0	11	0	0
2005	4	0	0	3	0	0
2005	Life	5	0	0	Life	4	0	0
2005	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005	8	0	0	6	0	0
2005	7	0	0	5	0	0
2005	5	0	0	4	0	0
2005	3	6	0	3	3	0
2005	6	0	0	5	6	0
2005	9	0	0	7	0	0
2005	8	0	0	5	0	0
2005	5	0	0	4	0	0
2005	0	18	0	0	12	0
2005	5	0	0	4	0	0
2005	11	0	0	9	0	0
2005	3	0	0	0	27	0
2005	9	0	0	7	0	0

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people convicted under Section 20 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 appealed against their sentence in each year since 1997; how many of them had their sentence reduced; and by what amount in each case. [48878]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

The following table shows the position at 2 February 2006.

Year received	Approximate number of applications received[1]	Approximate number where sentence reduced[1]	Number still awaiting resolution
1997	119	21	—
1998	111	27	—
1999	102	30	—
2000	101	21	—
2001	86	12	—
2002	96	30	—
2003	80	17	—
2004	111	23	—
2005	85	20	10
Grand Total	891	201	10

[1] Includes all appeals where there was a reduction to any aspect of the sentence.

The amount by which the previous sentences were reduced is shown in the following table. The table does not identify those cases where the change was to an aspect of sentence other than imprisonment or where the tariff was reduced on a life sentence. Also, while all the cases involved a charge under s20, the change to sentence may not have related to that charge.

Year received	Trial sentence			Sentence after appeal		
	Years	Months	Days	Years	Months	Days
1997	4	0	0	2	6	0
1997	3	0	0	2	0	0
1997	8	0	0	5	0	0
1997	0	20	0	0	12	0
1997	5	0	0	4	6	0
1997	1	8	0	0	12	0
1997	8	6	0	6	6	0
1997	5	0	0	4	5	0
1997	2	0	0	0	21	0
1997	3	6	0	3	0	0
1997	3	0	0	2	0	0
1997	6	0	0	5	0	0
1997	0	21	0	0	18	0
1997	2	0	0	1	6	0
1997	1	9	0	1	0	0
1997	0	21	0	0	15	0
1997	0	20	0	0	12	0
1997	3	6	0	0	0	0
1997	3	6	0	2	6	0
1997	1	0	0	0	0	0
1997	6	0	0	0	4	0
1998	2	3	0	2	2	0
1998	4	0	0	3	0	0
1998	2	0	0	0	0	0
1998	0	21	0	0	15	0
1998	2	6	0	0	18	0
1998	2	0	0	0	18	0
1998	3	6	0	0	6	0
1998	4	0	0	0	30	0
1998	0	30	0	0	12	0
1998	0	9	0	0	6	0
1998	0	6	0	0	6	0
1998	1	0	0	0	6	0
1998	0	9	0	0	9	0
1998	2	0	0	0	9	0
1998	0	15	0	0	9	0
1998	4	0	0	2	0	0
1998	1	3	0	0	0	0

Year received	Trial sentence			Sentence after appeal		
	Years	Months	Days	Years	Months	Days
1998	1	0	0	0	3	0
1998	2	0	0	0	18	0
1998	3	6	0	3	3	0
1998	1	6	0	0	12	0
1998	4	0	0	3	0	0
1998	0	18	0	0	9	0
1998	3	0	0	2	0	0
1998	3	0	0	2	0	0
1998	3	0	0	2	6	0
1998	1	6	0	0	12	0
1999	0	18	0	0	18	0
1999	0	12	0	0	6	0
1999	0	18	0	0	6	0
1999	2	6	0	2	0	0
1999	6	0	0	5	0	0
1999	5	0	0	4	0	0
1999	0	15	0	0	9	0
1999	2	0	0	0	18	0
1999	0	16	0	0	9	0
1999	4	0	0	3	0	0
1999	0	16	0	0	9	0
1999	4	0	0	3	0	0
1999	0	9	0	0	6	0
1999	0	15	0	0	12	0
1999	2	6	0	1	9	0
1999	0	12	0	0	6	0
1999	0	12	0	0	0	0
1999	0	18	0	0	12	0
1999	0	8	0	0	3	0
1999	4	0	0	2	0	0
1999	1	6	0	0	12	0
1999	3	0	0	2	0	0
1999	0	12	0	0	6	0
1999	0	27	0	0	18	0
1999	3	0	0	0	18	0
1999	4	0	0	4	0	0
1999	3	0	0	2	0	0
1999	0	15	0	0	3	0
1999	3	0	0	0	12	0
1999	4	0	0	3	0	0
2000	3	0	0	2	0	0
2000	0	18	0	0	12	0
2000	3	0	0	2	0	0
2000	2	0	0	0	14	0
2000	0	30	0	2	0	0
2000	3	0	0	2	0	0
2000	5	0	0	3	6	0
2000	2	0	0	1	3	0
2000	3	0	0	2	0	0
2000	5	0	0	4	0	0
2000	0	18	0	0	12	0
2000	5	0	0	4	0	0
2000	4	0	0	2	6	0
2000	2	0	0	0	18	0
2000	6	0	0	4	6	0
2000	3	0	0	2	0	0
2000	0	12	0	0	3	0
2000	0	18	0	0	12	0
2000	3	6	0	2	0	0
2000	3	6	0	2	0	0
2000	0	30	0	0	24	0
2001	4	1	0	2	6	0
2001	2	6	0	2	0	0
2001	0	12	0	0	6	0
2001	4	0	0	3	0	0
2001	4	6	0	2	6	0
2001	2	0	0	0	12	0
2001	0	12	0	0	6	0
2001	2	6	0	0	18	0
2001	3	0	0	0	18	0
2001	8	0	0	4	0	0
2001	0	15	0	0	9	0
2001	1	9	0	0	15	0
2002	4	6	0	0	21	0
2002	2	6	0	0	21	0
2002	0	0	0	0	0	0
2002	3	0	0	2	6	0

Year received	Trial sentence			Sentence after appeal		
	Years	Months	Days	Years	Months	Days
2002	0	12	0	0	8	0
2002	2	0	0	0	15	0
2002	0	12	0	0	8	0
2002	0	12	0	0	9	0
2002	3	8	0	0	18	0
2002	0	9	0	0	0	0
2002	2	0	0	0	14	0
2002	3	0	0	2	0	0
2002	4	6	0	3	6	0
2002	3	0	0	1	6	0
2002	2	6	0	2	0	0
2002	0	30	0	0	18	0
2002	0	18	0	0	6	0
2002	1	6	0	0	12	0
2002	3	6	0	2	0	0
2002	4	6	0	3	0	0
2002	0	21	0	0	15	0
2002	0	18	0	0	0	0
2002	2	6	0	0	12	0
2002	3	0	0	0	15	0
2002	0	15	0	0	9	0
2002	4	0	0	3	0	0
2002	0	15	0	0	9	0
2002	0	18	0	0	0	0
2002	2	0	0	0	0	0
2002	5	0	0	4	3	0
2003	1	0	0	0	4	0
2003	2	6	0	0	18	0
2003	3	6	0	2	6	0
2003	4	0	0	3	0	0
2003	2	3	0	0	12	0
2003	3	9	0	2	9	0
2003	3	0	0	0	18	0
2003	0	20	0	0	0	0
2003	0	12	0	0	6	0
2003	3	0	0	0	10	0
2003	0	30	0	0	15	0
2003	0	4	0	0	0	28
2003	3	0	0	3	0	0
2003	0	18	0	0	9	0
2003	0	18	0	0	10	0
2003	2	0	0	1	0	0
2003	3	0	0	2	0	0
2004	5	0	0	3	6	0
2004	4	6	0	3	0	0
2004	0	18	0	0	9	0
2004	0	18	0	0	10	0
2004	4	0	0	3	0	0
2004	3	6	0	2	6	0
2004	3	0	0	0	27	0
2004	6	3	0	4	3	0
2004	3	0	0	0	18	0
2004	3	0	0	2	0	0
2004	0	21	0	0	12	0
2004	3	9	0	2	0	0
2004	0	27	0	0	18	0
2004	5	0	0	3	6	0
2004	3	4	0	2	10	0
2004	0	18	0	0	9	0
2004	4	0	0	4	0	0
2004	2	0	0	0	15	0
2004	0	9	0	0	5	0
2004	0	0	0	0	0	0
2004	4	0	0	3	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005	2	0	0	0	18	0
2005	4	0	0	3	6	0
2005	0	18	0	0	12	0
2005	4	0	0	3	10	0
2005	0	33	0	2	0	0
2005	0	27	0	0	18	0
2005	1	11	0	0	18	0
2005	3	0	0	0	21	0
2005	0	15	0	0	6	0
2005	2	0	0	1	8	0
2005	3	6	0	2	6	0

	Trial sentence			Sentence after appeal		
Year received	Years	Months	Days	Years	Months	Days
2005	3	6	0	2	0	0
2005	4	0	0	3	3	0
2005	6	0	0	3	4	0
2005	0	8	0	0	0	0
2005	3	0	0	2	6	0
2005	3	0	0	2	0	0
2005	3	6	0	3	0	0
2005	3	0	0	2	0	0
2005	2	6	0	0	18	0

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of those convicted under section 18 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 since 1997 have reoffended within a year. [48879]

Fiona Mactaggart: The most recent reoffending data for adults were published in 'Reoffending of adults: results from the 2002 cohort' which is available through the Home Office's website (http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm).

The report shows the two-year reoffending rates of those offenders who start community penalties or who are discharged from prison in the first quarter of 2002. Further analysis of the 2000 data shows that 27 per cent. of offenders sentenced under section 18 of the Offences against the Person Act 1861 reoffended within one year and were subsequently convicted. The corresponding figure for 2002 is 24 per cent. Reoffending data broken down by legislative act is not readily available for other years.

Police Pounds

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what advice he has given to police authorities on the levying of charges on owners for the retrieval of stolen vehicles from police pounds. [47776]

Paul Goggins: The police have powers to order the removal of any vehicle that is dangerously, obstructively or illegally parked, broken down or abandoned, including vehicles abandoned after being stolen.

The Government regard such removals as important for road safety and crime reduction. Before owners can regain any vehicle so removed, they are required by law to pay fees prescribed by the Secretary of State to meet the costs of removal and storage. The Government consider it would not be appropriate for such costs to fall on the public purse. We recognise, however, the concerns that have been expressed by and on behalf of the owners of stolen vehicles who have had to pay for return of their own property. Following lengthy consideration of all the issues, we have reached agreement with the Association of Chief Police Officers on recommended best practice in such cases.

This includes an immediate notification on report of a vehicle theft as to the need to pay the statutory fees when the vehicle is recovered, a follow-up letter with more detailed information and further information and advice on police force websites.

Prisoners

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of *(a)* male and *(b)* female inmates in prisons in England and Wales are considered to be drug dependent. [47719]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Epidemiological studies show the proportion of prisoners assessed as showing signs of dependence on entry into custody are on average *(a)* 51 per cent. of males and *(b)* 54 per cent. of females.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners underwent treatment for drugs dependence in *(a)* Haltemprice and Howden constituency, *(b)* the East Riding of Yorkshire and *(c)* England and Wales in each of the past five years. [49101]

Fiona Mactaggart: Figures for prisoners undergoing drug treatment are given in the table. There are no recorded figures prior to 2001–02. Figures for programme completion were not collected prior to 2004–05.

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Haltemprice & Howden				
CARATs	342	426	274	198
Detox	446	0	0	0
Programmes entrants	32	84	77	74
Completions				*42*
East Riding				
CARATs	943	1,527	1,625	1,497
Detox	1,194	1,236	1,676	1,462
Programmes entrants	72	102	95	105
Completions				*68*
England and Wales				
CARATs	39,338	51,896	54,125	59,025
Detox	41,765	50,701	57,891	53,903
Programmes entrants	4,691	4386	4,703	7,621
Completions				*4,902*

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners on licence were recalled to prison following a breach of that licence in each of the last eight years. [48790]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the number of persons recalled to prison *(a)* from Home Detention Curfew, *(b)* from licence following determinate sentences of four years or more, and *(c)* from life licence can be found in tables 10.7 to 10.9 respectively of Home Office Statistical Bulletin 17/05: Offender Management Caseload Statistics, England and Wales, 2004. Copies of this publication can be found in the House of Commons Library. Information on the number of persons sentenced to less than four years who were not released on Home Detention Curfew and who were recalled to prison from licence between 1999–2000 and 2004–05 is provided in the following table. Most of these recalls are not the result of new charges but because of breach of conditions or changed circumstances. The increase reflects a determination to make supervision under licence an effective part of a sentence.

Number of persons sentenced to less than four years who were not released on HDC and who were recalled from licence in each year

	Number recalled
1999-2000	38
2000-01	1,637
2001-02	3,439
2002-03	4,950
2003-04	6,415
2004-05	6,378

Probation Service

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* probation officer and *(b)* probation service officers were in post in each probation area at the end of each of the past five financial years. [48449]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information is not available for the full period requested. Data collected prior to 1 April 2003 is unreliable, and is not directly comparable with the more accurate figures collected since that time. The figures presented in the tables show full-time equivalent (FTE) figures at the close of each year from 1 April 2003 and at 30 September 2005.

(a) Probation officers in post by area

	2003-04			
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Avon and Somerset		96.40	112.90	110.40
Bedfordshire		57.30	61.10	62.60
Cambridgeshire		75.50	85.35	75.97
Cheshire		116.10	112.30	114.30
Cumbria		59.90	59.90	56.30
Derbyshire		117.60	106.70	102.70
Devon and Cornwall		136.80	149.35	146.30
Dorset		63.00	68.00	63.10
Durham		72.00	86.50	87.50
Dyfed Powys		46.70	46.30	43.70
Essex		106.00	111.20	117.50
Gloucestershire		52.30	56.40	55.40
Gwent		69.10	68.10	69.20
Hampshire		155.90	173.59	178.60
Hertfordshire		63.70	65.90	71.99
Humberside		121.78	139.78	138.78
Kent		138.35	148.55	154.95
Lancashire		243.20	243.60	246.10
Leicestershire		126.00	125.00	130.70
Lincolnshire		64.20	61.60	60.60
London		795.70	880.50	862.50
Greater Manchester		414.70	399.80	387.58
Merseyside		243.90	241.50	238.44
Norfolk		72.68	76.88	84.18
North Yorkshire		66.20	75.80	75.60
North Wales		58.70	67.10	67.50
Northamptonshire		69.00	65.00	63.00
Northumbria		223.30	252.26	253.10
Nottinghamshire		166.00	171.50	160.90
South Wales		155.60	157.60	172.30
South Yorkshire		183.50	203.00	202.40
Staffordshire		148.70	147.10	146.20
Suffolk		82.25	81.75	85.15
Surrey		56.70	63.90	66.55
Sussex		121.20	123.30	126.60
Teesside		64.60	76.60	74.85
Thames Valley		163.00	176.70	182.00
Warwickshire		55.00	55.00	53.21
West Mercia		123.31	125.46	125.90
West Midlands		374.50	429.20	406.82
West Yorkshire		275.57	310.48	313.86
Wiltshire		41.90	48.90	50.10
Total	5,831.10	5,937.84	6,271.45	6,285.43

	2004-05				2005-06	
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Quarter 1	Quarter 2
Avon and Somerset	151.90	148.10	153.70	153.30	154.40	158.80
Bedfordshire	56.40	58.00	61.00	66.00	65.00	63.00
Cambridgeshire	74.90	75.60	78.27	76.27	73.70	77.07
Cheshire	109.60	113.80	113.90	114.65	121.00	134.00
Cumbria	53.60	52.90	57.50	58.00	59.20	56.80
Derbyshire	112.90	125.60	109.20	107.50	108.50	117.00
Devon and Cornwall	141.76	141.60	149.10	150.30	151.10	148.50
Dorset	60.86	62.56	66.79	70.29	67.64	67.43
Durham	87.56	89.50	96.70	95.83	91.50	86.70
Dyfed Powys	43.20	42.70	49.10	46.70	48.10	55.10
Essex	116.80	112.90	120.11	120.20	115.00	111.30
Gloucestershire	55.40	54.99	59.69	59.19	55.76	54.76
Gwent	65.60	65.10	67.30	65.30	52.10	63.10
Hampshire	175.90	168.50	190.40	188.90	179.90	180.70
Hertfordshire	71.99	72.70	71.70	75.10	71.10	70.20
Humberside	135.39	131.89	147.91	147.68	146.91	145.01
Kent	152.15	144.40	146.20	145.53	142.13	132.34
Lancashire	243.50	237.10	253.20	250.40	241.10	238.70
Leicestershire	134.20	140.80	138.20	134.70	136.10	152.50
Lincolnshire	57.60	64.00	63.60	64.40	63.10	70.50
London	864.80	874.60	835.41	834.54	820.07	829.74
Greater Manchester	370.20	373.20	404.40	406.26	402.21	385.81
Merseyside	242.03	237.43	268.43	267.24	264.24	262.20
Norfolk	80.88	77.68	79.85	82.60	80.16	79.89
North Yorkshire	78.30	75.20	88.60	93.60	88.60	79.50
North Wales	71.80	72.80	84.20	83.20	83.70	89.10
Northamptonshire	59.00	65.00	66.63	72.54	70.99	69.91
Northumbria	251.80	274.06	267.95	263.76	259.16	257.20
Nottinghamshire	156.18	168.02	166.11	165.91	161.01	155.60
South Wales	169.60	169.70	195.90	191.48	188.50	213.20
South Yorkshire	196.80	195.50	212.70	208.10	203.90	203.80
Staffordshire	148.40	156.40	152.30	152.70	151.60	165.10
Suffolk	82.25	82.80	83.00	83.40	83.58	80.96

	2004-05				2005-06	
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Quarter 1	Quarter 2
Surrey	62.50	62.10	68.30	66.67	69.85	68.25
Sussex	128.41	127.79	128.74	128.84	129.70	126.51
Teesside	74.35	84.85	87.65	87.24	95.90	95.00
Thames Valley	175.00	169.30	176.40	175.80	164.00	171.40
Warwickshire	52.80	55.15	51.33	52.93	54.06	60.77
West Mercia	121.84	142.58	141.30	138.10	137.10	150.10
West Midlands	403.97	447.50	444.50	446.30	443.50	441.50
West Yorkshire	321.16	320.58	343.37	331.88	335.37	320.56
Wiltshire	44.10	41.50	44.30	43.30	39.30	39.30
Total	6,257.32	6,376.48	6,584.94	6,566.63	6,469.84	6,529.41

(a) Probation Service Officers in post by area

	2003-04			
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Avon and Somerset		173.10	218.60	220.60
Bedfordshire		41.81	41.81	39.80
Cambridgeshire		55.90	60.58	65.69
Cheshire		84.10	90.20	88.80
Cumbria		42.48	41.02	38.25
Derbyshire		95.40	104.40	108.20
Devon and Cornwall		151.80	145.71	139.90
Dorset		58.80	59.80	59.49
Durham		97.40	96.80	96.10
Dyfed Powys		36.03	37.00	36.20
Essex		175.90	173.70	168.50
Gloucestershire		40.52	38.58	39.30
Gwent		65.60	67.50	68.80
Hampshire		134.88	130.38	125.40
Hertfordshire		55.80	53.95	52.30
Humberside		107.90	114.23	115.81
Kent		147.78	143.29	149.39
Lancashire		151.50	146.50	146.60
Leicestershire		119.70	137.30	144.75
Lincolnshire		74.50	81.48	81.29
London		617.00	665.50	704.50

(b) Probation Service Officers in post by area

	2003-04			
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Greater Manchester		312.20	322.10	298.06
Merseyside		208.70	211.50	199.07
Norfolk		67.16	79.30	79.20
North Yorkshire		38.00	46.30	40.30
North Wales		77.60	82.60	85.60
Northamptonshire		74.50	69.00	68.00
Northumbria		164.60	167.10	168.10
Nottinghamshire		119.80	122.80	118.00
South Wales		130.70	130.35	138.10
South Yorkshire		184.35	189.70	186.66
Staffordshire		76.00	78.50	80.60
Suffolk		58.42	59.54	61.63
Surrey		82.40	87.00	87.50
Sussex		69.71	88.00	99.70
Teesside		128.60	122.80	122.90
Thames Valley		191.40	204.80	210.20
Warwickshire		29.90	29.70	28.66
West Mercia		80.54	95.11	93.83
West Midlands		238.80	207.20	215.10
West Yorkshire		303.21	317.27	306.95
Wiltshire		39.80	27.00	39.00
Total	4,752.40	5,204.29	5,386.00	5,416.83

	2004-05				2005-06	
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Quarter 1	Quarter 2
Avon and Somerset	167.40	162.90	172.90	185.20	191.30	191.30
Bedfordshire	43.80	29.15	27.20	32.20	30.20	31.20
Cambridgeshire	67.06	61.87	66.62	66.41	73.72	77.25
Cheshire	81.20	92.10	83.00	89.98	91.60	107.80
Cumbria	39.25	38.79	41.92	45.11	47.88	48.57
Derbyshire	98.50	105.00	101.70	111.90	113.30	119.00
Devon and Cornwall	136.40	127.50	131.00	140.20	136.60	136.50
Dorset	63.20	59.68	63.80	62.13	61.02	67.99
Durham	98.10	105.70	107.70	117.31	115.93	114.63
Dyfed Powys	37.00	37.40	38.88	39.87	41.11	40.59
Essex	177.50	175.10	185.64	189.90	167.85	173.30
Gloucestershire	38.54	41.96	42.65	41.65	48.04	45.96
Gwent	63.80	67.30	66.50	65.10	75.50	70.10
Hampshire	125.40	126.54	115.40	121.07	147.80	152.20
Hertfordshire	53.30	58.10	58.20	61.90	64.40	64.30
Humberside	133.55	134.17	142.22	141.18	147.62	155.33
Kent	149.15	148.33	149.39	160.83	157.42	155.19
Lancashire	147.80	150.00	145.70	142.65	141.41	144.70
Leicestershire	157.15	174.15	175.40	175.40	185.30	189.90
Lincolnshire	78.48	76.50	74.16	73.96	70.88	72.49
London	695.30	686.30	674.23	707.34	722.61	747.44
Greater Manchester	318.40	321.92	320.36	331.05	342.83	345.79
Merseyside	206.64	207.64	210.21	213.13	214.54	215.87
Norfolk	79.30	80.51	81.28	83.29	87.27	93.56
North Yorkshire	45.60	41.10	41.60	60.10	60.10	50.26
North Wales	82.40	74.20	73.80	80.20	81.60	74.80
Northamptonshire	69.00	69.00	61.54	63.44	61.54	60.09
Northumbria	165.70	168.10	167.10	170.10	171.10	174.10
Nottinghamshire	131.86	143.41	164.81	167.90	177.07	180.00
South Wales	131.50	147.40	158.10	160.30	165.80	166.90
South Yorkshire	187.70	203.32	205.80	207.40	208.00	212.40
Staffordshire	82.60	82.70	90.10	91.00	91.10	92.50

	2004-05				2005-06	
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Quarter 1	Quarter 2
Suffolk	52.60	53.33	63.44	70.67	70.56	76.20
Surrey	87.30	97.50	100.70	106.90	111.75	113.10
Sussex	111.94	108.37	116.11	125.00	124.06	135.79
Teesside	123.20	123.10	122.80	125.47	133.00	132.40
Thames Valley	198.35	203.85	213.00	215.70	215.90	212.70
Warwickshire	30.20	32.38	33.97	35.15	36.19	33.88
West Mercia	91.83	100.11	93.70	101.00	99.90	98.30
West Midlands	279.22	260.90	290.10	327.40	337.40	360.57
West Yorkshire	303.05	296.98	308.63	302.40	301.75	311.95
Wiltshire	37.50	37.30	42.50	41.10	42.10	42.10
Total	5,467.77	5,511.66	5,623.86	5,849.99	5,965.05	6,089.00

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what matters relating to (*a*) the probation service and (*b*) the Prison Service in Wales are reserved matters. [48981]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 6 February 2006]*: The probation service and the Prison Service are not devolved. However the National Offender Management Service works closely with the Welsh Assembly Government in respect of any activity that touches on devolved matters (such as health services in prison), and under the Children Act 2004 the Assembly will be able, with the consent of the Home Secretary, to issue guidance to local probation boards and youth offending teams on co-operating with other public bodies in their area with a view to improving the well-being of children.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of staff were employed in an operational capacity within the National Probation Service in England and Wales at the end of each of the past five financial years. [48451]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information is not available for the full period requested. Data collected prior to one April 2003 is unreliable, and is not directly comparable with the more accurate figures collected since that time. The figures presented in the table show the proportion of staff, in terms of full time equivalent value, employed in an operational capacity at the close of each quarter from one April 2003 to 30 September 2005.

Operational staff in the National Probation Service operate in multi-disciplinary teams including dedicated support staff. For this reason figures have been provided showing both the number of operational staff, and the number of support staff dedicated to operational service teams. The total of these two staff groups gives an accurate representation of the total resource applied to operational services. The total of these two staff groups gives an accurate representation of the total resource applied to operational services.

	Operational staff	Support staff (Ops Services)	Total operational staff	Ops staff as percentage of total staff
2003-04				
Quarter 1	12,869.70	3,391.50	16,261.20	91.60
Quarter 2	13,419.39	13,312.22	16,731.61	91.57
Quarter 3	14,208.52	3,432.64	17,641.16	92.05
Quarter 4	14,249.91	3,428.66	17,678.57	92.10
2004-05				
Quarter 1	14,142.25	3,421.75	17,564.00	91.98
Quarter 2	14,086.67	3,423.60	17,510.27	91.84
Quarter 3	14,559.93	3,292.28	17,852.21	91.44
Quarter 4	14,765.90	3,317.90	18,082.90	91.53
2005-06				
Quarter 1	14,708.01	3,442.44	18,150.45	91.41
Quarter 2	14,781.50	3,549.77	18,331.27	91.22

Prostitution/Alcohol-related Arrests

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many people in (*a*) Romford and (*b*) Havering were arrested for offences relating to prostitution in each of the last five years; [48554]

(2) how many alcohol-related arrests have been made in (*a*) Romford, (*b*) Havering and (*c*) London since 24-hour licensing began; and how many such arrests were made in the same period in 2004. [48560]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested on arrests is not available centrally. Information on arrests collected is based on persons arrested for recorded crime (notifiable offences) by main offence group (ie sexual offences, violence against the person, burglary etc.) and at police force area only and therefore does not identify individual offences or circumstances nor constituency areas or local authorities.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many brothels in (*a*) Romford and (*b*) Havering have been closed in the last five years. [48555]

Fiona Mactaggart: This information is not held centrally. However, the Metropolitan Police Clubs and Vice Unit (CO14) advise that, during that period, three brothels have been closed in separate investigations in the areas covered by Romford and Havering, and a number of other brothels have been closed in the same area as a result of three major operations.

Racial and Religious Hatred

Ms Butler: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government plan to take to ensure that no undue arrests are made under the Racial and Religious Hatred Bill once that Bill becomes law. [47932]

Paul Goggins: The question of arrests under the Racial and Religious Hatred Bill when it is brought into force will be entirely a matter for the police. The Home Office will issue guidance for the police and other criminal justice agencies prior to commencement.

Ms Butler: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what post-legislative work has been planned to assess the effectiveness of the Racial and Religious Hatred Bill. [48971]

Paul Goggins: Like all new offences, operation of the new offence of incitement to religious hatred will be monitored by the Home Office and criminal justice agencies. We intend to conduct a preliminary review of the effectiveness of the legislation one year after commencement, with a full review three years after commencement. Records will be maintained of the number of prosecutions and convictions for the new offence.

Ms Butler: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what definition he uses of recklessness in the context of religious hatred. [48245]

Paul Goggins: The Government's Racial and Religious Hatred Bill, as amended by Parliament on 31 January, does not contain a "recklessness" provision. The proposed offence of incitement to religious hatred is now limited to words or behaviour that are intended to stir up religious hatred.

Real Women Programme

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to roll out the Real Women Programme for sentencing following its pilot in 2004. [49214]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Real Women Programme (now called The Women's Programme) was fully accredited by the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel(CSAP) in December 2004. It has been rolled out and is available as a sentencing option in the probation areas of South Wales, Hertfordshire and West Midlands. Leicestershire and Rutland Probation Area and London Probation Area are in the process of implementing the programme. We expect that more probation areas will use the programme in 2006-07.

Residential Care Staff (Vetting)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people applying for positions within residential care and nursing homes in (*a*) Tamworth, (*b*) Staffordshire and (*c*) England are awaiting clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau. [51224]

Andy Burnham: The information requested by the hon. Member for Tamworth is not available. The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) is unable to provide information on Disclosure applications based on specific employment sectors or geographical areas. The CRB aims to complete Disclosure applications across all sectors within the shortest time possible. Its published service standards are to issue 93 per cent. of Standard Disclosures within two weeks and 90 per cent. of Enhanced Disclosures within four weeks for all applications.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will bring forward measures to clarify criminal law on the transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. [49235]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government are working with the Crown Prosecution Service to produce guidance on this aspect of the law for prosecutors and for the public.

Student Visas

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the countries, or parts of countries, from which students with student visas are required to report changes of residence; and how many such changes in residence were reported to each police centre in the last two complete academic years. [51351]

Mr. McNulty: The position has not changed since my earlier answer to my hon. Friend on 12 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 142.

War Criminals

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how often the EU network of contacts established to exchange information to help investigate and prosecute suspected war criminals has met with a view to exchanging information about experiences, practices and methods, pursuant to Article 5 of the Council Decision of 8 May 2003 (2003/335/JHA); and if he will make a statement; [50302]

(2) what assessment he has made of the (*a*) operation and (*b*) effectiveness of the European network of contact points in respect of persons responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes; and if he will make a statement [50303]

(3) if he will list the EU network of contact points established to exchange information to help investigate and prosecute suspected war criminals in accordance with European Council Decision of 13 June 2002 (2002/494/JHA). [50304]

Andy Burnham: The European network of contact points in respect of persons responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes has met twice, on 23-24 November 2004 and 28-29 June 2005. A further meeting is planned during the Austrian presidency of the European Union. UK representatives who have attended meetings of the network have found it helpful in establishing contacts with foreign authorities responsible for investigating these offences. The current list of contact points has not been made public.

Work Permits

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 1791-92W, on work permits, if he will break down each figure given by type of application. [50277]

Mr. McNulty: The tables show the number of permits approved for posts in the health and medical industry for each month in 2004 and 2005 broken down by

country and type of application. The table one details the figures for 2004 and table two details the figures for 2005. This data is not provided under National Statistics protocols. It has been derived from local management information and is therefore provisional and subject to change. A copy will be placed in the Library.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many work permits were granted to health workers from overseas in each year between 1997 and 2003, broken down by *(a)* country of origin and *(b)* applications (i) made overseas, (ii) made in-country, (iii) for extensions and (iv) for change of employment. [50282]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* The table shows the number of permits approved for posts in the health and medical industry for each year between 1997 and 2003 broken down by country and type of application. This data is not provided under National Statistics protocols. It has been derived from local management information and is therefore provisional and subject to change. A copy of the table will be placed in the Library.

Young Offenders

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrests of minors were made in Wales in each of the last five years. [48561]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information available on arrests of minors in Wales is given in the table.

Number of persons aged 10–17 arrested for recorded crime (notifiable offences), Wales

	Total notifiable offences
2000–01[1]	15,817
2001–02[1]	16,021
2002–03	19,446
2003–04	19,930
2004–05	19,135

[1] Gwent was unable to supply arrests data by age group and therefore excluded from the total.

HEALTH

"Fuel for Living" Booklet

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost has been of the development of the "Fuel for Living" booklet; how many copies of the booklet will be published; at what cost; and if she will make a statement. [42189]

Caroline Flint: The cost of developing the "Fuel for Living" recipe booklet was £27,000. One million copies of the booklet have been produced at a cost of £58,500.

The "Fuel for Living" recipe booklet is part of the 5 A DAY campaign, which provides information and practical advice to improve the diet. The booklet targets the young independent group of 16 to 24-year-olds, who have a lower than average intake of fruit and vegetables so there is a need to provide information and help to improve their diet.

"Health Reform in England: Update and Next Steps"

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in respect of the proposed NHS reforms outlined in "Health Reform in England: update and next steps", whether practice based contracting will apply to all care or only to non-hospital care. [47469]

Mr. Byrne: The only services that are outside the scope of practice based commissioning for 2006–07 are services that are commissioned regionally or nationally and core general practitioner services.

ADHD

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will list the attention deficit hyperactivity disorder support groups which receive funding from the NHS; and how much each has received in 2005–06; [48075]

(2) what recent discussions have taken place between her Department and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder support groups. [48076]

Mr. Byrne: Information about national health service support for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder support groups is not collected centrally. However, the Department currently supports one attention deficit hyperactivity disorder support group via the section 64 grant scheme. In 2005–06, the National Attention Deficit Disorder Information and Support Service are receiving £40,000 as a contribution towards their central administrative costs.

Adverse Drug Reactions

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patient reports of adverse drug reactions have been received *(a)* online and *(b)* through a yellow card form in each month since patients were permitted to report adverse drug reactions directly. [46402]

Jane Kennedy: Reports of suspected adverse drug reaction (ADR) reports are collected by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and Commission for Human Medicines (CHM) through the spontaneous reporting scheme, the yellow card scheme.

Following recommendations from an independent review of access to the yellow card scheme, patients and their representatives are now encouraged to report suspected adverse drug reactions directly to the MHRA and CHM. Direct reporting from patients was launched as a small-scale pilot in January 2005 and expanded to a United Kingdom-wide pilot in October 2005. Patients are able to submit reports both electronically and via a purpose designed paper yellow card.

The table shows the total number of patient adverse drug reaction (ADR) reports received each month between 17 January 2005 and 31 December 2005, along with a breakdown of the number of paper and electronic internet reports.

Number of ADR reports received from patients between 17 January and 31 December 2005

Received month (2005)	*Total*	*Paper yellow card*	*Internet yellow card*
January	31	3	28
February	58	30	28
March	70	42	28
April	82	48	34
May	63	31	32
June	67	33	34
July	60	28	32
August	129	27	102
September	73	27	46
October[1]	69	22	47
November	79	38	41
December	169	134	35

[1] UK-wide direct patient reporting was launched on 25 October 2005

It is important to note that the submission of a suspected ADR report does not necessarily mean that it was caused by the drug. Many factors have to be taken into account in assessing causal relationships, including temporal association, the possible contribution of concomitant medication and the underlying disease.

Alcohol Consumption

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the effects of drinking alcohol *(a)* socially and *(b)* alone; and what assessment she has made of the different effects of drinking particular alcoholic drinks. [46213]

Caroline Flint: The Department has not made an assessment of the effects of drinking alcohol socially versus alone or of the different effects of drinking particular alcoholic drinks.

"Sensible Drinking: Report of an inter-departmental working group (1995)" sets out the Department's guidance on alcohol consumption and suggests:

> A maximum intake of two to three units per day for women and three to four for men, with two alcohol free days after heavy drinking; continued alcohol consumption at the upper level is not advised.

The Department keeps the evidence of the harmful effects of alcohol under ongoing review to ensure messages are accurate and up to date.

Alcohol Dependence

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her Department estimates to be the prevalence service utilisation ratio for alcohol-dependent individuals accessing treatment in *(a)* England and *(b)* each region. [45217]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 24 January 2006]*: The Government's alcohol needs assessment research project (ANARP) research, published in November 2005, estimates the gap between those alcohol-dependent individuals seeking treatment and the level of treatment services that is available.

The prevalence service utilisation ratio for alcohol-dependent individuals accessing treatment in England and each region is shown in the table.

England

Gender	*Prevalence service utilisation in need of treatment in treatment*
Male	20.8
Female	12.4
All (Average) Regions	18.0
East Midlands	15.7
Eastern	31.2
London	13.2
North East	101.9
North West	11.8
South East	20.2
South West	14.3
West Midlands	15.3
Yorkshire and Humber	46.0

Alimta

Jon Cruddas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the availability of Alimta on the NHS. [46360]

Jane Kennedy: Alimta is licensed for the treatment of malignant pleural mesothelioma and can be prescribed across the national health Service for those patients who fit the licensed criteria with the agreement of the clinicians and primary care trusts (PCTs) concerned.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is appraising Alimta for the treatment of mesothelioma and guidance is expected in October 2006.

Funding for licensed treatments should not be withheld because guidance from NICE is unavailable. In these circumstances, we expect PCTs to take full account of available evidence when reaching funding decisions. This is confirmed in "Health Service Circular 1999/176", which asks NHS bodies to continue with local arrangements for the managed introduction of new technologies where guidance from NICE is not available at the time the treatment or technology first became available.

Analogue Hearing Aids

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pensioners use analogue hearing aids. [49242]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not held centrally.

Brazilian Beef

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the amount of Brazilian beef procured for NHS establishments in the last year for which figures are available. [47472]

Jane Kennedy: The expenditure through framework agreements established by the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency for Brazilian beef have led to purchases by the national health service from November 2004 through to October 2005 of £7,700.

Capio Healthcare UK

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1293W, on Capio Healthcare UK, whether Dr. Thomas Mann was involved in the evaluation of bids for contracts for the provision of treatment centres or other surgical activity; whether Dr. Mann has been employed by her Department in any capacity since leaving the civil service; and in what capacity Dr. Mann was employed between the time he left the post of director of the national implementation team and the time he left the civil service. [47287]

Mr. Byrne: As director of the national implementation team, Dr. Mann was responsible for the oversight of the evaluation of bids for independent sector treatment centres by subject-matter specialists. Dr. Mann left this post in October 2003 and was thereafter strategic lead on clinical service issues for the implementation team until he left the employment of the civil service in February 2004. From 31 March 2004 until 27 May 2005, Dr. Mann worked on a consultancy basis for the Department's commercial directorate and was not responsible for the evaluation of bids for the provision of independent section treatment centres.

Care Homes

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many care home beds in *(a)* Greater London, *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon and *(c)* Uxbridge are operated (i) privately and (ii) by local authorities. [46544]

Jane Kennedy: I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that the number of care home beds in Greater London and the London borough of Hillingdon, which includes Uxbridge, is as shown in the tables.

Care homes in Greater London by capacity and ownership type at 1 January 2006

Owner type	*Number of homes*	*Number of beds*
Independent (private)	1,163	25,698
Local authority	113	2,652
NHS	24	234
Voluntary	694	10,841
Other	19	369

Care homes in Hillingdon borough (including Uxbridge) by capacity and ownership type at 1 January 2006

Owner type	*Number of homes*	*Number of beds*
Independent (private)	30	1,008
Local authority	6	82
Voluntary	15	109

Note:
Data from CSCI registration and inspection database at 30 January 2006

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health is she will establish a central record of mortality in respect of care homes residents, with particular reference to those residents who are moved consequent on closure of a care home; and if she will make a statement. [29711]

Mr. Byrne: Under the Care Home Regulation 2001, care homes have a duty to notify the Commission for Social Care Inspection of deaths, illness and other events that occur to residents.

I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspections (CSCI), that CSCI has a central database that records the death of residents in care homes and can track the number of deaths at a specific care home, but is unable to identify mortality rates in relation to the closure of a care home.

The Government have already announced a review of the national minimum standards and accompanying regulations and a full consultation exercise will be conducted.

Carers

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance and advice her Department provides for carers of elderly people in their own homes; where carers can obtain such guidance; and if she will place copies in the Library. [48351]

Mr. Byrne: The Department published a book entitled 'Who cares? Information and support for the carers of people with dementia' as well as a leaflet entitled 'How to get help in looking after someone'. Both publications are available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/36/29/04123629.pdf and www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/08/02/37/04080237.pdf or ordered from the Department's orderline at P.O. Box 777, London SE1 6XH telephone: 08701 555455. Copies of both publications are available in the Library.

In addition, the Department provides information and useful links for carers and those working with them on their website at www.carers.gov.uk

Chiropody

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress her Department is making towards establishing high-street drop-in centres for chiropody. [49561]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* The White Paper, Our health, "our care, our say", sets out the future direction for healthcare, including access to allied health professions (AHPs). The implementation will address additional access for AHP services including chiropody.

Choose and Book System

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost was of the infrastructure of choose and book in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06 to date. [41961]

Mr. Byrne: The cost of the central infrastructure of choose and book was £12.7 million in 2004–05 and £5.4 million in 2005–06 to date.

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on how many occasions her Department consulted citizens' juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens' jury differed from existing departmental

policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens' jury. [46231]

Mr. Byrne: Officials have not reported using citizen juries during the period specified. However, the Department does use a wide range of consultation methods to inform policy-making. For example, the recent consultation exercise leading up to the publication of the White Paper "Our health, our care, our say" involved a number of deliberative events which brought together ordinary members of the public to debate policy options. The outputs of these discussions strongly influenced the policy choices put forward in the final document.

Civil Servants (Overseas Visits)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what costs were incurred by her Department as a result of sending civil servants on overseas visits in each of the last 10 years. [46283]

Mr. Byrne: The information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Civil Service Relocation

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many departmental civil service jobs have been relocated to Scotland in each year since 2001. [47326]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 1 February 2006]:* No departmental civil service jobs from the Department have been relocated to Scotland in the period since 2001.

Clinical Guidelines

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if her Department will issue the NHS with a statutory direction to fund clinical guidelines. [47234]

Jane Kennedy: I have no plans to issue such a direction.

Communication Aid Equipment

Miss Begg: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to provide statutory funding for the provision of communication aid equipment. [49084]

Mr. Byrne: Primary care trusts (PCTs) and local councils receive substantial funding from Government each year. Within those allocations, it is for local PCTs and councils to fund and provide appropriate communication aids for their population through their integrated community equipment services in the light of local needs and priorities.

Compensation Claims

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost to public funds has been of claims for compensation from the NHS in each year since 1998. [46154]

Jane Kennedy: Information requested on the cost to public funds for all types of compensation claims from the national health service is not identifiable from NHS annual expenditure returns. Compensation payments made by the NHS Litigation Authority (NHSLA) are, however, identifiable and are shown in the following table.

Compensation paid by NHS Litigation Authority by scheme

£000

	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts	229	4,783	22,521	[1]201,869	175,277	293,384	329,412
Existing Liabilities Scheme	55,926	264,584	[1]842,093	343,242	269,345	128,071	169,414
Ex-Regional Health Authority Scheme	13,921	7,989	7,372	3,832	1,562	1,059	4,068
Total	[2]70,076	[2]277,356	[2]871,986	[2]548,943	446,184	422,514	502,894
Liabilities for Third Parties Scheme[3]	n/a	31	551	3,112	14,480	[3]7,395	21,280
Property Expenses Scheme	n/a	359	429	1,931	6,866	2,735	3,839
Total	0	390	980	5,043	21,346	10,130	25,119

[1] Amount reimbursed to trusts as part of the "call-in" and included within Existing Liabilities Scheme/Clinical Negligence Scheme for trusts payments.
[2] NHS bodies liable for an "excess" element not included in these totals.
[3] The apparent drop in payments under the Liabilities to Third Parties Scheme in 2003–04 was due to a change in invoicing policy by the NHSLA.

Computer Equipment

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice her Department has given to local authorities on the purchase and use of washable keyboards, mice and keyboard readers; and what encouragement her Department has offered them to purchase such items. [47689]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* The purchase of computer equipment is a local responsibility. We do not endorse particular products and such products cannot replace standard infection control measures such as hand hygiene. However, manufacturers can choose to submit their products that may contribute to infection prevention and control to the rapid review panel (RRP) for consideration. The RRP was set up to assess new and novel products that may help to improve infection control and reduce rates of healthcare associated infections. The RRP's recommendations are available on the Health Protection Agency's website at www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/rapid_review?default.htm and can help inform national health service purchasing decisions.

Cystic Fibrosis

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy to exempt cystic fibrosis sufferers from prescription charges. [45809]

Jane Kennedy: We have no plans to extend the existing list of medical conditions that give exemption from prescription charges.

The extensive exemption and change remission arrangements mean that 87 per cent. of prescriptions are dispensed free of charge. As a result, many people with

medical conditions not on the exempt list already get free prescriptions on other grounds. Anyone in work may claim help through the national health service low income scheme.

Prescription charges are currently being looked at by the Health Select Committee as part of its inquiry into NHS charges.

Dentistry

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to increase access to NHS dentistry in North Yorkshire; and how many additional places have been made available since 1997. [7489]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 27 June 2005]:* In September 2004, there were 794,177 patients registered with a national health service dentists in the North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire strategic health authority (SHA) area, compared with 906,871 in September 1997.

In 2004-05, £1.3 million of access money for NHS dental services was made available to primary care trusts (PCTs) in the North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire SHA area. The four PCTs within the North Yorkshire region are using this money to make available an additional 50,000 patient registrations.

Four Polish dentists are providing services to NHS dental patients in the Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale PCT and a further nine internationally-recruited dentists are working in the Selby and York PCT area. Furthermore, 0.9 whole time equivalent dentists have returned to work under the "Keeping in Touch" scheme.

Departmental Website

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of maintaining her main departmental website was for the last year for which figures are available; and how many visitors there were to the site in each of the last 12 months. [46305]

Jane Kennedy: The cost of the Department's corporate website (www.dh.gov.uk) and sub domain sites (www.info.doh.gov.uk, www.publications.doh.gov.uk, www.performance.doh.gov.uk and www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk) for the year 2004-05 was £724,956. These figures include hosting and maintenance, development and dedicated staff costs, using agreed civil service staff costs, including salaries, common services, etc.

The total number of visits to the main Department of Health website (www.dh.gov.uk) for the period January to December 2005 was 16,796,568. There were on average 871,497 unique users per month. The figures broken down by calendar month are shown in the table.

Date	*Visits*	*Unique users*
January 2005	1,450,700	897,192
February 2005	1,370,404	868,740
March 2005	1,567,241	972,913
April 2005	1,612,489	982,772
May 2005	1,462,105	889,320
June 2005	1,326,932	791,278
July 2005	1,238,586	726,929
August 2005	1,246,380	762,351
September 2005	1,547,505	1,018,882
October 2005	1,525,800	968,917
November 2005	1,382,912	877,830
December 2005	1,065,514	700,836
Total	16,796,568	10,457,960
Average per month	1,399,714	871,497

Diamorphine

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the stocks of diamorphine in England were in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available; [47929]

(2) what steps her Department has taken over the last 12 months to address shortages of diamorphine; [47930]

(3) what guidance her Department has issued to health professionals over the last 12 months regarding the use of diamorphine. [47931]

Jane Kennedy: Overall demand for diamorphine has exceeded supply to such an extent that at no time have significant stocks accumulated within the supply chain.

As soon as it became aware that one of the two United Kingdom suppliers of diamorphine was experiencing problems, the Department, with the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (PASA) made arrangements for the other supplier to maximise its production, contacted the suppliers of morphine and other opiates to arrange for them to increase production; explored the possibility of obtaining diamorphine from abroad and routinely monitored production of the two suppliers against historic demand, and ensured as far as possible that supplies were available where needed.

On 23 December 2004, the Department issued an alert to the national health service warning healthcare professionals about the shortage of diamorphine and advising them to consider alternative painkillers wherever possible, and to reserve supplies for those patients whose need was greatest. The alert also included interim clinical guidance which was subsequently updated by the Association for Palliative Medicine. Additional guidance for doctors managing patients dependent on diamorphine was issued on 30 December 2004. The Department has also been in regular contact with healthcare professionals and has issued updates to them on the supply situation.

Diamorphine is now available from both Wockhardt UK and Chiron but supplies are still limited and are likely to remain so for the coming months. The Department is continuing to monitor the situation carefully.

Disabled People (Independent Living)

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the outcome was of the consultation referred to in Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People on

whether people should have a right to request not to live in residential or nursing care; and if she will make a statement. [49830]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* Consultation on whether people should have the right to request not to live in residential or nursing care was included in the adult social care Green Paper "Independence Well-being and Choice: our vision for the future of social care for adults in England" which ran between 21 March and 28 July 2005.

An analysis of this consultation was published on 19 October 2005 and is available in the Library.

Domiciliary Care

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people over the age of 65 years were supported to live at home in *(a)* England and *(b)* each strategic health authority in each year since 1997. [47935]

Mr. Byrne: Information on the number of older people aged 65 or over helped to live at home in England and each strategic health authority as at 31 March, for the years 1998–99 to 2004–05 is shown in the table.

Following the last spending review, the Department was expected to ensure that, by March 2006, the number of older people supported intensively to live at home increased to 30 per cent. of the total being supported by social services at home or in residential care. This target was met two years early, in 2003–04, when the national average reached 30.1 per cent.

Number of older people aged 65 or over helped to live at home[1] by strategic health authority (SHA), 1998–99 to 2004–05[2] — England

Rounded numbers

	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05[3]
England total	637,600	662,000	649,700	660,200	660,700	662,000	641,900
SHA							
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	23,900	31,300	30,100	27,300	26,100	26,300	23,200
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	11,700	12,000	13,700	14,800	15,000	19,000	16,800
Birmingham and the Black Country	35,000	32,400	29,700	30,900	28,300	26,500	24,400
Cheshire and Merseyside	27,100	29,800	32,700	34,800	34,400	35,300	34,900
County Durham and Tees Valley	15,100	17,500	15,100	17,000	17,200	17,400	18,700
Cumbria and Lancashire	25,300	22,700	22,600	25,300	26,300	25,000	25,300
Dorset and Somerset	17,100	15,100	18,200	19,000	17,500	18,500	17,100
Essex	14,000	36,600	15,500	17,400	20,400	23,300	26,700
Greater Manchester	38,300	42,900	40,000	42,400	37,800	37,300	36,300
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	17,200	17,300	15,200	23,800	19,600	23,800	23,900
Kent and Medway	19,000	15,100	15,500	16,800	20,700	22,500	18,600
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	16,000	17,400	16,100	18,000	18,700	19,100	20,600
N and E Yorkshire and N Lincolnshire	21,000	13,300	20,900	23,100	25,700	24,700	24,600
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	20,700	22,000	20,700	23,900	24,800	26,800	29,100
North Central London	12,500	13,300	12,500	14,900	14,200	13,400	11,900
North East London	26,100	22,000	16,400	17,600	18,000	18,000	19,000
North West London	22,900	20,400	19,400	18,100	18,900	20,400	19,400
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	25,200	30,300	30,100	27,500	29,100	28,200	25,700
Shropshire and Staffordshire	22,000	28,600	30,000	20,800	21,000	21,000	26,700
South East London	21,800	23,500	21,400	20,700	20,600	19,200	18,600
South West London	17,100	17,100	17,600	17,300	17,100	16,300	14,000
South West Peninsula	19,100	21,100	22,500	24,500	26,700	23,200	22,000
South Yorkshire	16,300	23,900	23,000	19,300	19,300	17,100	18,100
Surrey and Sussex	26,700	28,400	34,200	33,400	30,000	27,700	21,700
Thames Valley	22,100	17,300	18,500	19,900	17,700	19,000	17,500
Trent	50,700	43,600	48,500	42,800	39,400	37,400	34,800
West Midlands South	15,500	13,300	16,100	15,600	19,900	20,200	19,300
West Yorkshire	37,900	33,600	33,500	33,200	36,300	35,300	33,000

[1] Helped to live at home by means of any service recorded on Referrals, Assessments and Packages of Care (RAP) return P2s. This includes planned short term breaks, direct payments, professional support, transport and equipment and adaptations as well as home care, day care and meals services. Data for 1998–99 on this basis are estimated as are data for 1999–2000 for around a quarter of the 150 local authorities.

[2] Data as at March each year. Data for 1997–98 has been excluded as it is not comparable with later years.

[3] Data on the number of people helped to live at home in 2004–05 is not comparable to data for previous years. In 2004–05 restated guidance was issued to exclude people receiving services from grant-funded organisations who had not had a community care assessment.

Source:
KS1 and RAP proforma P2s

Drug Costs

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many fees have been paid to pharmacists for each price category of *(a)* amlodipine, *(b)* simvastatin and *(c)* lisinopril (i) in each month of the last three financial years and (ii) to date in 2005–06; what the value was of each fee; and what the total payment was for each month for each price category of each drug; [48781]

(2) when *(a)* amlodipine, *(b)* simvastatin and *(c)* lisinopril went out of patent; [48782]

(3) what assessment she has made of the generic rates payable for *(a)* amlodipine, *(b)* simvastatin and *(c)* lisinopril since each drug went out of patent; [48783]

(4) what steps she plans to take to ensure that when drugs are out of patent fees are paid at a generic rate rather than a branded rate; and if she will make a statement. [48784]

Jane Kennedy: Data on the number of prescriptions and costs is recorded on a quarterly rather than monthly basis and is only currently available for the period up to September 2005. Table one, provides the number of items prescribed and their net ingredient cost for each of the medicines in each quarter. The drug tariff prices for each of these medicines during the period in question are provided in table two.

Data held by the Department records the following expiry dates for amlodipine, simvastatin and lisinopril:

Amlodipine—March 2004

Simvastatin—May 2003

Lisinopril—October 2002

The reimbursement prices for generic simvastatin and lisinopril followed the usual procedure and timeframe, moving from category C, reimbursement price based on a brand, to category A, reimbursement price based on a basket of generic suppliers, when the generic became available. However, it became apparent that there were significant differences between these generic reimbursement prices and the prices at which they could be purchased by community pharmacy contractors and dispensing doctors. These differences would normally be recovered by a discount inquiry, but these medicines entered the market after the last inquiry. Therefore, following a consultation, the Government reduced the prices of these medicines on two occasions; the first with effect from 1 December 2003 and the second with effect from September 2004.

Following patent expiry of amlodipine, the Department followed the usual procedure for setting a generic reimbursement price moving from category C to category A. However, the entry of amlodipine into category M was delayed 1 October 2005 by supply side instability.

The Department has already taken considerable action to ensure that off patent medicines are reimbursed appropriately. Following an unexpected increase in prices in 1999, the Department introduced a short term maximum price scheme whilst undertaking a wider consultation on the arrangements for the future supply and reimbursement of national health service generic medicines. Taking account of responses to this consultation, as part introduced a new category M into the drug tariff in April 2005 based on a new mechanism for setting reimbursement prices of commonly prescribed generics. The prices of category M medicines now reflect the average manufacturers' market prices after discount, but leave a margin of unrecovered discount as part of pharmacy funding. The prices for category M are recalculated quarterly.

Table 1: Number of prescription items and net ingredient cost of Amlodipine, Lisinopril and Simvastatin dispensed in the community in England. Quarterly data

	2002				2003		
	April-June	July-September	October-December	January-March	April-June	July-September	October-December
Number of prescription items (thousand)							
Amlodipine	1,695.7	1,728.9	1,790.3	1,747.0	1,830.4	1,872.9	1,943.4
Lisinopril	1,558.5	1,578.3	1,612.9	1,550.8	1,606.6	1,634.2	1,669.3
Simvastatin	1,712.9	1,859.6	2,005.6	2,043.2	2,239.8	2,435.7	2,652.7
Net ingredient cost (£ thousand)							
Amlodipine	34,758.0	35,400.4	36,683.9	35,655.5	37,214.3	40,500.6	43,337.6
Lisinopril	21,925.4	22,288.1	22,871.3	21,039.9	20,866.6	20,209.5	18,254.5
Simvastatin	61,003.7	66,808.5	72,698.8	74,423.1	81,742.0	81,890.8	71,024.2

	2004				2005		
	January-March	April-June	July-September	October-December	January-March	April-June	July-September
Number of prescription items (thousand)							
Amlodipine	1,934.5	2,010.8	2,073.1	2,173.5	2,138.5	2,287.9	2,354.5
Lisinopril	1,639.6	1,684.3	1,717.9	1,763.6	1,694.6	1,788.0	1,808.4
Simvastatin	2,756.3	3,018.4	3,297.9	3,608.4	3,623.1	3,966.3	4,272.2
Net ingredient cost (£ thousand)							
Amlodipine	42,947.8	42,188.3	40,534.5	37,345.3	35,521.5	36,328.2	36,671.9
Lisinopril	15,698.4	16,077.2	14,703.7	11,705.8	11,192.3	5,965.0	5,365.3
Simvastatin	63,548.2	69,749.3	66,109.1	51,471.9	51,814.6	20,572.1	15,940.2

Table 2: Reimbursement prices (pence)

		2002								
Drug	*Pack*	*April*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*August*	*September*	*October*	*November*	*December*
Amlodipine 5mg Tablets	28	1,185	1,185	1,185	1,185	1,185	1,185	1,185	1,185	1,185
Amlodipine 10mg Tablets	28	1,770	1,770	1,770	1,770	1,770	1,770	1,770	1,770	1,770
Lisinopril 2.5mg Tablets	28	626	626	626	626	626	626	626	626	626
Lisinopril 5mg Tablets	28	786	786	786	786	786	786	786	786	786
Lisinopril 10mg Tablets	28	970	970	970	970	970	970	970	970	970
Lisinopril 20mg Tablets	28	1,097	1,097	1,097	1,097	1,097	1,097	1,097	1,097	1,097
Simvastatin 10mg Tablets	28	1,803	1803	1,803	1,803	1,803	1,803	1,803	1,803	1,803
Simvastatin 20mg Tablets	28	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2969
Simvastatin 40mg Tablets	28	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969
Simvastatin 80mg Tablets	28	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969

		2003										
Drug	*Pack*	*January*	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*August*	*September*	*October*	*November*	*December*
Amlodipine 5mg Tablets	28	1,185	1,185	1,185	1,185	1,185	1,185	1,185	1,304	1,304	1,304	1,304	1,304
Amlodipine 10mg Tablets	28	1,770	1,770	1,770	1,770	1,770	1,770	1,770	1,947	1,947	1,947	1,947	1,947
Lisinopril 2.5mg Tablets	28	616	608	595	582	571	571	560	550	539	526	514	375

		2003										
Drug	Pack	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Lisinopril 5mg Tablets	28	773	764	752	736	720	720	708	696	670	666	649	495
Lisinopril 10mg Tablets	28	954	942	930	914	898	898	884	860	846	840	823	677
Lisinopril 20mg Tablets	28	1,079	1,066	1,054	1,035	1,012	1,012	998	978	957	951	936	750
Simvastatin 80mg Tablets	28	1,803	1,803	1,803	1,803	1,803	1,803	1,803	1,659	1,630	1,518	1,456	1,199
Simvastatin 20mg Tablets	28	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,692	2,614	2,421	2,307	1,600
Simvastatin 40mg Tablets	28	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,809	2,774	2,681	2,620	2,100
Simvastatin 80mg Tablets	28	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,969	2,908	2,908	2,877	2,877

		2004										
Drug	Pack	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Amlodipine 5mg Tablets	28	1,304	1,304	1,304	1,304	1,304	1,304	1,211	1,167	1,092	1,056	1,004	1,284
Amlodipine 10mg Tablets	28	1,947	1,947	1,947	1,947	1,947	1,947	1,792	1,727	1,583	1,534	1,445	926
Lisinopril 2.5mg Tablets	28	375	375	375	375	375	375	375	375	289	289	289	289
Lisinopril 5mg Tablets	28	495	495	495	495	495	495	495	495	347	347	347	347
Lisinopril 10mg Tablets	28	677	677	677	677	677	677	677	677	404	404	404	404
Lisinopril 20mg Tablets	28	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	549	549	549	549
Simvastatin 10mg Tablets	28	1,199	1,199	1,199	1,199	1,199	1,199	1,199	1,199	578	578	578	578
Simvastatin 20mg Tablets	28	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600	780	780	780	780
Simvastatin 40mg Tablets	28	2,100	2,100	2,100	2,100	2,100	2,100	2,100	2,100	1,560	1,560	1,560	1,560
Simvastatin 80mg Tablets	28	2,877	2,877	2,877	2,877	2,877	2,877	2,877	2,877	2,877	2,877	2,877	2,877

		2005										
Drug	Pack	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Amlodipine 5mg Tablets	28	870	962	889	889	889	889	889	889	889	548	548	548
Amlodipine 10mg Tablets	28	1,233	1,362	1,225	1,225	1,225	1,225	1,225	1,225	1,225	796	796	796
Lisinopril 2.5mg Tablets	28	289	289	289	176	176	176	117	117	117	130	130	130
Lisinopril 5mg Tablets	28	347	347	347	198	198	198	134	134	134	155	155	155
Lisinopril 10mg Tablets	28	404	404	404	178	178	178	170	170	170	198	198	198
Lisinopril 20mg Tablets	28	549	549	549	243	243	243	222	222	222	268	268	268
Simvastatin 10mg Tablets	28	578	578	578	212	212	212	165	165	165	175	175	175
Simvastatin 20mg Tablets	28	780	780	780	226	226	226	148	148	148	179	179	179
Simvastatin 40mg Tablets	28	1,560	1,560	1,560	487	487	487	357	357	357	414	414	414
Simvastatin 80mg Tablets	28	2,877	2,877	2,877	2,679	2,679	2,679	2,029	2,029	2,029	2,572	2,572	2,572

	2006	
Drug	Pack	January	February
Amlodipine 5mg Tablets	28	540	540
Amlodipine 10mg Tablets	28	782	782
Lisinopril 2.5mg Tablets	28	130	130
Lisinopril 5mg Tablets	28	154	154
Lisinopril 10mg Tablets	28	198	198
Lisinopril 20mg Tablets	28	268	268
Simvastatin 10mg Tablets	28	175	175
Simvastatin 20mg Tablets	28	171	171
Simvastatin 40mg Tablets	28	389	389
Simvastatin 80mg Tablets	28	2,529	2,529

Drug Treatment Programmes

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have successfully completed a drug treatment programme in each of the last five years. [47701]

Caroline Flint: There are no exact published numbers for the number of people successfully completing treatment prior to 2003–04. In 2003–04, 90,500 persons successfully completed treatment and in 2004–05 there were 120,700.

Easington Primary Care Trust

John Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made by Easington primary care trust in its cessation of smoking programme; and if she will make a statement. [47916]

Mr. Byrne: Annual data for the monitoring of the national health service stop smoking services, for the periods April 2002 to March 2003, April 2003 to March 2004 and April 2004 to March 2005, is shown in table 1.

Provisional results from the quarterly report that monitors the NHS stop smoking services (for the period April 2005 to June 2005—quarter 1 is shown in table 2.

Table 1: People[1] setting a quit date and those successfully quit[2] annually since 2002, Easington primary care trust

	Number setting a quit date	Number successfully quit at four week follow-up (self report)
2002–03	1,402	843
2003–04	1,782	1,075
2004–05	2,398	1,254

[1] Aged 16 and over.

A client is counted as having successfully quit smoking at the four week follow-up if he/she has not smoked at all since two weeks after the quit date. The figures presented here are based on self-report of smoking status by the client at the four week follow-up.

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre, Lifestyles Statistics

Table 2: People[1] setting a quit date and those successfully quit[2], April 2005 to June 2005, Kensington primary care trust

Number setting a quit date	696
Number successfully quit at four week follow-up (self report)	306

[1] Aged 16 and over.
[2] A client is counted as having successfully quit smoking at the four week follow-up if he/she has not smoked at all since two weeks after the quit date. The figures presented here are based on self-report of smoking status by the client at the four week follow-up.

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre, Lifestyles Statistics

Elderly Care Provision

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to ensure that elderly patients in (*a*) hospitals and (*b*) nursing and residential homes are afforded privacy for personal care. [48356]

Mr. Byrne: "Standards for Better Health" already describes the level of care that national health service organisations are expected to meet, including care that is supportive of patient privacy. The standards are a key part of the performance assessment undertaken by the Healthcare Commission of all health care organisations.

Similarly, in social care settings, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) inspects regulated care services against the national minimum standards described in "Care Homes for Older People National Minimum Standards". Privacy and dignity are covered explicitly by these standards.

Both the Healthcare Commission and CSCI have statutory powers to take action where the relevant standards are not being met.

Foster Review

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when she expects to publish the findings of the Foster review into non-medical health regulation; and if she will make a statement; [46254]

(2) when she expects to publish the findings of the Donaldson review into regulation of the medical profession; and if she will make a statement. [46255]

Jane Kennedy: The last meeting of the Chief Medical Officer's advisory group on medical regulation took place on 20 December 2005. The Chief Medical Officer is now preparing his report taking account of the deliberations of the advisory group, the responses to his Call for Ideas document, and the report of the Shipman inquiry and other relevant inquiries. The review undertaken by Andrew Foster has also involved extensive meetings and reviews of evidence in the complex field of non-clinical regulation. These major pieces of work will be submitted in reports to Ministers when concluded and a statement on the decisions reached given in due course.

General Medical Council

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average period between referral to the General Medical Council and a disciplinary hearing taking place was in each year since 2000; [48133]

(2) how many disciplinary cases were heard by the General Medical Council in each year since 2000; [48136]

(3) how many medical practitioners were referred for disciplinary action before the General Medical Council in each year since 2000. [48137]

Jane Kennedy: The Government do not collect data on the General Medical Council's disciplinary processes. I would therefore suggest that the hon. Gentleman writes to the General Medical Council at Regents Place, 350 Euston Road, London, NW1 3JN.

General Practitioners

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have attended general practitioner surgeries in the borough of Lewisham in each of the past five years. [47152]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the cost of general practitioners claiming entitlement for patients who have moved or died and not informed their general practitioner in each of the last five years. [41052]

Mr. Byrne: The Audit Commission are currently carrying out a study, the national duplicate registration initiative, to identify the costs associated with inaccurate patient registrations, including where patients have moved or died, but also to assess how systems may be improved in order to minimise duplications. The report is expected in the spring.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that general practices have a choice of IT systems within defined interoperability standards. [49430]

Mr. Byrne: All general practitioners are able to exercise choice between general practice clinical systems, including those systems offered by the national programme's local service providers, which meet the programme's requirements for accreditation. These requirements include defined standards for system function and interoperability. The standards are subject to continuing review and updating to ensure increased patient safety and benefits to general practice users. NHS Connecting for Health continues to work with suppliers and general practice professional bodies to expand the range of systems available to general practitioners which are compliant with the standards.

Genetic Testing

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research has been undertaken (*a*) by the Medical Research Council and (*b*) through her Department's research and development budget for the NHS into developing genetic testing. [44905]

Jane Kennedy: The Medical Research Council (MRC) is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology.

The MRC has a genetics portfolio and spends some £80 million per year on this area of research. The portfolio has a focus on the identification of disease susceptibility genes, on involvement and interplay of the environment and genes in disease, on analysis of gene expression in disease, and on uncovering disease biomarkers. Outputs from any of this research may contribute to the development of genetic diagnostic tools.

The genetics White Paper, "Our inheritance, our future realising the potential of genetics in the NHS", published in June 2003, announced that the Department would invest up to £4 million to fund pharmacogenetic research on existing medicines. Pharmacogenetics involves the tailoring of medication choice or dose to a patient's genetic make-up, usually assessed with the aid of genetic testing. The £4 million was awarded to six research projects selected in 2004.

The five genetics knowledge parks (GKPs), jointly funded by the Department and the Department for Trade and Industry, are undertaking research that includes an examination of the feasibility and ethical and legal implications of testing for sudden cardiac death syndrome, and for the breast and ovarian cancer susceptibility genes BRCA 1 and BRCA 2. The GKPs' work programmes also feature genetic testing for familial hypercholesterolaemia and the clinical and psychological impact of genetic testing on people being helped to give up smoking.

The National Genetics Reference Laboratories (NGRL) are developing new technologies to meet service needs and exploring the service configurations needed for pharmacogenetic testing in the national health service. Developing quality assurance in genetic testing is part of the NGRL remit, and one important aspect of this is the development of appropriate reference and control reagents.

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by national health service organisations. The NHS has reported spending from this funding in support of genetics research as follows:

	£ million
	Spending in support of genetics research
2003-04	28
2004-05	31

Details of individual projects, including those to do with the development and use of genetic tests, can be found on the national research register on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Health Trainers

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS-accredited health trainers have been employed since September 2004; and if she will make a statement. [47936]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Health White Paper

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will postpone any proposals to merge ambulance trusts arising from the current consultation until the urgent care service strategy described in paragraph 4.51 of the White Paper, "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say", is developed. [49551]

Mr. Byrne: Organisational reconfiguration does not preclude ambulance trusts being involved in the development and provision of integrated urgent care services nor does it prejudge their role in providing urgent care services.

Primary care trusts will continue to commission urgent care services, including ambulance services, and we expect ambulance trusts to continue to provide services tailored to particular localities within their area, whether or not ambulance trusts are merged. Larger ambulance trusts, if established, would have the strategic capacity and flexibility of resources to help them play an even greater part in working in partnership with other health and social care agencies to develop urgent care services that meet the needs of local people.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the national approach to risk management described in paragraph 4.42 of the White Paper, "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say", is expected to be placed on a statutory basis. [49552]

Mr. Byrne: This decision has not yet been taken.

Healthcare Commission

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what complaints procedure is in operation for complaints against the Healthcare Commission; [48183]

(2) how many complaints against the Healthcare Commission were received in 2005. [48184]

Jane Kennedy: The Chairman of the Healthcare Commission has confirmed that current advice, which is published on its website, is that anyone wishing to complain about the Commission should contact a named member of staff. When complaints are received in this way they are referred to the section of the Healthcare Commission concerned to respond to. The Health Commission's chief executive responds to complaints addressed directly to her. Central guidance for its staff on dealing with complaints made against it is being currently developed.

The Chairman has also confirmed that information on the number of complaints made is not held centrally.

Healthy Lifestyle Schemes

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on schemes the Department is funding to promote healthy lifestyles in people aged 50 years and over. [39422]

Caroline Flint: A number of initiatives are under way to promote healthy lifestyles in people aged 50 and over. As part of the partnerships for older peoples project

(POPP) initiative the Department has awarded funding of over £39 million to 19 local authority-led partnerships across England to improve health and well being outcomes for older people. Each pilot site, which will be operational by 1 May 2006 will develop, test and evaluate, a range of different ways of providing more support and care for local older people, which will enable them to have a better quality of life and remain in control of their own lives for as long as possible. Several of the pilot sites include health promotion activities as part of their wide-ranging projects. For example:

The cross-Government leaflet, "Are you over 50?", is being revised and will be available April 2006. The emphasis is very much on active ageing.

Nine local exercise action pilots (LEAP) are under way across England, jointly funded by the Department, the Countryside Agency and Sport England. The pilots are testing different community approaches to increasing physical activity in deprived areas. Three of the pilots based at Ashton, Leigh and Wigan, Nottingham city and West of Cornwall Primary Care Trust have a specific focus on older people.

Health Professions Council

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what complaints she has received about the registration process of the Health Professions Council; and if she will make a statement. [47640]

Mr. Byrne: I am only aware of one complaint involving the registration process of the Health Professions Council since July 2005.

HIV/AIDS

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough, South and East Cleveland were diagnosed as having HIV/AIDS in each year since 1997. [45104]

Caroline Flint: These data are only routinely published at strategic health authority level. These are shown in tables 1 and 2. Full HIV data are not yet available for 2005. The HIV diagnoses are from reports received from laboratories and clinicians by the end of December 2005.

Table 1: Numbers of HIV diagnoses made in County Durham and Tees Valley since 1997

	Number
1997	7
1998	3
1999	5
2000	9
2001	16
2002	25
2003	35
2004	34

Table 2: Numbers of HIV diagnoses for England since 1997

	Number
1997	2,532
1998	2,638
1999	2,916
2000	3,649
2001	4,807
2002	5,888
2003	6,831
2004	6,819

Source:
HPA—Reports of HIV Diagnoses

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking to increase access to HIV *(a)* testing and *(b)* treatment among African communities living in England; and if she will make a statement. [48479]

Caroline Flint: Through the African HIV Policy Network (AHPN) and partner organizations, the Department has funded the campaign "It's Better to Know" aimed specifically at increasing awareness of HIV testing among people from African communities living in England. We are working with the AHPN to develop a further HIV awareness raising campaign to be taken forward during 2006. We fund the African AIDS helpline, which provides information in a variety of languages. We have also funded a pilot project exploring the feasibility of providing additional HIV testing facilities outside of the genito-urinary medicine setting. This pilot is currently being evaluated.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps her Department is taking to increase awareness of HIV among *(a)* heterosexual and *(b)* homosexual males. [48480]

Caroline Flint: Awareness of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, will be addressed through a new sexual health media campaign, announced as part of the "Choosing Health" White Paper, to modernise and transform sexual health in England. The campaign will focus on the risks of unprotected sex and the benefits of using condoms to avoid the risk of sexually transmitted infections including HIV.

A major aim for the campaign is normalising condom use and implicitly this will contribute to reducing the risk of HIV. The campaign is additional and complementary to, existing HIV Awareness campaigns for those most at risk, in partnership with key voluntary sector organisations.

HIV awareness for men who have sex with men is delivered by the Terrence Higgins Trust in an ongoing targeted programme of information and selected media campaigns.

Independent Sector Providers

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the contracts being negotiated with independent sector providers of elective treatment will provide for payments exceeding the NHS equivalent cost by a *(a)* greater and *(b)* smaller percentage than the average excess in 2004–05. [46086]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* All contracts negotiated with independent sector providers have to demonstrate value for money. Value for money is based upon a combination of price and quality. It is not possible to predict the outcome of current negotiations but we do not expect to pay more than the average excess paid in 2004–05. From 2008, any new

provider and existing independent sector treatment centre providers, once their contracts have expired, will be expected to provide services at the agreed national health service price.

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) under what terms NHS *(a)* trusts, *(b)* primary care trusts and *(c)* health authorities procure independent sector elective treatment; [46088]

(2) what guidance her Department offers to NHS *(a)* trusts, *(b)* primary care trusts and *(c)* health authorities about the procurement of independent sector elective treatment. [46089]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answers 30 January 2006]:* The Department has not issued guidance nor has it provided standard terms with regard to the procurement of independent sector elective treatment.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the NHS can withhold payment under contracts with independent sector providers where the number of procedures stipulated in the contract is not fulfilled; and if she will make a statement. [45975]

Mr. Byrne: National health service commissioners can withhold payments where the provider of an independent sector treatment centre does not complete procedures in accordance with the terms of the contract. If the referral of patients to the treatment centre is less than that stipulated in the contract, agreed between the provider and the commissioner, the provider will be paid the difference between the value of referrals and the minimum contract value to cover their costs of providing sufficient resources to honour their contractual obligations.

Influenza Vaccines

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the extent to which general practitioners' surgeries in the Royal borough of Windsor and Maidenhead have been able to obtain sufficient supplies of influenza vaccine to inoculate all patients who fall into risk categories. [40738]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 12 January 2006]:* This information requested is not collected centrally.

However, the Department is supplying flu vaccine to any general practitioner surgeries from whom it receives orders.

Information Technology

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what proportion of general practitioners use system choice under the National Programme for IT in the NHS; and what target date has been set for achieving system choice throughout the NHS. [49831]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for South Derbyshire (Mr. Todd) today.

Kidney Disease

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the extent to which funding for NHS research into kidney disease is meeting the Government's priorities for the treatment and management of the disease, including the standards set out in the Renal National Service Framework. [45589]

Jane Kennedy: Over 75 per cent. of the Department's research and development (R and D) budget is allocated to research active national health service organisations as R and D support funding. This funding is used to meet the research priorities and needs of the NHS, and to meet the NHS costs of hosting research and development supported by external funders. The priorities and needs funding supports the R and D required to underpin quality improvement and is explicitly linked to the national service frameworks (NSFs). Renal disease is an identified priority for NHS research and NHS organisations report spending some £11 million a year in support of research in that area.

The Department, through its policy research programme, commissioned independent reviews of the available research evidence on kidney disease and its management for both parts of the NSF for renal services, ensuring the standards and quality requirements of the NSF are evidence-based.

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on NHS research into causes, diagnosis and treatment of kidney disease in each of the last five years; and if she will list the research projects on kidney disease funded in each year. [46746]

Jane Kennedy: The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the national health service through its national research programmes. Expenditure on research into kidney disease supported by these programmes is shown in the table.

	£000
2000-01	102
2001-02	138
2002-03	224
2003-04	284
2004-05	203

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by NHS organisations. The NHS has reported spending from this funding in support of renal disease research as follows:

	£ million
2002-03	11.1
2003-04	10.6
2004-05	10.8

This expenditure data was not collected centrally prior to 2002.

Details of the individual projects concerned can be found on the national research register on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Long-term Conditions

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her answer of 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 729W, on long-term conditions, what is the role of her Department's document, 'Supporting People with Long Term Conditions'; by what process *(a)* this document and *(b)* the national service framework for long-term conditions was created; and whether the document has been superseded by the national service framework on long-term conditions. [48201]

Mr. Byrne: The publication, 'Supporting People with Long Term Conditions' was developed to provide a health and social care model for long-term conditions. It was written for a management and senior clinician audience to provide a strategic direction to the national health service and social care. The management model was developed with the active engagement of a number of stakeholders including the NHS, local authorities, patients and the voluntary sector.

The national service framework (NSF) for long-term conditions builds on 'Supporting People with Long Term Conditions' by focusing on the implementation and delivery of improved treatment and care for people with long-term conditions. The NSF was developed with the advice of an independent external reference group consisting of health and social care professionals, service users and carers.

Medical Procedures (Costs)

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will list the payments made to *(a)* Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, *(b)* Barts and The London NHS Trust, *(c)* Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust, *(d)* St Mary's NHS Trust, *(e)* University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, *(f)* Royal West Sussex NHS Trust, *(g)* Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, *(h)* Airedale NHS Trust, *(i)* Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, *(j)* the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, *(k)* Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust, *(l)* The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, *(m)* Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust, *(n)* Medway NHS Trust, *(o)* Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust, *(p)* Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust, *(q)* Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, *(r)* George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust, *(s)* West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust and *(t)* Burton Hospitals NHS Trust for mitral/aortic valve replacements in each year since 1997; and how many mitral/aortic valve replacements were carried out by each hospital trust in each year; [48084]

(2) if she will list the payments made to *(a)* Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, *(b)* Barts and The London NHS Trust, *(c)* Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust, *(d)* St Mary's NHS Trust, *(e)* University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, *(f)* Royal West Sussex NHS Trust, *(g)* Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, *(h)* Airedale NHS Trust, *(i)* Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, *(j)* the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, *(k)* Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust, *(l)* The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, *(m)* Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust, *(n)* Medway NHS Trust, *(o)* Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust, *(p)* Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust, *(q)* Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, *(r)* George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust, *(s)* West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust and *(t)* Burton Hospitals NHS Trust for hernia repairs in each year since 1997; and how many hernia repairs were carried out by each hospital trust in each year; [48085]

(3) if she will list the payments made to *(a)* Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, *(b)* Barts and The London NHS Trust, *(c)* Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust, *(d)* St Mary's NHS Trust, *(e)* University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, *(f)* Royal West Sussex NHS Trust, *(g)* Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, *(h)* Airedale NHS Trust, *(i)* Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, *(j)* the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, *(k)* Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust, *(l)* The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, *(m)* Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust, *(n)* Medway NHS Trust, *(o)* Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust, *(p)* Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust, *(q)* Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, *(r)* George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust, *(s)* West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust and *(t)* Burton Hospitals NHS Trust for total hip replacements in each year since 1997; and how many total hip replacements were carried out by each hospital trust in each year; [48086]

(4) if she will list the payments made to *(a)* Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, *(b)* Barts and The London NHS Trust, *(c)* Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust, *(d)* St Mary's NHS Trust, *(e)* University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, *(f)* Royal West Sussex NHS Trust, *(g)* Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, *(h)* Airedale NHS Trust, *(i)* Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, *(j)* the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, *(k)* Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust, *(l)* The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, *(m)* Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust, *(n)* Medway NHS Trust, *(o)* Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust, *(p)* Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust, *(q)* Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, *(r)* George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust, *(s)* West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust and *(t)* Burton Hospitals NHS Trust for coronary artery bypass grafting in each year since 1997; and how many coronary artery bypass grafts were carried out by each hospital trust in each year; [48088]

(5) if she will list the payments made to *(a)* Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, *(b)* Barts and The London NHS Trust, *(c)* Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust, *(d)* St Mary's NHS Trust, *(e)* University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, *(f)* Royal West Sussex NHS Trust, *(g)* Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, *(h)* Airedale NHS Trust, *(i)* Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, *(j)* the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, *(k)* Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust, *(l)* The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, *(m)* Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust, *(n)* Medway NHS Trust, *(o)* Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust, *(p)* Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals

NHS Trust, *(q)* Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, *(r)* George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust, *(s)* West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust and *(t)* Burton Hospitals NHS Trust for total knee replacements in each year since 1997; and how many total knee replacements were carried out by each hospital trust in each year; [48089]

(6) if she will list the payments made to *(a)* Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, *(b)* Barts and The London NHS Trust, *(c)* Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust, *(d)* St Mary's NHS Trust, *(e)* University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, *(f)* Royal West Sussex NHS Trust, *(g)* Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, *(h)* Airedale NHS Trust, *(i)* Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, *(j)* the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, *(k)* Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust, *(l)* The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, *(m)* Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust, *(n)* Medway NHS Trust, *(o)* Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust, *(p)* Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust, *(q)* Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, *(r)* George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust, *(s)* West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust and *(t)* Burton Hospitals NHS Trust for stripping of varicose veins in each year since 1997; and how many operations to strip varicose veins were carried out by each hospital trust in each year; [48090]

(7) if she will list the payments made to *(a)* Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, *(b)* Barts and The London NHS Trust, *(c)* Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust, *(d)* St Mary's NHS Trust, *(e)* University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, *(f)* Royal West Sussex NHS Trust, *(g)* Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, *(h)* Airedale NHS Trust, *(i)* Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, *(j)* the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, *(k)* Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust, *(l)* The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, *(m)* Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust, *(n)* Medway NHS Trust, *(o)* Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust, *(p)* Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust, *(q)* Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, *(r)* George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust, *(s)* West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust and *(t)* Burton Hospitals NHS Trust for hysterectomies in each year since 1997; and how many hysterectomies were carried out by each hospital trust in each year; [48091]

(8) if she will list the payments made to *(a)* Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, *(b)* Barts and The London NHS Trust, *(c)* Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust, *(d)* St Mary's NHS Trust, *(e)* University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, *(f)* Royal West Sussex NHS Trust, *(g)* Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, *(h)* Airedale NHS Trust, *(i)* Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, *(j)* the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, *(k)* Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust, *(l)* The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, *(m)* Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust, *(n)* Medway NHS Trust, *(o)* Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust, *(p)* Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust, *(q)* Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, *(r)* George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust, *(s)* West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust and *(t)* Burton Hospitals NHS Trust for tonsillectomies in each year since 1997; and how many tonsillectomies were carried out by each hospital trust in each year; [48092]

(9) if she will list the payments made to *(a)* Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, *(b)* Barts and The London NHS Trust, *(c)* Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust, *(d)* St Mary's NHS Trust, *(e)* University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, *(f)* Royal West Sussex NHS Trust, *(g)* Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, *(h)* Airedale NHS Trust, *(i)* Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, *(j)* the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, *(k)* Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust, *(l)* The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, *(m)* Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust, *(n)* Medway NHS Trust, *(o)* Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust, *(p)* Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust, *(q)* Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, *(r)* George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust, *(s)* West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust and *(t)* Burton Hospitals NHS Trust for operations for enlarged prostates in each year since 1997; and how many operations for enlarged prostates were carried out by each hospital trust in each year; [48214]

(10) if she will list the payments made to *(a)* Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, *(b)* Barts and The London NHS Trust, *(c)* Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust, *(d)* St Mary's NHS Trust, *(e)* University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, *(f)* Royal West Sussex NHS Foundation Trust, *(g)* Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust, *(h)* Airedale NHS Trust, *(i)* Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, *(j)* the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, *(k)* Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust, *(l)* The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, *(m)* Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust, *(n)* Medway NHS Trust, *(o)* Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust, *(p)* Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust, *(q)* Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, *(r)* George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust, *(s)* West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust and *(t)* Burton Hospitals NHS Trust for cataract extractions and lens implants in each year since 1997; and how many cataract extractions and lens implants were carried out by each hospital trust in each year; [48234]

(11) if she will list the payments made to *(a)* Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust, *(b)* Barts and The London NHS Trust, *(c)* Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust, *(d)* St Mary's NHS Trust, *(e)* University College London Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, *(f)* Royal West Sussex NHS Trust, *(g)* Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust, *(h)* Airedale NHS Trust, *(i)* Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, *(j)* the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, *(k)* Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust, *(l)* The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust, *(m)* Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust, *(n)* Medway NHS Trust, *(o)* Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust, *(p)* Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust, *(q)* Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, *(r)* George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust, *(s)* West Middlesex University

Hospital NHS Trust and *(t)* Burton Hospitals NHS Trust for heart transplants in each year since 1997; and how many heart transplants were carried out by each hospital trust in each year. [48235]

Mr. Byrne: Information on payments is not held centrally. National health service trusts do not normally receive funding from the Department, but receive income for the provision of services from commissioners, principally, from primary care trusts.

Data on the number of finished consultant episodes has been placed in the Library.

Mental Health

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many inspectors of mental health facilities are employed by the Healthcare Commission; [48179]

(2) how many mental health establishments were inspected by the Healthcare Commission in 2005. [48180]

Jane Kennedy: The Chairman of the Healthcare Commission has confirmed that it does not have specific mental health inspectors. The Healthcare Commission has moved to a model of assessment managers and senior assessment managers, each of whom has a general job description. There are 37 assessment managers and 104 senior assessment managers across the Healthcare Commission.

The Chairman of the Healthcare Commission has also confirmed that between 1 January 2005 and 31 December 2005, 197 mental health establishments were inspected (statutory announced and unannounced only).

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what consultation between the Healthcare Commission and independent operators of in-patient care facilities for people suffering from mental illness took place in 2005 on inspection procedures. [48181]

Jane Kennedy: The Chairman of the Healthcare Commission has confirmed that it held a public consultation on revisions to its inspection methods between November 2004 and February 2005. The Healthcare Commission also held consultation meetings on inspection methods in each of its four regions in January 2005 and information exchange workshops in June 2005. All registered providers, including mental health establishments, were invited to these events.

Consultation on changes planned for 2006 started on 2 December 2005 and runs until 24 February. Consultation documents are published on the Healthcare Commission's website at: www.healthcarecommission.org.uk/contactus

Mr. Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of mental health services in Buckinghamshire were funded by *(a)* Wycombe Primary Care Trust, *(b)* Buckinghamshire Mental Health Trust, *(c)* Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust and *(d)* Buckinghamshire county council in each year for which figures are available. [51372]

Caroline Flint: Revenue allocations are made direct to primary care trusts who determine their expenditure on services according to local priorities.

This information requested is not centrally held by the Department However, information about spend on mental health services is available from "The 2004-05 National Survey of Investment in Mental Health Services" which is available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/11/52/96/04115296.pdf.

Monitor

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total budget of Monitor was in each year since it was established; what it will be in 2006-07; how many whole-time equivalent staff it has; at what salary grades; how much of its budget has been spent on external consultants; and whether these consultants were commissioned on a basis of contestability. [49759]

Mr. Byrne: This is a matter for Monitor, whose statutory name is the independent regulator of national health service foundation trusts. The Chairman will write to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the contracts placed by the Monitor regulatory body with external consultants. [48800]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* This is a matter for Monitor, whose statutory name is the Independent Regulator of National Health Service Foundation Trusts. The Chairman will write to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

National Framework for Continuing Care

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to publish the national framework for continuing care. [48838]

Mr. Byrne: The Department intends to publish the national continuing care framework for consultation in April, subject to the need to take account of any further legal proceedings on relevant issues.

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will extend the remit of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence to enable it to judge cost-effectiveness with reference to both NHS and social care budgets. [48849]

Jane Kennedy: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) already takes a national health service and personal social services perspective in its economic analysis of clinical and cost effectiveness. This approach is set out in NICE'S 'Guide to the Methods of Technology Appraisal', published April 2004 and is available on the NICE'S website at: www.nice.org.uk/pdf/TAP_Methods.pdf

Mr. Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are in place to allow the National Institute for Healthcare and Clinical Excellence to fast-track its assessment of cancer drugs; and if she will make a statement. [47019]

Jane Kennedy: On 3 November 2005, the Secretary of State for Health announced a new single technology appraisal process which allows the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to produce guidance to a faster timetable on important drugs. Work has started on the first tranche of topics, and NICE is consulting in parallel on the detail of the new process.

National Programme for Information Technology

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the progress of the National Programme for Information Technology; and what progress the software supplier has made in supplying systems for use in the programme. [48839]

Mr. Byrne: The national programme for information technology (NPfIT), which is being delivered by the NHS Connecting for Health agency, is an essential part of creating a safer, and more efficient and modern national health service. The foundations have now been laid, and the organisational and commercial infrastructure established, to deploy the systems the NHS needs to provide more effective health care to patients. Implementation work continues to gather momentum and its impact is beginning to be felt more and more widely across the NHS.

The programme has already delivered new systems to thousands of locations in the NHS. The extent of deployment of the programme's many software suppliers' systems across the five regional cluster areas, as at the end of January 2006 has been placed in the Library.

Progress is within budget, ahead of schedule in some areas, and, in the context of a 10-year programme, broadly on track in others. It now has over 180,000 registered NHS users across England. The live IT systems are performing well and are regularly achieving their contracted service and performance levels. Weekly updates of performance and deployment data are being routinely published on the internet.

Altogether, we estimate that well over one and a half million patients have already received improved and safer care as a result of systems and services made available through national programme developments. This figure is increasing every week.

NHS Appointments Commission

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will require the NHS Appointments Commission to change its policy of reappointing chairmen and non-executive members of primary care trust boards where those appointees have presided over trusts that are failing or under investigation. [47656]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* The NHS Appointments Commission has recently reappointed members to a number of primary care trusts (PCTs). In making these decisions, the NHS Appointments Commission has taken into account the need to ensure continuity of service pending the outcome of local consultations on potential reconfiguration. All appointments to reconfigured PCTs, will go through a process of fair, open and transparent competition once the outcome is determined.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what factors affected the decision of the NHS Appointments Commission to proceed with the advertisement of the post of Chairman of the new Regional Ambulance Trust in the east of England; and if she will make a statement. [47802]

Mr. Byrne: The decision to advertise these posts is sensible contingency planning that does not pre-empt the outcome of the public consultation. If a decision is made to change ambulance trust configuration, it would be necessary to move quickly to establish the new organisations in order to minimise uncertainty for staff and for service continuity. This includes having quorate boards as soon as possible so that decisions can be taken and staff transferred to the new organisations.

NHS Capital Building Projects

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total amount spent on capital building projects in the NHS was in real terms at today's prices in each of the last 30 years. [45572]

Mr. Byrne: The total amount of capital expenditure in the national health service over the last 30 years in 2004–05 prices is shown in the table.

NHS capital expenditure: England 1974–75 to 2004–05

		Capital net NHS expenditure (£ billion in 2004–05 prices)
Cash		
1974–75	Outturn	1.77
1975–76	Outturn	1.90
1976–77	Outturn	1.83
1977–78	Outturn	1.46
1978–79	Outturn	1.49
1979–80	Outturn	1.43
1980–81	Outturn	1.64
1981–82	Outturn	1.81
1982–83	Outturn	1.77
1983–84	Outturn	1.74
1984–85	Outturn	1.82
1985–86	Outturn	1.83
1986–87	Outturn	1.80
1987–88	Outturn	1.68
1988–89	Outturn	1.57
1989–90	Outturn	1.93
1990–91	Outturn	2.09
1991–92	Outturn	2.11
1992–93	Outturn	2.35
1993–94	Outturn	2.08
1994–95	Outturn	2.40
1995–96	Outturn	2.17
1996–97	Outturn	1.62
1997–98	Outturn	1.28
1998–99	Outturn	0.92
1999–2000	Outturn	1.08
RB stage 1		
1999–2000	Outturn	1.02
2000–01	Outturn	1.38
2001–02	Outturn	1.87
2002–03	Outturn	2.21
RB stage 2		
2003–04	Outturn	2.50
2004–05	Estimated outturn	3.40

These figures exclude NHS capital projects funded through the private finance initiative.

NHS Data Spine

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many individuals have access to the NHS data spine; what safeguards are in place to prevent unlawful access to the spine; what audit arrangements are in place to monitor inappropriate access to the spine; what penalties are available for unlawful use of the spine; and what guidance has been issued on the appropriate course of action if individuals are found to have misused the system. [47577]

Mr. Byrne: The national health service data spine is the technical architecture that underpins the NHS care records service in England (NHS CRS). Eventually all national health service staff involved in patient care will have access to the NHS CRS. The level of access granted will depend on their role. As at 31 January 2006 there were about 181,000 users registered for access.

Access depends on the use of a smartcard with photographic identification and a pass code, which can only be obtained upon verification of identity and through a formal user registration process. This process involves being sponsored by an appropriate user registration sponsor from the organisation in which an individual works and includes determining the level of access that individual will have. Access to a patient's care record is limited to only as much information as is needed for the purpose of the job role being performed in relation to the patient.

An audit trail will be maintained of everyone who has accessed a patient's information. Audits will be carried out to identify suspicious behaviour. Anyone trying to look at patient information contrary to their access rights will trigger an automatic alert. A privacy officer will then take action, including telling the patient where appropriate.

NHS staff have a duty of confidentiality to patients, and a contractual obligation to comply with the NHS Code of Conduct on Confidentiality. Accessing the NHS CRS without a legitimate business reason constitutes a breach of the code, which is a disciplinary offence and could lead to dismissal. Patients' rights are also protected under the Data Protection Act 1998, which provides significant penalties for non-compliance.

As part of a major exercise to prepare the NHS for the arrival of the NHS CRS, NHS Connecting for Health are issuing substantial information to frontline NHS staff about the new service, which includes guidance on information governance.

NHS Debt

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total NHS debt is in relation to private finance initiative projects. [42669]

Mr. Byrne: Private finance initiative (PFI) unitary payments are just one component of a Trust's total expenditure and the PFI expenditure by all operational schemes in 2005–06 is estimated to be about £215 million, considerably below the deficit shown for the first six months of the year.

Figures for foundation trusts are not included.

NHS Earnings

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average NHS earnings were in real terms at today's prices for *(a)* consultants, *(b)* general practitioners, *(c)* dentists and *(d)* nurses employed in the NHS in each of the last 30 years. [45570]

Mr. Byrne: The available information is shown in the following tables. Tables 1 and 2 show the average earnings of consultants and qualified nurses band on national health service earnings survey data uplifted to 2004–05 prices. This data is not available prior to 1998–99 and has been collated biannually since 2000–01. Table 3 shows that intended average net income for general practitioners set by the review body doctors and dentists review for the years since 1974–75 in 2004–05 prices. Table 4 shows the estimated average general dental service (GDS) net income for dentists with a reasonable GDS commitment since 1997–98. Figures are not available on a comparable basis for previous years.

Estimated average earnings in real terms for consultants, qualified nurses and midwives earnings in England.

Table 1: Consultant-estimated average earnings—England

£

	Average earnings	
	Cash terms	*2004–05 prices*
1998–99	65,600	75,100
1999–2000	69,700	78,300
2000–01	71,900	79,700
2001–02	[1]	[1]
2002–03	83,700	87,700
2003–04	[1]	[1]
2004–05	94,700	94,700

Table 2: Qualified nurses and midwives-estimated average earnings—England

£

	Average earnings	
	Cash terms	*2004–05 prices*
1998–99	19,600	22,400
1999–2000	21,400	24,000
2000–01	22,600	25,000
2001–02	[1]	[1]
2002–03	24,500	25,700
2003–04	[1]	[1]
2004–05	26,400	26,400

[1] No figures are available for these years.

Notes:

1. The earnings survey is based on a sample of approximately 50 per cent. of NHS trusts, derived.
2. Earnings figures are based on monthly payments in August, multiplied by 12 to give annual equivalent amounts.
3. The earnings survey is conducted on a biennial basis from 2000 onwards, hence no figures are available 2001 or 2003.
4. Earnings figures are rounded to the nearest hundred pounds.
5. 2004 equivalent earnings are calculated using HM Treasury Gross Domestic Product Deflator Index.

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre NHS Staff Earnings Survey

Table 3: Intended Average Net Income for General Practitioners, 1974–75 to 2003–04, Great Britain

£

	IANI	
	cash terms	*In 2004–05 prices*
1974–75	6,286	41,801
1975–76	8,735	46,320
1976–77	8,963	41,911
1977–78	9,313	38,328
1978–79	12,146	45,034
1979–80	14,284	45,335
1980–81	16,955	45,536
1981–82	17,970	44,067
1982–83	18,990	43,494
1983–84	20,288	44,426
1984–85	21,815	45,395
1985–86	23,212	45,823
1986–87	24,670	47,197
1987–88	26,840	48,640
1988–89	28,800	48,779
1989–90	31,105	49,184
1990–91	33,630	49,318
1991–92	37,512	51,879
1992–93	40,010	53,629
1993–94	40,610	53,078
1994–95	41,890	53,922
1995–96	43,165	54,047
1996–97	44,483	53,797
1997–98	46,031	54,071
1998–99	48,037	55,001
1999–2000	52,606	59,069
2000–01	54,219	60,094
2001–02	56,510	61,123
2002–03	61,618	64,596
2003–04[1]	67,040	68,470

[1] Forecast figure.

Note:
IANI relates to all principal GPs (full-time and part-time).

Table 4:—Estimated average general dental service (GDS) net income for dentists with a reasonable GDS commitment[1], 1997–98 to 2004–05, England and Wales.

£

	Estimated average net income	
Financial year	*Cash terms*	*In 2004–05 prices*
1997–98	51,200	60,143
1998–99	54,300	62,172
1999–2000	55,700	62,544
2000–01[2]	[3]59,200	[3]65,614
2001–02	60,500	65,439
2002–03	63,300	66,359
2003–04	66,700	68,122
2004–05	70,000	70,000

[1] Dentists with a reasonable commitment to the GDS are defined as dentists with GDS earnings equivalent to at least £40,000 in 1993–94 in fees for treatments and patient capitation. This equivalent is calculated each year by adjusting figures to take into account the effect of fee increases. The equivalent figure for 2004–05 is £59,100.

[2] Commitment payments started in 2001.

[3] Figures since 2000–01 use a different methodology to calculate the contribution from other non-fee/capitation payments.

Note:
Figures prior to 1997–98 are not available on a comparable basis.

Source:
DH and HSCIC analysis of Dental Practice Board payments and HMRC tax data

The income figures cover both estimated fees for treatments and patient capitation as well as other estimated payments such as seniority payments and commitment payments and payments for maternity and sickness.

NHS Employee Grades

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the *(a)* annual reduction in income expectation and *(b)* the loss in pension contributions over a five-year period of a Whitley grade 5 NHS employee transferred to the equivalent band 4 Agenda for Change grade. [48913]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* There is no automatic equivalence between Whitley and agenda for change pay bands. However, where job evaluation results in assimilation to a pay band with a lower maximum remuneration, and there are no offsetting changes in other aspects of remuneration, staff may be subject to the agenda for change pay protection rules. While these ensure there is no loss in actual income, a person who remains on protected pay this April will forego the benefit of annual pay awards. But the consequent reduction in income expectations cannot be calculated until the relevant pay awards are known.

Similarly, the effect on pension contributions of a person in any protection cannot be calculated until the relevant pay awards are known.

NHS Finance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 145W, on NHS finance, what the total reduction in provision for clinical negligence declared by the NHS Litigation Authority was in 2004–05; and whether it is expected that further such reductions will be declared in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* future financial years. [46607]

Jane Kennedy: The total reduction to provisions for the NHS Litigation Authority in 2004–05 was £1,872 million. This overall reduction reflects a £1,497 million recalculation to record the cumulative adjustment to clinical negligence provisions dating back to 2000–01 as a technical change and a £375 million further reduction in budget requirement due to a change in the methodology for calculating clinical negligence claims in 2004–05. These factors will be built into budget management for current and future years.

NHS Foundation Trusts

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the total cost to an average sized NHS trust of preparing an application for NHS foundation trust status. [48850]

Mr. Byrne: Information on national health service trusts preparing for an application for NHS foundation trust (NHSFT) status is not held centrally, as costs will vary from trust to trust.

The decision on when to apply for foundation trust status is one which is taken locally and applicant trusts are responsible for meeting the costs associated with their application and establishment as a NHSFT. However, the Department provides some direct financial and advisory support to applicants to assist them in preparing for their application and establishment as a foundation trust.

NHS Private Treatment

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations paid for by the NHS were carried out by private sector providers in December 2005 *(a)* in England and *(b)* in Kettering. [47624]

Mr. Byrne: As part of the national independent sector procurement, 8,762 diagnostic assessments and 3,786 clinical procedures were carried out by independent sector providers in England in December 2005. During the same period, the Capio Woodlands Hospital national health service treatment centre in Kettering discharged 25 NHS patients referred for treatment under a national contract. Information is not held on operations which are commissioned locally from the independent sector.

NHS Purchasing and Logistics

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she has taken to improve efficiency in NHS purchasing and logistics since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [42371]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer16 January 2006]:* The Government recognise the importance of achieving value for money in public procurement and the necessity of a modern supply chain in meeting this and other national health service requirements. It also needs to ensure that national purchasing and supply activity is relevant to the needs of the NHS.

In 1997, the national purchasing body for the NHS in England was the NHS Supplies Authority established in 1991. With a remit to obtain best value on supply spending for the NHS as a whole, it accomplished a great deal in moving towards a more strategic and collaborative NHS purchasing structure. However, as a special health authority NHS Supplies had limited powers and spheres of influence.

In 1998 the Cabinet Office Review of NHS procurement identified the need for a central purchasing organisation, with sufficient authority to exert a genuine influence on the NHS, both directly and via input at policy-making level within government. The review recommended:

- the establishment of the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (NHS PASA) to act as a strategic adviser on supply issues critical to the NHS;
- a separate logistics operation for the NHS, NHS Logistics Authority, established in April 2000;
- the transfer of staff from NHS Supplies Customer Services Division—which provided dedicated supplies staff based on-site at individual trusts to the employment of individual NHS trusts. This was completed by the end of October 1999.

The role of the NHS PASA was to act as a centre of expertise, knowledge and excellence in purchasing and supply matters for the NHS. Acting not just as an advisory and co-ordinating body but also as a leader in the modernisation of purchasing and supply for the NHS, NHS PASA contracts on a national basis for products and services which are strategically critical to the NHS. It also acts in cases where aggregated purchasing power will yield greater economic savings than those achieved by contracting on a sub-national basis.

NHS PASA contributes to the delivery of fast, responsive patient care by working with suppliers to ensure the availability of cost-effective equipment, goods and services; leading the development of electronic commerce in the NHS to reduce transaction costs and release resources for direct patient care.

The NHS Logistics Authority works to support the operational activity of the NHS by providing best value for the NHS in the supply of goods and supply chain services required in the support of health care.

Since its inception there has been significant progress, most notably in terms of:

- Increase in sales—Sales are forecast to reach £780.5 million by the end of the 2005–06 financial year, an increase of 42 per cent. over 2000–01. Consolidating demand through a single, efficient, primary supply channel enables trusts to save money and improve efficiency. It also enables trusts to benefit from supply services that provide continuously improving value for money.
- Reducing costs—A programme of continuous improvement and cost minimisation to contribute to improved health care and cost reductions that benefit the whole English NHS.
- Catalogue range—The catalogue range has increased from 17,000 products in 2000 to over 43,000 products, giving trusts even greater choice.
- Providing a high quality service—Customer satisfaction now at a record high of 88 per cent. and average service level to trusts consistently above 98 per cent.
- E-commerce—Worked towards maximising the use of e-commerce.
- Supply chain modernisation—offers consultancy and practical support in developing a world class supply chain for the NHS. Supply chain modernisation can save the NHS many millions of pounds each year by reducing excess inventory in trusts and unlocking both staff and funding for improved patient care.

In June 2003, the Department established the commercial directorate in support of gaining efficiencies across the NHS and to ensure value for money in particular areas of spend building relationships with the independent sector using a commercially focused approach.

After a review of the NHS supply chain the commercial directorate launched the supply chain excellence programme (SCEP) in March 2004. The three-year programme is focused on the restructure of the NHS supply chain to gain efficiencies and improve the effectiveness of supply management in the NHS. SCEP aims to gain the best value for the money the NHS spends each year on goods and services. This will ensure the greatest possible share of NHS funding is directed towards improving clinical capacity and ultimately patient care. Overall, SCEP is expected to deliver annualised savings of over £500 million by 2007–08.

The healthcare industries task force, a ministerial led initiative which worked in partnership with industry, recommended that a new device evaluation service should be established to help inform procurement decisions and encourage the uptake of useful, safe,

innovative products and procedures used in health and social care. To effect the necessary changes the centre for evidence-based purchasing (CEP)—formerly the device evaluation service—moved to NHS PASA on 1 October 2005 and a new structure and processes are being established in early 2006.

NHS Restructuring

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many civil servants in her Department are involved in policy work on the proposed restructuring of the NHS in England, broken down by grade; and how many are secondees from NHS trusts. [21609]

Mr. Byrne: The senior officer responsible for commissioning a patient led national health service is Sir Ian Carruthers seconded from the NHS. He is supported by a central team of 14 permanent staff, three of whom are secondees from the NHS. This includes three senior civil servants. The remaining posts are all in the integrated payband.

NHS Trusts

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 151W, on NHS trusts, what assessment will be made of the value of turnaround teams. [49160]

Jane Kennedy: The turnaround teams were announced by the Secretary of State in a ministerial statement on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS.

The first stage of this is a baseline assessment, the aim of which is to ensure there is an agreed understanding of the local financial problem and that actions are in hand to address this. Following the assessment, the local national health service will identify the actions needed to return the organisations to financial balance and what tailored support is needed to support local management.

The value of the teams will be assessed through the delivery of turnaround in the organisations concerned.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1675W, on NHS trusts (mergers), what savings were anticipated in the risk analysis submitted for each planned merger of acute trusts in the last five years; and what steps were taken to monitor whether the predicted outcomes were achieved. [47851]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* In considering proposals for mergers, Ministers need to be satisfied that the lead strategic health authority (SHA) has presented a case that demonstrates the trust's ongoing delivery and development of services, and clinical and financial viability. SHAs are charged with performance managing trusts including ensuring the benefits of any merger are realised.

Older People's National Service Framework

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects the National Clinical Director for Older People to publish his report Next Steps for Older People's National Service Framework. [49532]

Mr. Byrne: Professor Ian Philp, the National Clinical Director for Older People, plans to publish his "Next Steps" report by the end of April.

Overseas Nurses

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the qualifications of *(a)* Russian and *(b)* Pakistani overseas-trained nurses meet the standards required for admission to the Overseas Nursing Programme. [21224]

Mr. Byrne: The nursing and midwifery council is responsible for the overseas nursing programme and for assessing the training and qualifications of nurses trained outside the United Kingdom and the European economic area.

Pain Relief (Children)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the drugs licensed for use in the NHS to provide pain relief for children. [48082]

Jane Kennedy: The following medicines are licensed in the United Kingdom and available on the national health service for the treatment of pain in children.

Non-opioid analgesics:

Paracetamol

Co-codamol (codeine phosphate and paracetamol)

Opioid analgesics:

Morphine

Buprenorphine

Codeine Phosphate

Diamorphine Hydrochloride

Dihydrocodeine Tartrate

Hydromorphone Hydrochloride

Papaveretum

Pethidine Hydrochloride

Tramadol Hydrochloride

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs):

Ibuprofen

Naproxen

Diclofenac sodium

Indometacin

Mefenamic acid

Meloxicam

Piroxicam

Information about the licensed indications and prescribing advice for doctors for all of these medicines is published in the British National Formulary for Children which is available in the Library.

Parkinson's Disease

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the level of funding for research into treatment for Parkinson's disease has been in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [47348]

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding her Department has provided for research into Parkinson's disease in each of the last eight years. [48863]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is shown in the table.

£ million

	Medical Research Council (MRC)[1,2]	*Department of Health national research programmes*[3]
1997–97	n/a	0.020
1998–99	n/a	0.063
1999–2000	n/a	0.158
2000–01	2.5	0.209
2001–02	3.2	0.176
2002–03	6.5	0.169
2003–04	7.1	0.155
2004–05	n/a	0.047

n/a = not available

[1] The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research. The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology.

[2] The definition used to identify projects eligible for inclusion in this area of expenditure changed with effect from 2002–03.

[3] The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the NHS.

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by national health service organisations. From this funding, the NHS reported spending in support of research related to older people and on neurological conditions as follows:

£ million

	Older people	*Neurological conditions*
2001–02	37	n/a
2002–03	34	28
2003–04	39	30
2004–05	40	27

n/a = not available

This expenditure data was not collected centrally prior to 2002. Details of individual projects, including projects to do with Parkinson's disease, can be found on the national research register at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Parliamentary Questions

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to answer the question from the hon. Member for Northavon tabled on 31 October for answer on 2 November, reference 24525, on child protection. [47985]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* A reply was given to the hon. Member on 1 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 969W.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will reply to the Questions tabled by the hon. Member for Woking, reference *(a)* 44640, *(b)* 44641, *(c)* 44644 and *(d)* 44117. [48626]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* Answers were given to the hon. Member on 6 February, 2 February, 31 January and 7 February respectively.

Partnerships for Older People

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health where partnerships for older people projects are being piloted; when the introduction of these projects was first announced; and if she will make a statement. [49525]

Mr. Byrne: The Secretary of State announced that there would be 19 sites piloting partnerships for older people projects on 8 November 2005. The successful partnerships are in Bradford, Brent, Camden, Dorset, East Sussex, Knowsley, Leeds, Luton, Manchester, Norfolk, North Lincolnshire, Northumberland, North Yorkshire, Poole, Sheffield, Somerset, Southwark, Wigan and Worcestershire. In total, the pilot sites will cover about 150,000 older people. Funding will be made available to the successful applicants during April 2006 and pilots are expected to commence their projects by 1 May 2006 at the latest.

Pesticide Residue

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the *(a)* incidence and *(b)* levels of pesticide residue in (i) orange and (ii) lemon peel. [41918]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 16 January 2006]:* The results of official surveillance for pesticide residues in food, published by the Pesticide Residues Committee (PRC), show that most orange and lemon samples contain residues and that some of these residues are largely in the peel. PRC surveillance reports can be found on the Pesticides Safety Directorate's website at: www.pesticides.gov.uk/prc.asp?id=959. The Food Standards Agency advises that the residue levels currently found in oranges and lemons do not present a significant concern for consumer health.

Pigeon-transmitted Disease (South Manchester)

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many reported cases there have been of *(a)* avian alveolitis, or pigeon fancier's lung, and *(b)* psittacosis transmitted from pigeons to humans via droppings in south Manchester in the last five years. [46170]

Mr. Byrne: Avian alveolitis, also known as pigeon fancier's lung is caused by an allergic reaction to birds (pigeons and other species). As it is not an infectious disease, data on the number of cases are not collected centrally.

Psittacosis is an infection, caused by the bacterium Chlamydophila psittaci, that is acquired from birds (pigeons and other species), though not necessarily via droppings.

It is not possible to provide a breakdown of the data for south Manchester. The number of cases in England and Wales in the last five years is as follows:

	Number of cases
2001	103
2002	68
2003	91
2004	59
2005	[1]57

[1] Provisional figures

Source:
Health Protection Agency

In 2005, infection was most frequently reported from the north west health region of England.

Practice-based Commissioning

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what safeguards her Department is putting in place against conflicts of interest in practice-based commissioning; [44922]

(2) whether general practitioners will be able to commission services provided by themselves under practice-based commissioning. [44927]

Mr. Byrne: General practitioners are able to provide services under practice based commissioning. "Making Practice Based Commissioning a Reality—Technical Guidance" (February 2005), makes it clear that where practices or localities are both a provider and a commissioner of services, it is very important that there are no actual or perceived conflicts of interest. Patients should also be given a choice of other providers of that service and should not feel pressured to choose the practice as provider.

The roles and responsibilities of primary care trusts (PCTs) and practices under practice based commissioning was set out in Annexe D of "Health reform in England: update and next steps" (December 2005). This states that PCTs continue to negotiate and hold contracts under practice based commissioning.

In addition, the Department has recently released updated practice based commissioning guidance. "Practice based commissioning: achieving universal coverage" (January 2006) reinforces the need for robust arrangements for agreeing contracts for services provided under practice based commissioning.

Prescriptions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the cost of adding cystic fibrosis to the list of diseases which give rise to exemption from prescription charges. [49636]

Jane Kennedy: Based on figures of the number of adult cystic fibrosis sufferers, not currently entitled to free prescriptions, provided by the Cystic Fibrosis Trust we estimate the cost of lost prescription revenue would be around £100,000, based on the assumption that all currently have a prescription pre-payment certificate.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will undertake a public consultation on the list of diseases that give rise to exemption from prescription charges. [49647]

Jane Kennedy: We have no plans to undertake a consultation on the list of medical conditions that confer free prescriptions.

Government policy is to help those who may have difficulty paying charges. The current exemption and charge remission arrangements are intended to ensure that no one need to be deterred from obtaining any necessary medication on financial grounds. Consequently 87 per cent. of prescriptions are dispensed free of charge.

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many personal prescriptions have been prescribed in each year since 2000, broken down by primary care trusts; how much revenue has been raised from prescription charges in each year since 2000; and if she will make a statement. [41101]

Jane Kennedy: The number of prescription items prescribed in general practitioner practices in England and dispensed in the community at primary care trust level from 2001 to 2004 has been placed in the Library. Earlier data are not available. The Department holds no data on private prescriptions.

Income raised from prescription charges in England for each year since 2000 is contained in the Department's published resource accounts:

	£ million
2004–05	422.4
2003–04	426.0
2002–03	420.8
2001–02	410.9
2000–01	323.2
1999–2000	370.5

Figures represent revenue raised from when a charge is paid at point of dispensing and income raised from pre-payment certificates.

Press Coverage

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 she has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* her Department; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47089]

Mr. Byrne: There have been no occasions since April 1 2003 that the Secretary of State for Health has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of Ministers, officials or the Department.

Primary Care Trusts

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons the Government introduced primary care trusts; and what the cost of setting them up was. [31718]

Mr. Byrne: Primary care trusts (PCTs) were primarily introduced in order to bring together, primary and community care services for the benefit of patients. Further changes in the configuration of many PCTs are now required and are now the subject of local consultations.

The Department does not hold information on the cost of setting up primary care trusts.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 11 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 744W, on primary care trusts, what evidence she has received of primary care trusts underspending against their enhanced services expenditure floor in the 2005–06 financial year; and whether underspends by primary care trusts in 2005–06 will be reinvested in 2006–07. [48632]

Mr. Byrne: Quarterly financial monitoring reports from primary care trusts (PCTs) indicate that overall investment in enhanced services by PCTs in 2005–06 could be greater than the national planned investment.

Investment in enhanced services in 2006–07 will be a matter decided upon and managed by PCTs, in a way that makes best use of resources in meeting locally agreed priorities.

Public Information Leaflets

Mr. Ian Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what method is used to calculate the number of Department of Health public information leaflets distributed to general practitioner practices and other health service sites. [44038]

Mr. Byrne: The marketing strategy that accompanies the production of any public information leaflet determines how that leaflet is distributed. Typically for campaign literature, between 50 and 200 leaflets will be distributed to individual general practitioner (GP) surgeries complete with an extra copies order form.

A network of national health service health promotion professionals, on a monthly basis, take receipt of public information leaflets that they have ordered on a cyclical delivery from our central distribution outlet.

In addition to these channels, the Department also has a contract with the waiting room information service; who distribute a range of health care leaflets to GP surgeries using demographic information to target surgeries with the highest patient throughput. An analysis of the uptake of leaflets is presented to the Department on a quarterly basis.

Purified Protein Derivative

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the possibility of compensation claims arising from complications in the use of unlicensed Mantoux-strength purified protein derivative. [39284]

Caroline Flint: Mantoux testing is now the internationally recognised standard for determining immunity to tuberculosis, and in line with this and in the absence of any further supplies of Heaf strength tuberculin purified protein derivative (PPD), the Department now recommends that Mantoux testing replace Heaf testing.

Although Statens Serum Institut PPD is unlicensed, the manufacturer still retains the responsibility for safety of the product, subject to it being used and stored correctly. If a patient suffers injury or illness as a result of a defect in the product, the manufacturer may be liable under the Consumer Protection Act 1987. Similarly, individual doctors prescribe or administer unlicensed medicines to their patients on their own direct responsibility. A claim can be brought against a doctor who prescribes or administers any medicine, whether licensed or unlicensed, if the patient can show the doctor acted negligently. Doctors are required to have in place appropriate professional negligence insurance cover in respect of such claims. Should there be claims for negligence, the court is unlikely to find that the doctor acted negligently if use of the product was supported by a responsible body of medical opinion and the patient consented to treatment. Although each case would depend on its own facts, the fact that the product is licensed in other European Union states and that its use is supported by the Department, means that it is unlikely that any claim for damages against an individual doctor would be successful.

Regulatory Reform Orders

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many regulatory reform orders her Department has laid before Parliament in each of the last five calendar years. [46806]

Mr. Byrne: The Department laid before Parliament one regulatory reform order, "The National Health Service Charitable and Non-Charitable Trust Accounts and Audit Order" in 2005.

Rickets

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the expenditure was in each of the last five years on the treatment of rickets. [37134]

Caroline Flint: The drugs used to treat rickets are calcium supplements, Hypercalcaemia and hypercalciuria, phosphate supplements, phosphate binding agents and vitamin D. However, these drugs are also used to treat other diseases. We are unable to provide a breakdown of the expenditure by the disease it was used to treat.

The amounts spent in each of the last five years are shown in the table. These figures exclude prescriptions in hospitals and non-drug costs of treatment such as general practitioner time.

£000

	Costs
2000	17,331
2001	20,559
2002	24,943
2003	31,338
2004	39,756

Rule of Rescue Principle

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence takes into account the rule of rescue when evaluating *(a)* drug treatments for brain cancer and *(b)* other drug treatments; and if she will make a statement. [49590]

Jane Kennedy: In December 2005, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) launched its "Social Value Judgements" document

setting out principles for the development of NICE guidance. At this time, NICE anticipated the later inclusion of additional areas.

In order to inform this ongoing work, NICE asked a meeting of its Citizens Council in late January 2006 for its views on the rule of rescue. The Citizens Council heard evidence from a variety of experts and organisations active in this field to inform their discussions. I understand that the Citizens Council will in due course submit a report to the board of NICE setting out its findings.

Scanners

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the impact on waiting lists of scanners being used on a part-time basis because of staff shortages; and if she will make a statement. [39684]

Jane Kennedy: No specific assessment has been made. However, this Government recognise the immediate need for additional workforce and imaging capacity. This is why additional diagnostic scanning activity is being procured from the independent sector to treat national health service patients and deliver a maximum wait of 18 weeks from referral to hospital treatment by 2008.

However, the Government acknowledge that the NHS needs to recruit more radiographers and has taken action to address this. The latest data shows that there are now 18 per cent. more NHS radiographers than in 1997 and the number of students entering training to become a radiographer has more than doubled since 1996–97.

Sex Change Operations

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many teenagers have undertaken sex change operations on the NHS in each of the last 10 years. [48080]

Mr. Byrne: No operations for sexual transformation were carried out by the national health service on teenaged individuals between 1995–96 to 2004–05.

Sight Problems (Rehabilitation Officers)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the adequacy of provision of qualified rehabilitation officers for blind and partially-sighted people in London; and if she will make a statement. [47217]

Jane Kennedy: Rehabilitation services for blind and partially sighted people are provided by local health and social care bodies. It is for those organisations to commission appropriate services based on local need. This would include the number and training of teams available to provide rehabilitation for blind and partially sighted people.

Stoma Appliances

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many responses were received to the consultation on the provision of stoma appliances and other services; and if she will make a statement. [49431]

Jane Kennedy: The consultation document on the arrangements for the provision of dressings, incontinence appliances, stoma appliances, chemical reagents and other appliances to primary and secondary care was published on 24 October 2005 and closed on 23 January 2006.

Responses were welcomed from all interested parties, including patients, the national health service and suppliers.

The Department has received nearly 3,000 responses.

Representation has been received from:

patients;

Members of Parliament on behalf of their constituents, including MPs and MLAs from Northern Ireland;

the NHS: primary care trusts; acute trusts, general practitioner practices and specialist nurses;

community pharmacists;

appliance contractors;

manufacturers;

wholesalers; and

trade bodies representing industry.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to report on the consultation on stoma care and incontinence products; and if she will publish a summary of responses at the end of the consultation period. [45723]

Jane Kennedy: The consultation on the arrangements for the provision of dressings, incontinence appliances, stoma appliances, chemical reagents and other appliances to primary and secondary care closed on Monday, 23 January 2006.

I can confirm that, following Cabinet Office guidelines, a summary of responses to the consultation will be published. This will be done in due course.

Strategic Health Authorities

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the *(a)* financial, *(b)* operational and *(c)* accountability consequences of the abolition of strategic health authorities. [29869]

Mr. Byrne: Strategic health authorities (SHAs) are not being abolished. They are being reconfigured and any changes are still subject to a full three-month consultation. Reconfiguration will reduce the running costs of SHAs but a full assessment of the financial, operational and accountability consequences of reconfiguration will happen after the consultation is completed.

Tarceva

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the cancer drug Tarceva (erlotinib) has been licensed in the UK. [49492]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* Tarceva was granted a marketing authorisation valid throughout the European Union on 19 September 2005.

Tarceva is currently licensed for the treatment of patients with locally advanced or metastatic non-small cell lung cancer after failure of at least one prior chemotherapy regimen.

Tuberculosis

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons Chapter 33 of the Department of Health Immunisation against Infectious Diseases 2006, published in November 2005, does not include reference to the unlicensed nature of the purified protein derivative used in the Mantoux test for tuberculosis and the need for this product to be issued under a patient specific direction. [43528]

Caroline Flint: Guidance regarding the supply and administration of any unlicensed vaccine, including Tuberculin purified protein derivative by patient specific directions is covered in the draft chapter 6, "Immunisation by nurses and other healthcare professionals", of the Department's "Immunisation against Infectious Diseases 2006", published in November 2005, which is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/33/48/04123348.pdf.

VAT

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what mechanisms her Department has in place for recovering VAT from the Treasury. [49677]

Mr. Byrne: The Department follows HM Revenue and Customs' value added tax rules for Government Departments. For its non-business work, the Department recovers value added tax paid on inputs that feature in the Treasury (Contracting-out) Direction. If the Department carries out business activities, it recovers input tax under the same rules that apply to the private sector. Value added tax returns are made quarterly to HM Revenue and Customs.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions she has had with the Health Minister in the National Assembly for Wales about differences in the ways waiting lists are compiled in England and Wales. [39265]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* Discussions have not taken place at ministerial level although we have worked closely with Welsh Assembly officials to determine the differences in the content and definition of waiting list statistics in each country.

These discussions will continue.

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when data will be made available to measure the total waiting time from a patient's first visit to their GP to an operation being carried out. [44295]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 20 January 2006]:* The Department is pioneering total waiting time measurement in chosen national health service sites this spring. The intention is to measure the total pathway, from referral to start of treatment, across England from April 2007 in order to have the data to support delivery of the 18 weeks pathway in 2008.

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the clinical and surgical procedures included in the formula used by the NHS to calculate average waiting list times. [46295]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* In-patient waiting lists statistics include all patients waiting to be admitted to national health service hospitals in England either as a day case or ordinary admission. They do not include the following:

patients admitted as emergency cases;

out-patients;

patients undergoing a planned programme of treatment, for example, a series of admissions for chemotherapy;

expectant mothers booked for confinement;

patients already in hospital and

patients who are temporarily suspended from waiting lists for social reasons or because they are known to be not medically ready for treatment.

Winter Deaths

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the effects on the NHS of more than 40,000 excess winter deaths in a year taking place. [32861]

Jane Kennedy: The pressure on health services from those needing unscheduled care is greater in the winter months. This is planned for, and other types of care scheduled accordingly throughout the year. This winter, pressure comes largely from an increase in the numbers of elderly people requiring admission to hospital. As winter progresses, the age and length of stay of those admitted tends to increase as a result.

The excess in the number of deaths is only a partial marker for this increase in pressure—for two main reasons. Firstly, many of the deaths are relatively sudden, and may not give rise to a hospital admission. Secondly, hospitals tend to have very high occupancy during winter anyway, irrespective of how many excess deaths there are in the community. For primary care services, there is an undoubted increase in the workload originating from older people living at home during the winter.

Working Party on Respiratory Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects to publish the report of the Working Party on Respiratory Services in England. [37296]

Mr. Byrne: Following the Chief Medical Officer's annual report published in July 2005, the Department has been considering the evidence relating to respiratory disease. Although there has been no working party, we have sought the advice of a number of stakeholders in a number of ways. Work collating the epidemiological and clinical evidence associated with a wide range of respiratory diseases will then be peer reviewed. We expect that process to be completed shortly in the new year when we will consider how to make it more widely available.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 14 February 2006

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Abu Hamza

Mr. Cash: To ask the Solicitor-General on what date the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) first decided not to endorse the proposed prosecution of Abu Hamza; whether the CPS consulted the *(a)* Director of Public Prosecutions and *(b)* Attorney-General in relation to the case; and if he will make a statement. [51555]

The Solicitor-General: In November 1999 the CPS having consulted Treasury Counsel decided that there was insufficient evidence to prosecute Abu Hamza for offences of kidnap and murder relating to an incident in the Yemen. In 2003 following a submission of further material from the police the CPS again decided that there was insufficient evidence to prosecute Abu Hamza for those offences. The CPS did not consult the Attorney-General about this matter.

In January 2003 police seized tapes connected with Abu Hamza, in April 2003 further tapes were seized. In November 2003 the police submitted a report concerning the tapes to the CPS. CPS advised that further police enquires should be made. In March 2004 the police submitted a further report to the CPS. In May 2004 the police seized further tapes and submitted them to the CPS.

In October 2004 the CPS decided, having taken advice from Treasury Counsel, that there was sufficient evidence to prosecute Abu Hamza for soliciting to murder, incitement to racial hatred and possessing a document containing information likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism. The evidence came from the tapes seized in May 2004 and one tape from those seized in January 2003. On this occasion the Attorney-General was consulted, agreed with the decision to prosecute and gave his consent to the prosecution of the incitement to racial hatred offence in October 2004.

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Solicitor-General what proportion of the premises occupied by the Law Officers is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42872]

The Solicitor-General: All the offices occupied by the Law Officers' Departments[1] are fitted with audible fire alarms in compliance with current fire safety legislation.

[1] Crown Prosecution Service, HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate, Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Service, Serious Fraud Office, Treasury Solicitor's Department and Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers.

Criminal Justice Act

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General what changes were made under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 to the Crown Prosecution Service's power to instigate prosecutions. [51303]

The Solicitor-General: The changes made by the Criminal Justice Act 2003 empower a crown prosecutor, acting under guidance issued by the Director of Public Prosecutions, to determine whether, and if so what, criminal charges should be preferred against alleged offenders who have been arrested or reported for an offence by the police.

The Act considerably enhances the ability of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to influence the efficient progress of casework by ensuring that the right offender is charged with the most appropriate offence.

Previously, the CPS's powers were limited to reviewing and amending police determined charges or in limited circumstances instigating proceedings where the importance or difficulty of the case made it appropriate to do so.

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Bone: To ask the Solicitor-General if he will take steps to improve liaison between the Crown Prosecution Service and witnesses in relation to bringing cases to court. [50982]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), in partnership with the police, has established 165 witness care units across England and Wales. The units provide a single point of contact for victims and witnesses from point of charge until the conclusion of the case. Dedicated witness care officers ensure that the needs of individual victims and witnesses are identified and met so that they have all the support and information they need to enable them to attend court and to give their best evidence.

As far as vulnerable and intimidated witnesses are concerned, there is the possibility of the witness meeting the prosecution team to discuss what special measures in court may be appropriate for them at trial. Research has shown that there has not been a high take-up of these meetings and the CPS will use this to encourage areas to hold them where appropriate.

In addition the CPS is currently piloting pre-trial interviews with witnesses in four CPS areas. The purpose of the interview is to assess the reliability of the witness's evidence, assist the prosecutor in understanding complex evidence, and to explain the criminal process and procedures to witnesses.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Francois: To ask the Solicitor-General how much has been spent in each year since 1997 by the Law Officers' Department on salaries paid to civil servants. [41585]

The Solicitor-General: The salaries paid by the Law Officers' Departments[1] to civil servants between 1997–98 and 2004–05 together with the related percentage of total budget are shown in the following table.

[1] The Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office was set up on 18 April 2005.

Financial year	Crown Prosecution Service		Serious Fraud Office		Treasury Solicitor's Department[1]			
					TSol	LSLO	HMCPSI	
	£ million	Percentage	£ million	Percentage	£ million	£ million	£ million	Percentage[2]
1997–98	130.95	41	4.17	27	[3]	[3]		
1998–99	132.80	40	3.92	24	12.05	1.08		19
1999–2000	138.48	42	4.26	27	13.29	1.09		27
2000–01	135.50	37	4.72	24	14.73	1.19		22
2001–02	158.79	35	6.20	27	16.78	1.32	1.69	31
2002–03	181.83	37	6.89	26	19.60	1.50	1.81	30
2003–04	205.17	37	7.60	27	23.05	1.54	1.87	32
2004–05	224.52	37	8.89	26	24.41	2.03	1.93	35

[1] Includes figures for the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers and for HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate from its establishment on 1 October 2000 and separately accounted for from 1 April 2001.
[2] Percentage of total Treasury Solicitor's Department salaries against total budget.
[3] Figures no longer available.

Departmental Vehicles

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Solicitor-General how many cars are *(a)* owned and *(b)* leased by his Department; what models the cars are; what type of petrol each model requires; and what the fuel efficiency is of each model. [41354]

The Solicitor-General: None of the Law Officers' Departments owns any cars.

The Crown Prosecution Service leases 18 vehicles from LoydsTSB Autolease whose fleet contains the vehicle models/type petrol consumption shown in the following chart. The fuel efficiency figures for these vehicles are not known.

Car model	Type of petrol
Citroen Berlingo Van 1.4i 600 LX	Liquefied petroleum gas
Ford Transit 260 SWB low-roof 2.3L	Liquefied petroleum gas
Ford Transit 280 SWB low-roof 2.3L	Liquefied petroleum gas
Ford Transit 280 SWB low-roof 2.3L	Liquefied petroleum gas
Ford Transit Connect Van 200 SWB 1.8L D TEC L	Liquefied petroleum gas
Ford Transit Connect Van 210 LWB 1.8L	Liquefied petroleum gas
Ford Galaxy 5 door 7ST 2.3i LX	Liquefied petroleum gas
Vauxhall Astravan 1.6 Twinport LS	Liquefied petroleum gas
Vauxhall Astravan 1.6 Twinport Envoy	Liquefied petroleum gas
Vauxhall Astravan 1.6i LS	Liquefied petroleum gas
Vauxhall Combo Van 1700 1.6	Liquefied petroleum gas
Vauxhall Combo Van 1700 1.6	Liquefied petroleum gas
Vauxhall Combo Van 1700 1.6	Liquefied petroleum gas
Vauxhall Combo Van 1700 1.6	Liquefied petroleum gas
Vauxhall Zafira 1.6i 16v Life	Liquefied petroleum gas
Vauxhall Vectra 2.2 Dti Estate	Diesel

HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate, the Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office, Serious Fraud Office, Treasury Solicitor's Department and Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers do not lease any cars.

For vehicles provided to Government Departments by the Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA), my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Transport has asked the chief executive of the GCDA to write to the hon. member with the information requested.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Solicitor-General whether the Attorney-General was instructed by the Prime Minister that he should not give advice in relation to the war in Iraq until March 2003. [51581]

The Solicitor-General: I refer the hon. Gentleman to paragraphs 366–87 of the Report of the Butler Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Prosecutions (Parents)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Solicitor-General (1) how many cases of parents prosecuted for killing their children have been reviewed following the Sally Clark judgment; and how many of these cases have been re-investigated; [48168]

(2) what procedures were followed in reviewing the cases of parents convicted of killing their own children; [48169]

(3) how many pathologists were involved in the review of cases of parents convicted of killing their own children following the Sally Clark judgment. [48172]

The Solicitor-General: On 29 January 2003 the Court of Appeal overturned Sally Clark's conviction for murdering her two sons. On 19 January 2004 the Court of Appeal issued its judgment allowing the appeal of Angela Cannings against her convictions for murdering two of her children. On the same day the Attorney-General announced he had established a review of all convictions in the previous 10 years (1994—2004), of a parent, foster parent or carer convicted of the unlawful killing of a baby and/or infant under the age of two. A small number of cases which did not fall strictly within the parameters of the review were also included at the request of defendants or their solicitors.

At the same time, January 2004, the Attorney-General asked the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to review current cases involving an unexplained infant death, which were still to come to trial.

A Central Review Team (CRT) of experienced legal practitioners was set up within the CPS, answerable only to the Attorney. The CRT purely reviewed case files on legal merits in the light of the Court of Appeal ruling in Cannings. No pathologist was involved in this legal review work.

A total of 297 cases were reviewed by the CRT. The papers reviewed included evidence served on the prosecution by the defence, who were in the best position to know about the circumstances of their clients' convictions. None of the cases were reinvestigated (by the police) in the sense that the original investigation was reopened but all the available papers were thoroughly reviewed. A selection was also sent to independent counsel for review.

The team's work was supervised by an Inter-Departmental Group (IDG). This group considered 34 cases identified by the CRT for possible referral to the defendant. All but six of those cases were accepted for such referral. After careful consideration, the Attorney-General, IDG and counsel decided that the remaining six cases did not give such cause for concern that they needed to be referred to the defendant. Again, no pathologist was involved in this work but the Attorney-General was assisted by an expert in child health and paediatrics.

On 21 December 2004, the Attorney-General published the results of the review of the Infant Death Cases, and together with the then Solicitor-General, made oral statements before Parliament on that day. The report was also placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

As a result of the review a number of cases were referred to the Court of Appeal. It was at this stage that these cases were subject to the re- examination of evidence by medical professionals, including pathologists.

In addition, the review of current cases resulted in three prosecutions being stopped without going to trial. This was set out in the original review.

At the time of publication of the original review in December 2004, the Attorney-General explained that he had deferred final consideration of 89 further cases of so-called Shaken Baby Syndrome. An addendum to the report, dealing with those cases, will be published shortly.

Neither stage of the review has prevented any person from referring their case to the Court of Appeal or Criminal Cases Review Commission if they wish to do so.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has allocated to *(a)* total expenditure, *(b)* grant in aid to private sector partners, *(c)* capital spending and *(d)* revenue spending in each year between 2006–07 to 2014–15; and if he will make a statement. [50617]

Hilary Benn: DFID allocates funds within spending review limits, agreed with Her Majesty's Treasury (HMT). The current spending review (SR04) runs to 2007–08.

Annex 1, table 1 of DFID's 2005 Departmental Report (DR) summarises all Government spending that falls within DFID's responsibility. Tables 2 and 3 of the DR provide a detailed breakdown of the resource and capital spending totals. Table 4 outlines our bilateral aid expenditure, which includes all forms of direct assistance; expenditure through multilateral institutions; DFID expenditure in support of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative and the multilateral debt relief expenditure plans.

Capital expenditure is shown net in the DR (i.e. expenditure minus receipts). Expected gross expenditure in both 2006–07 and 2007–08 is about £46.5 million.

DFID does not hold specific details of grants in aid to private partners centrally and it is not possible to provide a disaggregation without incurring disproportionate cost.

DFID is currently undertaking a resource allocation round, which is the mechanism by which DFID distributes its budget internally. Revisions to the allocations for 2006–07 and 2007–08 have yet to be agreed.

Departmental Offices

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the locations in which his Department has had offices in each of the last five years. [50775]

Mr. Thomas: In the UK, staff have been based in the following locations in the last five years:

94 Victoria street, London (up to November 2001)

1 Palace street, London (since November 2001)

20 Victoria street, London

Glen House, Stag Place London (up to October 2002)

Abercrombie House, East Kilbride.

Over the last five years, DFID have had staff based in the countries in the following list.. In some cases, for part or all of the period in question the DFID staff formed part of the British embassy/high commission, or other multilateral organisation, rather than a separate office.

Country	*Office Location*
Angola	Luanda
Botswana (closed)	Gaberone
Burundi	Bujumbura
Cameroon (closed 2004)	Yaounde
Congo, Dem Rep	Kinshasa
Egypt (closed 2005)	Cairo
Ethiopia	Addis Ababa
Gambia	Banjul
Ghana	Accra
Kenya	Nairobi
Lesotho	Maseru
Malawi	Lilongwe
Mozambique	Maputo
Namibia (closed)	Windhoek
	Abuja
	Ekiti
	Jigawa
	Enugu
Nigeria	Makurdi
Rwanda	Kigali
Sierra Leone	Freetown
	Cape Town (closed)
South Africa	Pretoria
Sudan	Khartoum
Swaziland (closed)	Mbabane
Tanzania	Dar Es Salem
Uganda	Kampala
Zambia	Lusaka
Zimbabwe	Harare

Country	Office Location
Afghanistan	Kabul
Burma	Rangoon
Bangladesh	Dhaka
Cambodia	Phnom Penn
China	Beijing
Fiji (closed)	Suva
	Delhi
	Kolkata
	Orissa
	Hyderabad
India	Bhopal
Indonesia	Jakarta
Jordan	Amman
Nepal	Kathmandu
Palestine	Jerusalem
Pakistan	Islamabad
Sri Lanka	Columbo
Thailand	Bangkok
Vietnam	Hanoi
Yemen	Sanaa
Barbados	Bridgetown
Belize (closed)	Belmopan
Bolivia	La Paz
Brazil	Brasilia
Guyana	Georgetown
Honduras (closed 2005)	Tegucigalpa
Jamaica	Kingston
Montserrat	
Nicaragua	Managua
Peru (closed 2005)	Lima
Albania	Tirana
Armenia	Yerevan
Azerbaijan (closed 2003)	Baku
Belarus (closed 2002)	Minsk
	Banja Luka
Bosnia	Sarajevo
Bulgaria (closed 2005)	Sofia
Czech Republic (closed 2003)	Prague
Croatia (closed 2005)	Croatia
Estonia (closed 2003)	Estonia
France	Paris
Georgia	Tiblisi
Hungary (closed 2003)	Budapest
Italy	Rome
Kazakstan (closed 2005)	Almaty
Kosovo	Kosovo
Kyrgyzstan	Bishkek
Latvia (closed 2003)	Riga
Lithuania (closed 2003)	Vilnius
Macedonia (closed 2005)	Macedonia
Moldova	Chisinau
Poland (closed 2003)	Warsaw
Romania (closed 2005)	Bucharest
Russia	Moscow
	St. Petersburg
Serbia and Montenegro	Belgrade
Slovakia (closed 2003)	Bratislava
Slovenia (closed 2003)	Ljubijana
Tajikistan	Dushanbe
Turkmenistan (closed 2002)	Ashgabat
Ukraine	Kiev
Uzbekistan (closed 2005)	Tashkent
Switzerland (UN)	Geneva
Austria (UN)	Vienna
USA (IMF)	Washington
USA (UN)	New York
Belguim (EU)	Brussels
Iraq	Baghdad (opened 2003)
	Basra (opened 2003)

Madagascar (British Embassy)

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact of the closure of the British embassy in Madagascar on UK aid and development initiatives in *(a)* Madagascar and *(b)* South East Africa. [50583]

Hilary Benn: I refer the hon. Member to the response given on 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 13W. We have made no assessment of the impact of the closure of the embassy, as DFID does not have a bilateral development programme with Madagascar. The closure is unlikely to have any effect on South East Africa.

Middle East

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether the Government have required the Palestinian Authority to meet certain criteria in order to ensure continued financial aid; and if he will make a statement. [50551]

Hilary Benn: The statement by the European Union, United States, United Nations and Russia (the Quartet) on 30 January concluded that future assistance to any new Palestinian government would be reviewed by donors against that government's commitment to principles of non-violence, recognition of Israel and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap. The UK government fully supports this approach.

Pending the formation of a new Palestinian government, a caretaker administration is in place. The Quartet has called for measures to facilitate the work of this caretaker administration to stabilise public finances. DFID is in close contact with the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and other donors about how we can help. For the time being DFID's programmes of advice to key Palestinian institutions and assistance to refugees are continuing.

Pakistan

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total amount of aid given to *(a)* the Pakistan Government and *(b)* aid agencies has been following the earthquake of 8 October 2005; and if he will make a statement. [50726]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has pledged £58 million for emergency humanitarian relief and £70 million for longer term reconstruction. Of this nearly £53 million has been committed so far, including £43.3 million to aid agencies. The remainder has been in support of interventions undertaken by NATO, MOD and of direct action by DFID. We have not disbursed any money to the Government of Pakistan so far.

Palestinian Authority

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much the Government gave in aid to the Palestinian Authority in each of the last five years. [51546]

Hilary Benn: DFID's support to the Palestinian Authority (PA) over the last five years has been as follows:

	£ million
2001–02	14.4
2002–03	15
2003–04	16.9
2004–05	15.8
2005–06	15

This support has included technical assistance and financial aid, including budgetary support. These figures are in addition to Palestinian projects implemented outside the PA, including contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for refugees.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agricultural Support

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her estimate is of the total amount to be paid to farmers under the Single Farm Payment in England in 2005–06. [47984]

Jim Knight: The total amount of money that is available for payments to farmers in England under the single payment scheme is £1.63 billion. The amount each farmer will receive depends on the number and value of the entitlements they are allocated, and whether they activate these entitlements. In addition all payments are subject to modulation.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects the first single farm payments to be made. [48205]

Jim Knight: As I stated on 31 January 2006, full payments under the Single Payment Scheme will start at the end of February 2006, with the bulk complete in March 2006.

I expect all payments will be made well within the payment window set by EU legislation which runs until 30 June 2006.

Avian Influenza

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what factors she took into account when deciding not to authorise the use of vaccines against avian influenza. [50086]

Mr. Bradshaw: The use of avian influenza vaccines is prohibited by European Union (EU) legislation except in emergency or high risk situations. They would also have to be specifically authorised by the Chief Veterinary Officer.

The vaccines currently available in the EU are able to reduce mortality but it is likely that some vaccinated birds would still be capable of transmitting the avian influenza virus if they become infected. We are continuing to work closely with vaccine manufacturers to assess information on other possible vaccines.

Beacon Towns Initiative

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the status of the Beacon Towns initiative. [51102]

Jim Knight: The Beacon Towns programme was part of the Market Towns initiative announced in the Rural White Paper 2000. Between 2003–04 the Countryside Agency identified 18 Beacon Towns in England; demonstrating the range of different problems and challenges which market towns experience, and other towns can learn from. Details of their experiences are set out in the Countryside Agency's report 'Beacon Towns: The Story Continues', available from the Agency's website at http://mt.net.countryside.gov.uk/cgi-bin/item.cgi?id = 2840

The delivery functions that used to be carried out by the Countryside Agency (including work on Beacon Towns) transferred to regional development agencies and Government Offices from 1 April 2005. Regional development agencies have continued to support the delivery of individual Beacon Town projects during 2005–06.

The not-for-profit organisation Action for Market Towns is also focusing on work with three specific Beacon Towns: Faringdon, Carterton and Wolverton. The aim is to generate an ongoing knowledge and skills exchange between these and other experienced market town partnerships.

Calls to Prayer

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance she gives local authorities on the acceptable volume of amplified calls to prayer; and if she will make a statement. [50247]

Mr. Bradshaw: Complaints about noise from amplified calls to prayer can be addressed by local authorities under the statutory nuisance provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It is for the appropriate local authority to determine whether a noise amounts to a statutory nuisance. The Department does not produce guidance on acceptable levels of noise, since these will vary. Factors to be taken into account include the character of the locality, the duration of the noise and the frequency of its occurrence.

Canoeists

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to what percentage of the total length of rivers in the United Kingdom canoeists have full access throughout the year; and if she will make a statement. [48366]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* The lengths of water for canoeing on canals, rivers with public navigation rights, and rivers with formal access agreements in England total some 5,000 km (34 per cent. of the major river and canal network) but the canoeists right of access may be limited at certain times of year (eg during the angling season).

Responsibility for access to rivers in Scotland and Wales lies with the devolved Administrations rather than with Defra.

Circuses

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make it her policy to ban the use of animals in travelling circuses. [50562]

Mr. Bradshaw: We do not believe there is sufficient evidence to justify an across the board ban on animals performing in travelling circuses.

DEFRA plans to introduce a statutory code of practice for circuses to underpin the new welfare offence set out in the Animal Welfare Bill. The code will establish good practice, and assist with enforcement. Together with the proposed welfare offence it may have the effect of making it uneconomic for certain animal acts to perform in travelling circuses.

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on how many occasions her Department consulted citizens' juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens' jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens' jury. [46243]

Jim Knight: As part of the 'GM Nation?' public debate on genetically modified crops and food, a number of organisations set up citizens' juries to consider the issues and contribute to the debate. The outcome from such juries and hundreds of public meetings informed the advice from the independent GM debate steering board set up by the Government. This advice was taken into account in determining the Government's GM policy statement published in 2004.

In 1999 there was a national consensus conference organised by UK CEED to discuss a way forward with radwaste management which included expert witnesses, including Defra, giving evidence to a Citizen's Panel of 12. The panel then produced a report called "Final Report of the UK National Consensus Conference on Radioactive Waste".

Climate Change Consultation

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will place in the Library a copy of the consultation responses received by the Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions following the publication of the draft UK Climate Change Programme 2000. [51749]

Mr. Morley: A summary of responses to the consultation on the draft UK Climate Change Programme 2000 can be found on the Defra website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/pubs/ukccp/draft/response/01.htm.

Common Agricultural Policy

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with her French counterpart to ensure that British and French farmers are treated equally in *(a)* monetary and *(b)* commercial terms under the common agricultural policy. [50105]

Jim Knight: The CAP exists in the context of the single market. It functions according to rules fixed for the EU as a whole and negotiated collectively when periodical reviews and reforms occur. Such reforms took place in 2003, 2004 and 2005 and are scheduled for 2006 and 2008–09. We held and will hold discussions with the French Government as part of these reforms.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47683]

Jim Knight: It is the policy of DEFRA its agencies, non-departmental public bodies and, where appropriate, its sponsored organisations to make financial redress in accordance with the guidance set out in Chapter 18.7 and Annexes 18.1 and 18.2 of Government Accounting.

The information you requested is set out in the following table:

Value for the year 1 January to 31 December 2005, DEFRA

Department	£
(a) Lost items:	
Catering Equipment	427
Thefts from Departmental vehicles of one digital camera and two laptops	3,285
(b) Broken items:	
1,690 cage traps	80,269

For information on thefts of items valued over £100 from DEFRA buildings, for the period 1 January to 31 December 2005, I refer the hon. Member to my earlier response on 1 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 519W.

Departmental Catering Budget

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much and what proportion of her Department's catering budget was spent on fair trade produce in the last period for which figures are available. [49914]

Jim Knight: From information held centrally, total turnover through Defra's catering facilities was £1,636,300 for the period January 2005 to December 2005 inclusive. Of this amount, £459,000 (28 per cent.) is accounted for by fair trade produce.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's policy is on the procurement of fair trade produce for consumption on its premises. [49925]

Jim Knight: The department policy on the procurement of fair trade produce is that farm assured produce, organic food and fair trade products should be promoted and all feature on the menu on a daily basis.

Contracts are measured against this requirement. All hospitality beverages (teas, coffees and chocolate) served within Defra premises is fair trade produce.

The hon. Member may wish to refer to the Defra website where further detail can be found in the "Catering Services Food Procurement Toolkit": which is designed for the use of Public Sector organisations. http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/sustain/procurement/toolkit.htm. Pages: 6, 16, 37, 38, 79, 93, and 129. refer to fairly traded produce.

Departmental Regulations

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many regulations from her Department came into force in each year since 1996–97. [49169]

Jim Knight: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) was formed in June 2001 as a result of the merger of the former Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the former Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions. Relevant agencies and non-departmental public bodies were also absorbed into the new organisation.

The following table identifies the number of statutory instruments which fall within scope of Defra's activities and that came into force between 8 June 2001 and 31 December 2005. The figures include new regulations and amending regulations which concern technical or clarifying amendments to existing regulations.

	Number of Defra SIs coming into force
2001[1]	54
2002	128
2003	115
2004	146
2005	153

[1] 8 June to 31 December

From 2006 Departments are required to publish an annual list of forthcoming legislation it expects to introduce in that year. Defra published its 2006 list on 31 January and this can be found at http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/regulat/regulat.asp-forthcoming.

Digital Television (Energy Efficiency)

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance she has issued to digital television *(a)* broadcasters, *(b)* manufacturers and *(c)* retailers on the energy efficiency of digital television appliances. [50223]

Mr. Morley: Defra has worked closely with the Department for Trade and Industry and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport—who have lead policy responsibility for digital switchover—through the Digital TV Group to identify the projected increases in energy consumption arising from digital switchover and to identify actions for mitigating these increases.

My Department, via the Market Transformation Programme (MTP), by proactively working with the European Commission and service providers to develop and encourage sign up to the EU Code of Conduct for Digital TV Services which sets energy efficiency standards for digital TV equipment, has been able to help mitigate projected increases from service providers such as BskyB, by around 400,000 TC per annum.

I have also written to all the major digital TV broadcasters, service providers and retailers urging them to sign up to the EU Code of Conduct, including for terrestrial digital TV equipment.

Defra, via MTP, has also been working closely with the Energy Saving Trust to extend it's successful Energy Saving Recommended product labelling scheme to include Integrated Digital Television (IDTVs) sets. To be endorsed, IDTVs have to conform to a challenging set of energy performance criteria in both standby and on-mode functions. In addition, purchase of an IDTV now will negate the necessity to install a set top box, thus achieving additional energy savings. In its first month, three manufacturers have registered a total of 20 products with the scheme.

English Nature

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on English Nature's delivery plan; when the latest plan will be published; and whether this plan imposes *(a)* targets and *(b)* statutory requirements on local planning authorities. [51104]

Jim Knight: English Nature is a public service organisation, which provides advice and influences policies at national, regional and local level in order to conserve and enhance our natural environment.

English Nature does not publish formal delivery plans. However, its latest corporate plan, covering the period 2005–08 is available on its website at: www.english-nature.org.uk

Local planning authorities already have a statutory responsibility to consult English Nature over development that would affect Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Subject to parliamentary approval, English Nature, parts of the Countryside Agency and DEFRA's rural development service, will be brought together from 1 October into a single body, Natural England, to be responsible for conserving, managing and enhancing the natural environment. Natural England will be responsible for publishing its own reports and plans.

Farm Income

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farming households in England were living below the Government low-income threshold in each year since 1996–97. [49170]

Jim Knight: Pursuant to the answer given to the right hon. Member for Kettering (Mr. Hollobone) on 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1183W, the low income threshold as defined by the Department for Work and Pensions cannot be compared with any estimate of average farm household income. This is because the low income threshold published by the Department for Work and Pensions has been re-scaled for a standardised household consisting of two adults only.

Data on farm household income was collected for the first time in 2005 and is expected to be published later this year.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* percentage and *(b)* real terms changes in total income from farming were in each of the last four years. [49981]

Jim Knight: The information requested is presented in the following table.

	£ million	Percentage change
Total income from farming		
2002	2,361.8	27.8
2003	3,080.7	30.4
3004	2,766.7	-10.2
2005	2,521.3	-8.9
Total income from farming in real term (2005 prices)		
2002	2,573.2	25.8
2003	3,261.8	26.8
3004	2,845.0	-12.8
2005	2,521.3	-11.4

Farm Subsidies

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of single farm payments she expects to have been paid by the end of February. [47993]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 2 February 2006]: We* cannot be precise at this stage about how many payments will have been made by the end of February 2006. However, we expect the bulk of payments to be complete by the end of March 2006.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what changes in pillar II funding from earlier estimates are expected in 2007–13 as a result of the recent EU budget reform.[49985]

Jim Knight: The overall budget for the Rural Development Regulation was agreed as part of the Financial Perspective (2007–13) negotiations and has been set at €69.75 billion for the whole EU. This is roughly in line with existing expenditure, although with a greater focus in the new member states. Once the mandatory transfer from CAP subsidies to rural development agreed as part of the 2003 reform are taken into account, (also known as compulsory modulation), EU spending on rural development will be higher—during the 2007–13 period than it is currently.

The European Commission has yet to propose the detailed allocation for each member state. For the UK, a key element of the budget deal was securing the flexibility to make use of voluntary modulation or additional transfers of funds from pillar I to pillar II. This will enable us to meet our manifesto commitments on Environmental Stewardship. We will look at all financing arrangements for the successor Rural Development Programme from 2007 with the Treasury and in light of the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review.

Fisheries

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will visit Iceland to see how it is managing its fish stocks. [50107]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have already visited Iceland in August 2004 as part of a series of tours to explore the ways various non-EU countries managed their fisheries. The Icelandic approach to managing fish stocks is, along with examples from other countries, being taken into account in the current programme to change our own quota management arrangements.

Footpath Closure Orders

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many applications for footpath closure orders have been made in each metropolitan district in the county of Greater Manchester under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 since the act came into force; and how many were successful in each district. [51145]

Jim Knight: This information is held by local highway authorities and could be gathered only at a disproportionate cost.

Freedom of Information

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what total sum has been received by her Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48470]

Jim Knight: Since the Freedom of Information Act came into force, the Department has not received any payment for the provision of information under the Act, nor for answering requests under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

The Freedom of Information Act allows for public authorities to determine when the cost of processing a request will exceed the appropriate limit, which for central Government are set at £600 and for the wider public sector £450. In this instance the public authority may decide to either approach the applicant to help them refine their request and where possible to bring it under the appropriate limit. Alternatively, public authorities may charge the applicant the cost of processing the request. There is, however, no obligation for Departments to provide information if the cost of processing the request exceeds the appropriate limit.

Public authorities may also charge for disbursements when handling requests where it is deemed appropriate. Further information on the FOI fees regime can be found on the DCA website at http://www.foi.gov.uk/feesguide.htm.

GM Crops

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of terminator seed technology on free access to genetic resources. [50046]

Mr. Morley: Terminator technology (genetic use restriction technologies or GURTs) involves a wide range of technically complex, inter-related issues that

are evolving rapidly. While the Government keeps abreast of the potential impact of this technology on a range of stakeholders, we have not undertaken a specific study into the impact on free access to genetic resources.

We do however monitor developments in the genetically modified (GM) field overall and seek stakeholder views more generally. In 2003, we initiated the "GM nation" public debate which sought to explore the public's views on GM crops and food. All GM issues were open for debate but we did not seek specifically views on GURTs. We regularly meet with relevant stakeholders to keep abreast of their views on all GM matters and GURTs have been raised on occasion. We also monitor development in the scientific press and the wider media.

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if the Government will support the Convention on Biodiversity Decision V/5 section III on the field testing and commercialisation of genetic use restriction technologies at the forthcoming 2006 Convention on Biodiversity meetings. [50047]

Mr. Morley: The UK Government support the decision that the Convention on Biological Diversity took in 2000 that there should be a precautionary approach to the use of genetic use restriction technologies (GURTs) while research into the possible impacts of these technologies is carried out.

At the meeting of the convention in March, this year, parties will consider recommendations and reports from the convention's subsidiary body and other working groups on this issue. They will be invited to reaffirm the previous decision. Our position at the meeting will take full account of these reports, as well as the EU's own regulatory regime.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what was the value of genetically modified crops imported to the UK from Spain in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2005. [50048]

Mr. Morley: The only GM crop which is approved for cultivation in Spain is maize, and we understand that no GM maize that has been grown in Spain is exported to the UK. Any GM maize grain imported into the UK from Spain would itself have been imported into Spain from outside the EU.

The total value of grain maize (combined figure for both GM and non-GM) exported from Spain to the UK in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2005 was:

£

	Value
2003	1,152,000
2005	17,742,000

Only part of the total export was genetically modified. We do not keep specific records of the total of specifically GM imports, although since April 2004 exporters have been required under new EU legislation to keep for five years records of imports of GM crops. This data is not however collected centrally.

GM maize is only legal in the EU if the product has been approved under stringent EU legislation.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much genetically modified maize was imported to the United Kingdom in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [50049]

Mr. Morley: The total volume of grain maize (combined figure for both GM and non-GM) imported to the United Kingdom in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005 was:

tonnes

	Volume
2004	1,257,921
2005	1,169,953

We do not keep records of the total of specifically GM imports, although since April 2004 exporters have been required under new EU legislation to keep for five years records of imports of GM crops. This data is not however collected centrally.

GM maize can only be imported legally to the United Kingdom if the product has been approved under stringent EU legislation.

Grey Squirrels

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the control of grey squirrels. [50973]

Jim Knight: I refer my hon. Friend to the written ministerial statement I made on 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 37WS, announcing the publication of the Policy and Action Statement for the management of Grey Squirrel in England's woodlands. This policy sets out the rationale and actions for the control of grey squirrels.

Identity Cards

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 930W, on identity cards, whether her Department has finalised the current best estimates of the cost of using the identity cards scheme to support the services which it oversees. [50324]

Jim Knight: As is the case with other Government Departments, Defra has begun an exercise to establish the benefits and costs arising from the introduction of identity cards. The initial stage underway will perform a broad scan across the range of Defra's services to identify areas of potential costs and benefits. These areas will be investigated in more detail as part of a subsequent stage, with support from the Home Office Identity Cards Programme.

Lyons Inquiry

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department has sent a written submission to the Lyons inquiry on local government finance. [47887]

Jim Knight: The Lyons inquiry is independent of the Government. Sir Michael Lyons will decide what to publish when he makes available his final report.

National Reserve

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects the allocation of the National Reserve to be finalised. [49158]

Jim Knight: Eligibility decisions have been taken on 99.8 per cent. of all National Reserve applications and since 3 January the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) has been informing successful applicants of their National Reserve awards.

RPA anticipates that, where possible, all applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application by 22 February.

Organic Entry Level Scheme

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farmers have been registered under the Organic Entry Level Scheme in *(a)* Devon, *(b)* Cornwall, *(c)* Somerset and *(d)* Dorset. [48715]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* As at 3 February 2006, the following numbers of farmers had successfully entered into Organic Entry Level Stewardship agreements:

	Number
Devon	48
Cornwall	27
Somerset	16
Dorset	18

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many parliamentary questions tabled in the last 12 months for answer by her on a named day *(a)* were transferred and *(b)* received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named; [49890]

(2) how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by her in the last 12 months have been answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* between 14 and 28 days, *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if she will make a statement. [49903]

Jim Knight: The following information is as follows:

Number of Named Day PQs transferred	23
Number transferred on the day named	23
Number transferred after the day named	0
Number of Named Day PQs that received a substantive answer	478
Number answered on the day named	153
Number answered after the day named	325

Note:
All figures are for PQs received between 1 February 2005 to 31 January 2006.

Number of Written PQs answered	2,871
Number answered within 14 days	2,409
Number answered between 14 and 28 days	268
Number answered between 28 days and two months	76
Number answered in excess of two months	118

Note:
All figures are for PQs received between 1 February 2005 to 31 January 2006.

Press Complaints

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 she has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* her Department; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47086]

Jim Knight: There have been no complaints to the PCC from this Department in that time.

Rural Payments Agency

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will examine the reasons for the delay by the Rural Payments Agency in establishing definitive maps in respect of the holdings of John Lumsdon of Mayhouse Farm, Hadley, Droitwich Spa, WR9 OAS, reference numbers 17/510/0048 and 106620345. [49439]

Jim Knight: Due to the size of the Rural Land Register project, and the amount of land the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) is trying to capture, there have been some instances when RPA has been unable to capture edits as quickly as it would like.

However, I am pleased to report that revised maps have now been sent to Mr. Lumsdon.

Set-aside

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much has been allocated to each EU country in set aside payment within the Common Agricultural Policy in 2005–06. [43549]

Jim Knight: Under the Single Payment Scheme, the number of set-aside entitlements allocated in each member state in the first year of application of the scheme is determined, in the main, by the average number of hectares under compulsory set-aside under the Arable Area Payments Scheme (AAPS) during the 2000–02 reference period. Subject to the exemptions that applied at the time, notably for small producers, that equates to 10 per cent. of the total area claimed under AAPS in each member state in the reference period. Total figures for those member states operating the scheme in 2005 are not yet available, but the amount of payment attached to set-aside entitlements in each member state will vary according to whether the 'historical' or 'flat-rate/hybrid' model of the scheme has been adopted. For those member states still operating AAPS in 2005, set-aside payment figures are again unavailable at this point, but will be determined by the number of applicants applying under the scheme, how much land they put into set-aside and the 63 euros/tonne payment rate.

Sheep Dip

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effects on *(a)* biodiversity and *(b)* the environment of synthetic pyrethroid sheep dip. [51032]

Mr. Bradshaw: It is widely known that synthetic pyrethroids can cause environmental problems if they are allowed to come into contact with watercourses. Recent reports from the Environment Agency of pollution incidents caused by the synthetic pyrethroid cypermethrin used in sheep dipping have included the loss of aquatic insects and other invertebrate species and possible resulting decline of the insect-feeding fish populations.

The veterinary medicines directorate and the Environment Agency are currently consulting on a programme to reduce pollution from such incidents.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) for what reasons the veterinary medicines directorate and Environment Agency consultation on the future use of synthetic pyrethroid sheep dip is not a public consultation; [51033]

(2) what assessment she has made of the compliance of the current format of the veterinary medicines directorate and Environment Agency consultation on the future use of synthetic pyrethroid sheep dip with the openness about environmental decision-making required by the Aarhus Convention. [51034]

Mr. Bradshaw: The consultation on the draft Pollution Reduction programme for sheep dip is a public consultation.

Following a number of reports of serious pollution incidents arising from the use of synthetic pyrethroid sheep dips, the veterinary medicines directorate and the Environment Agency called a public stakeholder meeting to consider how the issue could be addressed. The meeting was held in September last year and subsequently from the agreed actions, a draft Pollution Reduction programme for sheep dip was produced.

During December, the draft programme was sent out for consultation to all who attended the meeting.

One of the external stakeholders pointed out that the Pollution Reduction programme was not available on the internet. This error was corrected when the consultation package was put on to the veterinary medicines directorate website on 27 January.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what volume of synthetic pyrethroid sheep dip was licensed for disposal in each of the last five years. [51041]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Environment Agency's database currently holds approximately 9,000 authorisations issued for a period of four years to sheep farmers under the Groundwater Regulations 1998 for disposal of sheep dip. The database records only the maximum amount of sheep dip which may be disposed of, rather than actual volumes, and does not distinguish between specific sheep dips such as synthetic pyrethroids or organophosphorus compounds. Records of specific substances and quantities disposed of are required to be kept by the holders of authorisations, but this information is not held centrally by the EA and would be disproportionately expensive to collate.

VMD records show that 51,700 litres of cypermethrin sheep dip were sold in 2005, indicating the quantities which would require disposal after use.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what quantity of synthetic pyrethroid sheep dip chemical precursors were sold in each of the last five years; and how much sheep dip by volume would be produced when the precursors were prepared for use. [51042]

Mr. Bradshaw: For the control of sheep ectoparasites by plunge dipping, synthetic pyrethroid sheep dips products have to be diluted with water to make the dip. The rates of dilution differ between products and the ectoparasites for which the animals are to be treated. The range of dilutions are 1:400 to 1:1,000 with 1:500 the most common rate. Using this rate:

In 2001: 32,000 litres of cypermethrin sheep dip were sold for dilution to 16 million litres.

In 2002: 57,000 litres of cypermethrin sheep dip were sold for dilution to 28 million litres.

In 2003: 65,000 litres of cypermethrin sheep dip were sold for dilution to 33 million litres.

In 2004: 57,000 litres of cypermethrin sheep dip were sold for dilution to 28 million litres.

In 2005: 52,000 litres of cypermethrin sheep dip were sold for dilution to 26 million litres.

Single Farm Payment

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many applications for Single Farm Payment made in 2004 *(a)* are still under review and *(b)* have not been processed by the Rural Payments Agency; and if she will set a date by which a decision on all such applications will be made. [49125]

Jim Knight: The Single Payment Scheme was introduced in the UK on 1 January 2005, the earliest opportunity possible under the regulations. Therefore, there were no applications to this scheme in 2004.

All applications to the 2005 scheme have been assessed, although just over half of the claim population is still in the process of completing validation.

As I stated on 31 January 2006, full payments under the Single Payment Scheme will start at the end of February 2006, with the bulk complete in March 2006.

I expect all payments will be made well within the payment window set by EU legislation which runs until 30 June 2006.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost was of administering the single farm payment scheme in each year since its introduction. [49156]

Jim Knight: The Single Payment Scheme (SPS) was introduced in 2005 and the cost of administering claims for that year under this scheme will largely fall in the financial year 2005–06. The cost of administering all CAP schemes, including SPS, in England during 2005–06 is forecast at £148 million. The allocation of these costs between schemes will not be finalized until after the year end.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of single farm payments she expects to have been paid by the end of *(a)* February and *(b)* March. [49157]

Jim Knight: We cannot be precise at this stage of the proportions of payments under the single payment scheme to have been paid by the end of February 2006. However, we expect the bulk of payments to be complete by the end of March 2006.

Statutory Instruments

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the statutory instruments introduced by her Department since 6 May 2005. [46210]

Jim Knight: The Department introduced 105 Statutory Instruments for the period in question. These are listed as follows.

The Access to the Countryside (Correction of Provisional and Conclusive Maps) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Agricultural Holdings (Units of Production) (England) Order 2005

The Animal By-Products Regulations 2005

The Animal Health Act 1981 (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Animals and Animal Products (Import and Export) Regulations 2005

The Avian Influenza (Preventive Measures in Zoos) Regulations 2005

The Avian Influenza (Preventive Measures) Regulations 2005

The Avian Influenza (Preventive Measures) (No. 2) Regulations 2005

The Beet Seed (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Boiler (Efficiency) (Amendment) Regulations 2006

The Calshot Oyster Fishery Order 2005

The Cattle Compensation (England) Order 2005

The Cattle Compensation Order 2006

The Cereal Seed (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Charges for Inspections and Controls (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations 2005

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 (Commencement No.2, Transitional Provisions and Savings) (England and Wales) Order 2005

The Climate Change Agreements (Eligible Facilities) Regulations 2006

The Common Agricultural Policy (Wine) (England and Northern Ireland) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Common Agricultural Policy Single Payment and Support Schemes (Cross Compliance) (England) Regulations 2005

The Common Agricultural Policy Single Payment and Support Schemes (Reductions from Payments) (England) Regulations 2006

The Common Agricultural Policy Single Payment Scheme (Set-aside) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Control of Trade in Endangered Species (Enforcement) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (Commencement No. 8) Order 2005

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (Commencement No. 9) Order 2005

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (Commencement No. 10) Order 2005

The Crime Prevention (Designated Areas) (No.3) Order 2005

The Dairy Produce Quotas (Amendment) Regulations 2006

The Detergents Regulations 2005

The Diseases of Animals (Approved Disinfectants) (Amendment) (England) Order 2005

The Diseases of Poultry Declaratory (Infected Area) (England) Order 2005

The Diseases of Poultry Declaratory (Infected Area) (England) (No. 2) Order 2005

The Diseases of Poultry Declaratory (Infected Area) (Merger of Zones) (England) Order 2005

The Diseases of Poultry Declaratory (Infected Area) (Merger of Zones) (Revocation) (England) Order 2005

The Dog Control Orders (Prescribed Offences and Penalties, etc.) Regulations 2006

The Drought Plan (England and Wales) Regulations 2005

The Energy Information (Household Air Conditioners) Regulations 2005

The Energy Information (Household Air Conditioners) (No. 2) Regulations 2005

The Enterprise Act 2002 (Bodies Designated to make Super-complaints) (Amendment) Order 2005

The Environmental Impact Assessment (Land Drainage Improvement Works) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Environmental Impact Assessment (Uncultivated Land and Semi-Natural Areas) (England) Regulations 2005

The Environmental Offences (Use of Fixed Penalty Receipts) Regulations 2006

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Amendment of Section 57) (England and Wales) Regulations 2005

The Environmental Stewardship (England) and Organic Products (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Farm Woodland Premium Schemes (Amendment) (England) Scheme 2005

The Fees for Assessment of Active Substances (Fourth Stage Review) Regulations 2005

The Financial Assistance for Environmental Purposes Order 2005

The Fodder Plant Seed (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Foot and Mouth Disease (Control of Vaccination) (England) Regulations 2006

The Foot and Mouth Disease (England) Order 2006

The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme (Amendment) and National Emissions Inventory Regulations 2005

The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme (Approved National Allocation Plan) Regulations 2005

The High-activity Sealed Radioactive Sources and Orphan Sources Regulations 2005

The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme (England) Regulations 2005

The Home-Grown Cereals Authority (Rate of Levy) Order 2005

The Individual Ascertainment of Value (England) Order 2005

The Landfill (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Leicestershire County Council (Ashby de la Zouch Canal Extension) Order 2005

The List of Wastes (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Litter (Fixed Penalty Notices) Order 1991 and the Dog Fouling (Fixed Penalties) Order 1996

(Revocation) (England) Order 2005

The North-West, Severn-Trent and Welsh Regional Flood Defence Committees (Boundaries Alteration) Order 2005

The Oil and Fibre Plant Seed (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Older Cattle (Disposal) (England) Regulations 2005

The Pesticides (Maximum Residue Levels in Crops, Food and Feeding Stuffs) (England and Wales) Regulations 2005

The Pesticides (Maximum Residue Levels in Crops, Food and Feeding Stuffs) (England and Wales) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2005

The Plant Breeders' Rights (Discontinuation of Prior Use Exemption) Order 2005

The Plant Health (England) Order 2005

The Plant Health (Export Certification) (England) (Amendment) Order 2005

The Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005

The Plant Protection Products Regulations 2005

The Plant Protection Products (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Pollution Prevention and Control (Public Participation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2005

The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2005

The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) (No. 4) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Public Rights of Way (Register of Applications under section 53(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) (England) Regulations 2005

The Radioactive Contaminated Land (Enabling Powers) (England) Regulations 2005

The Registration of Fish Buyers and Sellers and Designation of Auction Sites Regulation 2005

The Reporting of Prices of Milk Products (England) Regulations 2005

The Salmonella in Broiler Flocks (Survey Powers) (England) Regulations 2005

The Sea Fishing (Enforcement of Community Control Measures) (Amendment) Order 2005

The Seed (Registration, Licensing and Enforcement) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Sheep and Goats (Records, Identification and Movement) (England) Order 2005

The Smoke Control Areas (Authorised Fuels) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Smoke Control Areas (Exempted Fireplaces) (England) Order 2005

The Southern Water Services Limited (Weir Wood Reservoir) (Drought) Order 2005

The Southern Water Services Limited (Weir Wood Reservoir) (Drought) (No.2) Order 2005

The Stanswood Bay Oyster Fishery Order 2005

The Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies Regulations 2006

The TSE (England) (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations 2005

The Tuberculosis (England) Order 2005

The Tuberculosis (England) (Amendment) Order 2006

The Vegetable Seed (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005

The Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2005

The Veterinary Surgery (Testing for Tuberculosis in Bovines) Order 2005

The Volatile Organic Compounds in Paints, Varnishes and Vehicle Refinishing Products Regulations 2005

The Waste (Household Waste Duty of Care) (England and Wales) Regulations 2005

The Waste Management Licensing (England and Wales) (Amendment and Related Provisions) (No. 2) Regulations 2005

The Waste Management Licensing (England and Wales) (Amendment and Related Provisions) (No.3) Regulations 2005

The Water Act 2003 (Commencement No. 5, Transitional Provisions and Savings) Order 2005

The Water Act 2003 (Consequential and Supplementary Provisions) Regulations 2005

The Water Supply (Exceptions from Supply System Prohibitions) Regulations 2005

The Water Supply Licence (Application) Regulations 2005

The Water Supply Licence (Modification of Standard Conditions) Order 2005

The Water Supply Licence (New Customer Exception) Regulations 2005

The Water Supply Licence (Prescribed Water Fittings Requirements) Regulations 2005

The Yorkshire Regional Flood Defence Committee Order 2005

Timber

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what monitoring her Department carries out to measure the effectiveness of policies to restrict the import of illegal timber. [50945]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* All UK Government policy is regularly reviewed and monitored for effectiveness.

The Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Regulation adopted by the EU in December 2005 is key in tackling the importation of illegally logged timber. Member states will submit annual reports on the implementation of the policy and there will be a formal review from the two years after the entry into force of the first partnership agreement.

We are also committed to taking forward commitments made on illegal logging at last years G8 Environment and Development Ministerial. The Ministers' recommendations were endorsed by Heads at the Summit in Gleneagles in July 2005 and Ministers agreed that officials would meet in 2006 to review progress against these objectives.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the Government's timetable is for negotiating Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade voluntary agreements with partnership countries. [51067]

Mr. Thomas: I have been asked to reply.

The EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan identifies a number of potential partner countries. The European Commission and member states began consultations in 2005 with four of these—Cameroon, Ghana, Indonesia and Malaysia, with a view to beginning formal negotiations once a mandate had been given by the European Council. That mandate was given in late 2005 and formal negotiations can begin when these partner countries and the EU agree that the preparatory work has been completed. Consultations will begin with other potential partner countries in 2006 drawing on the experience already gained. The time taken to complete negotiations will vary from partner country to partner country. It is anticipated that the first partnership agreement will be signed in 2007.

Urban Biodiversity

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice her Department has *(a)* received from statutory advisors and *(b)* sought from experts on the role of gardens in urban biodiversity. [50708]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* Defra, English Nature, the Countryside Council for Wales, and the Environment and Heritage Service (Northern Ireland) are funding research by Sheffield University into biodiversity in urban gardens (BUGS).

An initial BUGS project, completed at the end of 2002, involved a three year investigation into the significance of urban gardens in Sheffield as habitats for 'natural' biodiversity, and tested the efficacy of some simple methods for enhancing garden biodiversity. The results confirmed that 'gardens are brilliant for wildlife'. And further details are available on the BUGS website at http://www.bugs.group.shef.ac.uk/BUGS1/bugs1-index.html

A second BUGS project is now building on the methods and findings of the first study. This project, which is also supported by Defra, widens the scope of this work to examine the resource that gardens provide for wildlife, and the diversity of plants, across different parts of the UK, and different urban forms. It will run until 2006–07, and the results will feed into Biodiversity Action Plans for urban areas.

Waste Incineration Directive

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she intends to delay the application of the Waste Incineration Directive to tallow until the Directorate-General Environment has completed its review of the directive's impact on the combustion of tallow. [27328]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Waste Incineration Directive has been transposed into national law and we currently have no grounds on which to change that. I am advised that, as the law currently stands, the burning of waste tallow as fuel remains subject to the requirements of that directive.

In June 2005, the Government wrote to the European Commission expressing its view that the existing requirements of the Waste Framework Directive (WFD) (75/442/EEC as amended) and the Directive on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (96/61/EC) are sufficient to ensure that the burning of waste tallow as fuel is carried out in ways which protect the environment and public and animal health. The Government called for the EU Animal By-Products Regulation (ABPR) and the WID to be amended accordingly.

In response, the Commission stated that there did not appear to be sufficient justification at present for it to propose an exclusion of the burning of waste tallow from the WID. However, the Commission also confirmed that the WID is not intended to discourage uses of waste as competitive and efficient alternative energy sources, agreed that it is desirable that it does not have such an effect and has initiated further analysis of the issue in the form of a study. This study should help to clarify the wider environmental and economic impacts of the current legislation.

I recognise that recent announcements by the European Commission have raised the possibility that this legal position might change in the future. My understanding is that the Commission's study of the environmental impacts of burning tallow has now commenced and will report in the second half of 2006. If the outcome of this study were favourable to the burning of waste tallow as fuel without having to meet the requirements of the WID, then this could lead to a change in the relevant legislation although it is suggested that this is unlikely to occur before 2009. I must also stress that such an outcome is by no means a foregone conclusion.

Water Abstraction

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) whether water abstraction charges are planned to be levied on a *(a)* regional and *(b)* national basis; [51460]

(2) what representations she has received concerning regional charges for water abstraction licences; [51461]

(3) what proposals she has received from the Environment Agency concerning water abstraction charges. [51469]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency has a statutory duty to manage water resources in England and Wales. It recovers the costs of managing water resources from abstraction licence holders through an abstraction charges scheme that is approved by Ministers. The recovery of its day-to-day costs expended in meeting this duty is, and will continue to be, on a regional basis.

The Environment Agency is expected to take action against abstraction licences where the abstraction is adversely impacting on conservation sites, and in particular those designated under European legislation. Where it needs to revoke or modify an abstraction licence then compensation is generally payable. The compensation payments form part of the agency's costs of meeting its duties and therefore are costs to be recovered via abstraction charges.

The Environment Agency has recently consulted on proposals to recover any compensation that may be payable via a national, rather than regional, formula. The Department has received representations, in light of that consultation, from a number of Members of Parliament whose constituencies lie in the north east of England and in particular those served by Northumbrian Water plc. The representations have been made to draw the Department's attention to the concerns of the Consumer Council for Water, the North East Chamber of Commerce and Northumbrian Water about a national approach. Anglian Water has made representations in support of a national approach.

The Environment Agency has made proposals to the Department to raise its regional Standard Unit Charges, which are the basis of the recovery of day-to-day costs of managing water resources in England and Wales, in 2006–07.

The Environment Agency has not proposed to the Department any changes to the abstraction charges scheme in relation to the recovery of any compensation payments it may need to make. Therefore no decision has been made by Ministers on this element of abstraction charges.

Water Supply

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what minimum *(a)* additional water supply infrastructure, *(b)* additional works to existing water supply infrastructure and *(c)* change in per capita consumption of water she expects to be required in order to enable an adequate water supply to be maintained when the Government have achieved its target for additional new dwellings in the Thames Gateway by 2016; and what plans the Government have to take the action necessary to ensure adequate water supply. [50198]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency is the statutory body with a duty to manage water resources in England and Wales. As part of the agency's management role it has both national and regional water resource strategies which set out the pressures over the next 25 years.

Water companies have statutory duties to maintain adequate supplies of water. They have 25 year water resource plans which complement the agency strategies and seek to reconcile supply with anticipated demand. This forward planning framework exists to take account of factors such as the water supply and disposal infrastructure required to service significant new housing developments of which the Thames Gateway is an example.

Although produced voluntarily, every five years, at present these plans will become a statutory requirement under the provisions of the Water Act 2003. The Department is currently consulting on the exercise of the new powers in respect of statutory water resource plans.

The Government will introduce regulations to secure improved water efficiency in new housing and will be issuing a consultation paper later this year.

Working Dogs

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate her Department has made of the percentage of working dogs which have had their tails amputated as a consequence of injury. [50981]

Mr. Bradshaw: None. However, these amputations can only be performed by a qualified vet.

World Trade Organisation (Sensitive Products)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what criteria the EU applied when designating agricultural products as sensitive in the forthcoming World Trade Organisation negotiations. [49172]

Jim Knight: In October, in the run-up to the sixth ministerial meeting in Hong Kong, the EU made an offer on improved market access for agricultural products. Others, such as the US, did so too. An agreed feature of the market access negotiations is that all countries will be permitted to protect sensitive products, by applying less than the agreed reduction rates to the tariffs on these products. The EU suggested that up to 8 per cent. of a country's tariff lines on agricultural products should be deemed sensitive products. The US suggested 1 per cent., so there is a considerable divide here that, because the matter was not discussed or decided at Hong Kong, still needs bridging.

The EU Commission negotiates on behalf of the EU member states in the WTO negotiations. EU member states have not discussed or seen any list of sensitive products or criteria from the Commission. We would not expect to do so before the number of sensitive products has been agreed. The EU may yet decide to offer a figure lower than 8 per cent. in order to secure a Doha deal, which could then effect the choice of sensitive products. In addition, agreeing the treatment of sensitive products is, of course, as important as agreeing the number.

It is difficult for any issue within the Doha Trade Round to be viewed in isolation, as any agreement reached will be part of a package. For this reason, the Commission is unlikely to have any fixed criteria, for the designation of sensitive products, that they would wish to share at this present time.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to add vulnerable egg lines to the EU list of products designated as sensitive in the forthcoming World Trade Organisation negotiations. [49178]

Jim Knight: In October, in the run-up to the sixth ministerial meeting in Hong Kong, the EU made an offer on improved market access for agricultural products. Others, such as the US, did so too. An agreed feature of the market access negotiations is that all countries will be permitted to protect sensitive products, by applying less than the agreed reduction rates to the tariffs on these products. The EU suggested that up to 8 per cent. of a country's tariff lines on agricultural products should be deemed sensitive products. The US suggested 1 per cent., so there is a considerable divide here that, because the matter was not discussed or decided at Hong Kong, still needs bridging.

The EU Commission negotiates on behalf of the EU member states in the WTO negotiations. EU member states have not discussed or seen any list of sensitive products or criteria from the Commission. We would not expect to do so before the number of sensitive products has been agreed (the choice of products designated will depend upon the number of sensitive lines available). The EU may yet choose to offer a lower figure than 8 per cent. in order to secure a Doha deal. In addition, agreeing the treatment of sensitive products is, of course, as important as agreeing the number.

The UK Government are not endorsing any product as sensitive until the number and treatment of sensitive products is agreed. In general, the hon. Member will be aware that the UK Government wish to see only a minimal number of sensitive products as we believe a large number would undermine the potential benefits of the Doha Round.

We continue to receive representations from the egg industry and representatives for the egg industry are also able to lobby the Commission direct. The UK Government will review their own position when we know the parameters we have to work to.

TREASURY

Amber Communications Management Ltd.

Mr. Gale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when HM Revenue and Customs expect to be in a position to repay the sums owing to Amber Communications Management Ltd. of Margate. [42932]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 18 January 2006]:* Section 18 of the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005 does not permit HM Revenue and Customs to disclose information relating to the tax affairs of individual taxpayers.

Banks

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will bring forward legislation under which banks would not be permitted to close branches without demonstrating that the local citizens would not experience any deterioration in credit and banking services. [50558]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: All of the main high street banks and building societies are signatories to the Banking Code. Out of the five recommendations on bank closures made at the time of the last independent review, four were accepted outright. Through the Banking Code there is now an obligation for subscribers to:

give customers extended notice of branch closure if the road distance of the nearest alternative branch is more than one mile in urban areas or more than four miles in rural areas;

explain how they continue to provide services after the branch has been closed in a way that is specific to local provision; and,

give notice of a substantial reduction in opening hours.

The Government's approach to improving local services is to work with communities to help them understand and articulate their needs to those who deliver services.

This sort of collaborative working will ensure that communities' benefit from our programmes to modernise, improve and support services and will enable communities to help themselves to meet the needs of local people.

Business Taxation

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many section 660 investigations by HM Revenue and Customs are currently open; and if he will make a statement. [51671]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not currently available.

Car Registrations

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of trends in new car registrations in the United Kingdom in each of the last five years; what changes he forecasts in each of the next two years; on what basis these forecasts are made; and if he will make a statement. [51283]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: According to the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders Limited, average annual growth in new car registrations from 2001 to 2005 was 2 per cent. Total new car registrations and annual growth in each of the last five years are presented in the following table. HM Treasury do not publish forecasts of new car registrations.

	Total new car registrations	*Annual growth (percentage)*
2001	2,458,769	10.7
2002	2,563,631	4.3
2003	2,579,050	0.6
2004	2,567,269	-0.5
2005	2,439,717	-5.0

Census

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he *(a)* is taking and *(b)* plans to take to enforce penalties for failing to complete a census form. [51215]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 14 February 2006:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking *(a)* what steps are being taken and *(b)* what plans there are to enforce penalties for failing to complete a census form. (51215)

For the 2001 Census, as with previous censuses, the Office for National Statistics followed a policy of enforcing legal proceedings against persons who persistently refused to fulfil their statutory obligation to return a completed census form, and where it had obtained clear and sufficient documentary evidence of such a refusal. The objective is to improve response by prosecution and the threat of prosecution, to support census field staff and to deter non-compliance for any future census.

Interviews under Caution were conducted and voluntary witness statements obtained, as required under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Code of practice which governs the treatment and questioning of persons who refuse to complete a census form. Particular attention was given to those reported cases where refusals were accompanied by acts of intimidation towards field staff.

This policy will also be followed for non-compliance in the 2011 Census although the precise arrangements for enforcing legal action are yet to be developed.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many officials were responsible for compiling the 2001 census in Southend-on-Sea, broken down by grade; and if he will make a statement. [50834]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 14 February 2006:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent parliamentary Question asking how many officials were responsible for compiling the 2001 census in Southend-on-Sea, broken down by grade. (50834)

The number and disposition of field staff working in Southend-on-Sea during the 2001 Census is listed as follows:

Job title	Number of staff
Census Area Manager	1
Census District Managers	5
Census Team Leaders	15
Census Enumerators	168
Total	189

Personnel working at the Widnes Processing office and Census HQ in Titchfield carried out tasks across all local authorities and were not specifically responsible for compiling figures for particular areas such as Southend-on-Sea. Over the 10 month life of the Widnes Processing site the number of staff employed to process forms for the UK averaged 1,200. The core number of staff from the Office for National Statistics at Titchfield assigned to 2001 Census activities averaged between 100 and 150. These included statisticians, researchers, information technology specialists and staff providing administrative support.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what mechanisms are available to *(a)* hon. Members and *(b)* local authorities to dispute the findings of a national census; and if he will make a statement. [50835]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested fall within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 14 February 2006:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what mechanisms are available to *(a)* hon. Members and *(b)* local authorities to dispute the findings of a national census. (50835)

There are a number of mechanisms available by which it is possible to dispute the findings of a national census. As you will know, Members of Parliament can ask questions in the House and receive a response from either the ONS Minister or from myself. Alternatively, they can write directly to me or to the Census Director, outlining their concerns. Local Authorities can also use these routes or may choose to channel their views through the Central and Local Government Information Partnership (CLIP) Census Sub Group. This group is one of a number of Census Advisory Groups which provide a forum for communication between the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the user community on requirements for information from, and the operational planning of, the Census in England and Wales.

The Census legislation does not provide any specific legal mechanisms for disputing the findings of a national census.

On a more general level, one of the components of our 'Statement of Compliance with the National Statistics Code of Practice I is an additional 'Statement on Customer Service and Complaints' (http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about_ns/cop/compliance.asp). The latter provides guidance to stakeholders on how to make a formal complaint about any aspect of our administration or service, and what they can do if they are unhappy about our response.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the accuracy of census figures for *(a)* Southend-on-Sea and *(b)* Essex in each of the last two censuses; and if he will make a statement. [50478]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 14 February 2006:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what assessment has been made of the accuracy of census figures for *(a)* Southend-on-Sea and *(b)* Essex in each of the last two censuses. (50478)

Following the 2001 Census for England and Wales, the Office for National Statistics undertook an extensive programme of work to investigate the reasons for the difference between the 2001 Census and the mid-year population estimates (MYEs) at both national and local levels. This research included a series of Local Authority studies carried out in 2004 which were designed to improve the MYEs in the areas that proved hardest to count in the Census. An extensive review was carried out for 32 local authorities, including Southend-on-Sea, to assess whether there was evidence that the population might have been under- or over-estimated. The results of these studies showed that better estimates of the population could be made in 15 areas and an adjustment was made to the MYEs in these areas. For the great majority of areas, including Southend-on-Sea, it was found that the 2001 Census-based population estimate remains the best estimate of the population. A full report on these Local Authority Studies can be found at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/LAStudy_FullReport.pdf

The detailed report for Southend-on-Sea can be found at:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/LAStudy_Southend_on_Sea.pdf

The Census 2001 Quality report for England and Wales provides information about all aspects of quality relating to the 2001 Census. It provides an overview of the quality issues and the studies and analyses that have been carried out to improve the quality of census data. The Quality report is held in the House of Commons Library or can be downloaded from www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/proj_qr.asp

Additional information pertaining to the quality of results from the 2001 Census for local areas can be found at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/stat_methods_qual.asp

Official assessments of the quality of the 1991 Census were published in the 1991 Census General Report (ISBN 0-11-691616-8) and User Guide 58 (Undercoverage in Great Britain). These were carried out at national level and no assessment of quality was made for individual Local Authorities. The General Report is held in the House of Commons Library and User Guide 58 may be obtained from Census Customer Services:

census.customerservices@ons.gov.uk

The 1991 Census Validation Survey assessed the coverage of the Census and the quality of the Census information recorded about those people who were successfully enumerated. The 1991 Census Validation Survey: Quality Report (ISBN 0-11-691688-5) and 1991 Census Validation Survey: Coverage Report (ISBN 0-11-691591-9) are held in the House of Commons Library.

Climate Change Levy

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much in climate change levy was paid by three-digit industry categories since it was introduced; and on what percentage of industry output the levy was charged. [50932]

John Healey: It is not possible to break down climate change levy receipts by three-digit industry categories or calculate the percentage of industry output covered. This is because HM Revenue and Customs collect the levy from energy suppliers, not individual businesses. However, estimates of climate change levy by industry sector are available in the Cambridge Econometrics report, "Modelling the Initial Effects of the Climate Change Levy" (at Appendix D), published at Budget 2005.

Council Tax

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden of 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 766W, on council tax, when the copies of the external guidance will be placed in the Library. [50961]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been assured by officials that the external guidance was deposited in the Library of the House on 12 January, the day I answered the question from the hon. Member for Meriden, and that further copies of the guidance were deposited on 26 January. The Library has confirmed that they have the guidance and that it is available to Members. I am arranging for copies if the guidance to be sent to the hon. Gentleman and the hon. Member for Meriden.

Credit Unions

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many credit unions have been established in each of the past 10 years; and what the total number of credit unions in England and Wales is. [51409]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The number of credit unions registered under the Credit Unions Act over the past 10 years is shown in the following table. This break down is based on all registrations in Great Britain as a whole (rather than for England and Wales only).

	Number
1996	36
1997	51
1998	47
1999	50
2000	39
2001	23
2002	31
2003	11
2004	16
2005	12
2006	[1]1

[1] to date

There were 561 authorised credit unions in Great Britain as at 10 February 2006.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of credit unions operating in Tamworth constituency. [51410]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Financial Services Authority (FSA) is responsible for registering credit unions under the Credit Unions Act 1979. It monitors and supervises the manner in which credit unions comply with the statutory and regulatory requirements and rules, taking whatever action it considers appropriate in the event of non-compliance.

One area of supervision is to ensure that the activities of a credit union are consistent with the objects laid down in their statute. However it is not a function of the FSA to investigate whether or not a credit union achieves its aims or whether it is effective in addressing the needs it was set up to meet. That is for the credit union and its members to assess.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was spent on entertainment by his Department in 2004–05; and how much of that sum was accounted for by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [50897]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Treasury's expenditure on official entertainment for 2004–05 was £213,000. Further analysis could be provided only at disproportionate cost. All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on the principles set out in "Government Accounting".

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff in his Department are paid on a performance-related basis. [50483]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: All HM Treasury employees are paid on a performance-related basis.

Earnings

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the change in average earnings in the *(a)* private sector, *(b)* public sector and *(c)* United Kingdom as a whole over the last 10 years; what impact this has had on the formulation of policy; and if he will make a statement. [51282]

Mr. Des Browne: The growth in the Public Sector Average Earnings Index (AEI) was 4.2 per cent. in the year to November 2005 (single month figure, for Great Britain, seasonally adjusted and excluding bonuses, Source: Office for National Statistics), compared to 3.7 per cent. in the Private Sector and 3.8 per cent. in the Whole Economy.

In the short-term the public and private sector AEI growth can diverge and they usually do, but in the long-term they tend to be very similar. The average annual growth between March 1997 (the earliest available data) and November 2005 was 4.0 per cent. in the public sector and 4.2 per cent. in the private sector (and 4.1 per cent. in the whole economy).

Government policy on public sector pay is devolved to individual Departments, while the Treasury maintains a monitoring and co-ordinating role. Government policy on public sector pay remains one of ensuring pay awards are justified, affordable and deliver value for money. Given that it accounts for around a quarter of all public spending, controlling pay is essential to delivering value for money and keeping inflationary pressures in check.

With this in mind, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has written to the public sector Pay Review Bodies emphasising the importance of basing its pay settlements on the achievement of the inflation target of 2 per cent. Furthermore, to achieve a more co-ordinated approach to pay across the public sector, the Government have now established a new single gateway to scrutinise all significant public sector pay proposals (as announced in the last pre-Budget report). Reporting to myself, the objective of the gateway (Public Sector Pay Committee) is to establish a common set of objectives for pay across government, extending and strengthening existing arrangements. Its aim is to ensure that all new pay structures are evidence-based, represent value for money and are financially sustainable over the long run, including taking account of the pensions implications of new pay decisions.

Employment Statistics

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many women were in paid *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time employment in each year since 1980. [50720]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 14 February 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about women in employment. (50720)

The attached table gives the number of women who were working in full-time or part-time employment, for the three months ending May each year from 1984 to 2005. Information is not available for earlier periods on a comparable basis.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics's Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to a margin of uncertainty.

Women in employment by whether working full or part-time—three months ending May each year—United Kingdom, seasonally adjusted

Thousand

	All in employment[1]	Full-time	Part-time
Spring 1992	11,500	6,478	5,022
Spring 1993	11,477	6,409	5,068
Spring 1994	11,548	6,395	5,153
Spring 1995	11,640	6,490	5,150
Spring 1996	11,838	6,529	5,309
Spring 1997	12,043	6,668	5,375
Spring 1998	12,143	6,727	5,416
Spring 1999	12,348	6,888	5,461
Spring 2000	12,526	6,979	5,547
Spring 2001	12,672	7,073	5,599
Spring 2002	12,815	7,195	5,620
Spring 2003	12,908	7,210	5,698
Spring 2004	13,046	7,292	5,754
Spring 2005	13,216	7,540	5,677

[1] Includes those women who did not state whether they worked full or part-time.

Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey

Women in employment by whether working full or part-time—United Kingdom, not seasonally adjusted

Thousand

Three months ending May each year	All in employment[1]	Full-time[2]	Part-time[2]
1984	9,935	5,551	4,371
1985	10,171	5,695	4,474
1986	10,368	5,833	4,527
1987	10,615	5,969	4,635
1988	11,021	6,259	4,756
1989	11,465	6,500	4,960
1990	11,613	6,647	4,965
1991	11,503	6,531	4,971
1992	11,497	6,448	5,042
1993	11,471	6,374	5,085
1994	11,537	6,359	5,169
1995	11,621	6,451	5,165
1996	11,809	6,484	5,322
1997	12,007	6,618	5,385
1998	12,103	6,676	5,424
1999	12,309	6,838	5,469
2000	12,492	6,932	5,558
2001	12,645	7,029	5,612
2002	12,790	7,152	5,634
2003	12,886	7,165	5,714
2004	13,025	7,243	5,774
2005	13,194	7,489	5,698

[1] Includes those women who did not state whether they worked full or part time.
[2] Full/part-time is based on respondents self assessment.

Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey

Financial Services Authority

Mr. Carswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what research he has undertaken on the relative cost effectiveness of the Financial Services Authority; [51190]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Financial Services Authority's scrutiny of the financial services industry; and if he will make a statement. [51191]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA) enables a review to take place of the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which the Financial Services Authority (FSA) has used its resources in discharging its functions. As announced in the pre-Budget report 2005, the Treasury aims to hold the first such review in the near future.

The effectiveness of some FSA functions was considered as part of the Treasury's Two-Year Review of FSMA, the outcome of which was announced on 2 December 2004. As part of this review the FSA improved its provision of advice and guidance, improved the accessibility of its handbook of rules, improved its cost-benefit analysis, and reduced consultation burdens.

Fuel Smuggling

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the extent of fuel smuggling into Northern Ireland in 2005. [51356]

Dawn Primarolo: The latest estimates of revenue loss in the hydrocarbon oils sector are published in 'Measuring Indirect Tax Loss-2005', which was published alongside the PBR. All estimates for Northern Ireland relate to total non-UK duty paid consumption rather than the illicit market. This is because it is not yet possible to split revenue losses between those resulting from the illicit market and those from legitimate cross-border shopping.

Gold Reserves

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 739W, on gold reserves, what interest has been earned from the funds reinvested from the sale of gold reserves; and if he will list the movement in currencies against sterling since that date. [51763]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The gold sales between July 1999 and March 2002 reflected a prudent decision to reduce over-exposure to a single asset in the net reserves portfolio. The gold sales reduced risk by around 30 percent. (as measured by value-at-risk) and are not expected to deliver a loss in return when measured over the medium to long-term; the appropriate time horizon for such a decision.

Government Accounts

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to what independent auditing the Whole of Government Accounts will be subject; and if he will make a statement. [50632]

Mr. Des Browne: Section 11 of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 provides for the Comptroller and Auditor General to audit Whole of Government Accounts.

Gross Domestic Product (Peterborough)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what level of gross domestic product was recorded in each of the last five years in *(a)* the Peterborough city council area and *(b)* Peterborough constituency. [51387]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 14 February 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in each of the last five years for the Peterborough City Council area and Peterborough constituency (51387).

Gross Value Added (GVA)[1] rather than GDP data exists for the Peterborough NUTS3• area, which is currently the lowest geographic level at which GVA is published. The latest published information is for 2003.

The estimates in the table below are based on the regional GVA estimates published in December 2005. These data are available on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk = 7359

[1] Information presented here is Gross Value Added (GVA) which is Gross Domestic Product (GDP) less taxes (plus subsidies) on products.

• Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics

Gross value added (GVA)[1] for Peterborough (NUTS3 area) at current basic prices 1999 to 2003

	£ million
1999	2367
2000	2448
2001	2572
2002	2733
2003	2921

HM Revenue and Customs

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria HM Revenue and Customs uses to determine whether an appeal against one of its decisions constitutes a test case. [50677]

Dawn Primarolo: All the circumstances of a case are taken into account, including whether there is a question of law in need of clarification which has wider relevance to taxpayers as a whole.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the evidence from HM Revenue and Customs to the Public Administration Committee on 20 October 2005, Question 81, on the tax credits system, when the part manual-part computerised method of suspending the automatic recovery of overpayments in tax credits will be introduced; and how this differs from the manual intervention introduced from November 2005. [45833]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 26 January 2006]:* The interim method of suspending disputed overpayments was introduced in November 2005. This interim method, is the part manual and part computerised method, as described in answer to Q81 of the Public Administration Committee on 20 October 2005. From November 2006 a fully computerised system is planned.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what criteria he uses to decide whether the HM Revenue and Customs logo may appear on a commercial product; and whether HM Revenue and Customs endorses any tax calculation products which do not include the full UK tax return. [47321]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* HMRC authorises suppliers to use its logo only in cases where there is clear benefit to the Department and its relationship with its customers.

PAYE products produced by a third party can carry the following message if they have achieved HMRC's Payroll Standards: "Tested and meets HM Revenue & Customs Payroll Standard". This message does not include the HMRC logo.

In addition, although HMRC does not endorse any of these products, the Self Assessment Filing Partner logo was developed for those software vendors who entered into an agreement with HMRC to jointly promote their SA filing online services.

Income Tax

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the amount of tax which would be raised by introducing a new 49 per cent. tax band for those with incomes over *(a)* £100,000 per annum, *(b)* £125,000 per annum, *(c)* £150,000 per annum and *(d)* £200,000 per annum; and if he will make a statement. [50450]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is in the following table.

Revenue yields from introducing a new 49 per cent. band in 2005–06

Income level at which the new 49 per cent. is introduced (£)	*Yield (£ billion)*
100,000	3.1
125,000	2.6
150,000	2.1
200,000	1.7

These estimates assume tax changes to earned income and savings only—the higher rate income tax on dividends remains at 32.5 per cent.

The income tax information is based upon the 2003–04 Survey of Personal Incomes and 2005 pre-Budget assumptions.

The figures exclude any estimate of behavioural response to the tax change, which could be significant given the scale of the changes.

Interpal

Richard Burden: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what representations he has received from the Israeli embassy in relation to the Interpal charity in the last six months; what meetings have been held between embassy officials and Ministers from his Department on the subject; and what was discussed at those meetings; [51308]

(2) what representations he has received from representatives of the Interpal charity in the last six months; what response he has made to those representations; and if Ministers from his Department will meet representatives of Interpal to discuss their concerns. [51344]

Mr. Des Browne: HM Treasury does not comment on the details of ministerial meetings. The Treasury receives numerous representations from a range of organisations in the course of Treasury business. Interpal is one such organisation, but it would be inappropriate to comment on the details of any one particular case.

Lisbon Agenda

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will assess British progress in fulfilling the criteria of the Lisbon Agenda; when he expects the UK to have fulfilled those criteria; and if he will make a statement. [50218]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: At the 2005 Spring European Council, European leaders agreed to re-launch the Lisbon Strategy with a renewed emphasis on Growth and Jobs. Since 2001, average GDP growth has been 2.3 per cent. in the UK compared to just 1.4 per cent. in the euro area. The UK is also one of just three member states that meet all three Lisbon employment targets. And as set out in the Chancellor's Pamphlet "Global Europe: Full Employment Europe" (October 2005), the UK has an ongoing economic reform agenda for Europe.

National Insurance

Paul Flynn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much greater the income of the National Insurance Fund would have been *(a)* in each year from 2003–04 to 2006–07 and *(b)* in total for that period if the additional National Health Service allocation under the National Insurance Contributions Act 2002 in respect of employers' contributions had been a percentage of earnings over the secondary threshold on which contributions are payable instead of a percentage of total earnings; and if he will take steps to ensure that funds to the total value of the additional income which would have been so raised is remitted to the Fund. [50288]

Dawn Primarolo: The NHS allocation is calculated in accordance with Section 162 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992. The National Insurance Fund provides funds to pay state retirement pensions and other contributory benefits and is currently in surplus.

There is no question of the National Insurance Fund being left in a position where commitments to pensioners and other benefit claimants cannot be met. However, the information requested is provided in the following table:

Extra Income to the National Insurance Fund if Increased NHS Allocation from NICs Act 2002 Applied to Earnings over Secondary Threshold Only

	£ million
2003–04	940
2004–05	970
2005–06	1,010
2006–07	1,050
Total	3,970

Notes:

1. The figures provided are for Great Britain accruals and are in cash (i.e. not constant prices) terms.
2. The figures provided are estimates from the model used to forecast National Insurance contributions and are consistent with PBR2005 projections.
3. All figures have been rounded to the nearest £10 million.

Mr. Byers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many people who are self-employed and working abroad paid the voluntary class 2 national insurance contribution in each of the last 10 years; [51532]

(2) how many people living abroad have changed their national insurance contributions from class 3 to class 2 in each of the last 10 years. [51533]

Dawn Primarolo: The following table shows how many people paid class 2 or 3 contributions whilst abroad from 1997–98 onwards. Similar information is not available for earlier years. Information on the numbers that are paying class 2 and who are in employment abroad or who have changed from paying class 3 to paying class 2 contributions, is not readily available. Such information could only be provided at a disproportionate cost.

	Number of individuals with voluntary class 2 contributions from abroad	*Number of individuals with voluntary class 3 contributions from abroad*	*All*
2003–04	16,000	37,000	53,000
2002–03	13,000	39,000	52,000
2001–02	10,000	36,000	46,000
2000–01	6,000	36,000	42,000
1999–2000	5,000	33,000	38,000
1998–99	4,000	28,000	32,000
1997–98	2,000	21,000	23,000

Population

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his estimate is of the current population of *(a)* each Essex borough and *(b)* each ward in Southend West constituency based on (i) the 2001 Census, (ii) electoral rolls and (iii) health service users; and what projections he has made for the next five years. [50479]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 14 February 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your question regarding the current population of *(a)* each Essex borough and *(b)* each ward in Southend West constituency based on (i) the 2001 Census, (ii) electoral rolls, and (iii) health service users; and what projections have been made for the next five years. (50479)

The tables attached provide the information you have requested. Data for Essex local authorities, including the former Essex authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock, are shown in Table 1 and Table 2. Data for wards in Southend West are shown in table 3.

ONS publishes annual mid-year population estimates. The latest estimates are for mid-2004 and are given in Table 1. These mid-year population estimates are calculated using a robust methodology and are the best estimates of the resident population in an area. They are based on aged-on 2001 Census data adjusted for births, deaths, and net migration. Further information on the methodology can be found at:

www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk = 575.

Population projections for each local authority in Essex, for mid-2005 to mid-2010, are also given in Table 1. These projections are based on the mid-2003 population estimates and are the latest population projections available. They assume that trends in fertility, mortality and migration at the time of the mid-2003 population estimate will continue into the future.

Electoral rolls provide counts of the number of people registered to vote. The latest available data, on the local/European electorate and the Parliamentary electorate, for local authorities in Essex can be found in the Table 2. These data are for 1 December 2004. It should be noted that the number of people eligible to vote is not the same as the resident population aged 18 and over. There are numerous reasons for this. For example not everyone who is usually resident is entitled to vote (foreign citizens from outside of the EU and Commonwealth, prisoners, etc. are not eligible), some people do not register to vote and people who have more than one address may register in more than one place. Further, there is inevitably some double counting of the registered electorate as electoral registration officers vary in how quickly they remove people from the registers after they have moved away from an area or after they have died. These factors have a differential impact from area to area.

The number of people registered with a GP, living in each local authority in Essex, in July 2004, can also be found in the Table 2. It should also be noted that patient register counts differ from estimates of the usually resident population for a number of reasons.

Patient registers include people who are in the country for at least three months, whereas population estimates are based on a usual residence definition requiring a stay of 12 months or more. The patient registers exclude individuals who are ineligible to be registered with a GP. People may be on a patient register after having left the country and not deregistered with their GP; similarly people may have moved to another area and not re-registered. Some patients may have more than one NHS number e.g. they may have been issued a temporary number for a short period. Again, these factors have a differential impact from place to place.

Ward data are shown in Table 3; the points set out above also apply to wards. However, there are some further points to note for wards.

The most recent population estimates for wards are for mid-2002. The closest available geography to current electoral wards, for which population estimates are available, is Census Area Statistics (CAS) wards. This geography was created for outputs from the 2001 Census and is based mainly on 2003 electoral wards. The CAS ward level population estimates have been published with the status of "experimental statistics". Therefore, the estimates, and figures derived from them, should be treated with some care. The margin of confidence for population estimates is proportionately larger at ward level than at local authority level.

The ONS does not produce projections of population at ward level.

Table 3 contains CAS ward electorate counts for December 2002 and 2004 as well as patient register figures for July 2002 and July 2004. The 2002 figures are given for comparison with population estimates and 2004 are the latest available data.

Finally, the local government electorate is definitionally closer to the population estimates, however these data are not available at ward level. Hence, the Parliamentary electorate is shown.

Table 1: Mid-2004 population estimates and mid-2005 to mid-2010 population projections (2003-based)

Thousand

	Population estimate	*Population projections*[1]					
	Mid-2004	*Mid-2005*	*Mid-2006*	*Mid-2007*	*Mid-2008*	*Mid-2009*	*Mid-2010*
Southend-on-Sea	159.6	161.0	161.4	161.8	162.3	162.8	163.4
Thurrock	145.7	147.6	148.8	150.0	151.1	152.3	153.5
Basildon	166.5	166.9	167.2	167.5	167.8	168.2	168.6
Braintree	136.2	138.7	140.6	142.4	144.1	145.8	147.5
Brentwood	70.2	69.4	69.3	69.2	69.2	69.1	69.1
Castle Point	86.8	87.6	87.9	88.2	88.4	88.7	89.0
Chelmsford	159.8	159.2	159.6	159.9	160.4	160.8	161.2
Colchester	160.7	160.3	161.1	161.9	162.7	163.5	164.3
Epping Forest	121.3	121.8	122.1	122.4	122.7	123.1	123.5
Harlow	77.5	77.9	77.9	78.0	78.1	78.2	78.3
Maldon	60.3	61.5	62.1	62.8	63.5	64.1	64.8
Rochford	79.1	80.0	80.5	81.0	81.5	82.0	82.4
Tendring	141.5	143.7	145.2	146.6	148.1	149.6	151.0
Uttlesford	70.4	70.7	71.0	71.3	71.7	72.0	72.3

[1] The population projections shown in this table are taken from the 2003-based subnational population projections, the latest set of projections currently available. Therefore they may not be consistent with the 2004 mid year estimate presented in the first column.

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Table 2: Electoral register counts (December 2004) and patient register counts (July 2004)

	Electors[1]	*Parliamentary electors*[2]	*Patient register*
Southend-on-Sea	125,485	124,491	176,781
Thurrock	107,264	106,736	148,941
Basildon	127,487	126,889	179,677
Braintree	105,204	104,658	141,950
Brentwood	53,277	52,838	75,669
Castle Point	69,378	69,188	92,654
Chelmsford	126,748	125,948	167,686
Colchester	123,060	121,535	167,076

Table 2: Electoral register counts (December 2004) and patient register counts (July 2004)

	Electors[1]	Parliamentary electors[2]	Patient register
Epping Forest	92,249	91,429	127,977
Harlow	55,609	55,172	84,296
Maldon	46,111	45,931	63,449
Rochford	63,384	63,212	83,699
Tend ring	109,242	108,839	142,897
Uttlesford	54,873	54,323	74,976
Southend West Constituents	65,523	65,070	91,494

[1] Local government electors are those people who are entitled to vote in local elections and who meet the residence qualification. These include Peers and European citizens but exclude overseas voters.
[2] Parliamentary electors are those people who are entitled to vote in parliamentary elections at Westminster and who meet the residence qualification. Those include overseas voters but exclude Peers and European citizens.
Source:
Office for National Statistics.

Table 3: CAS wards in Southend West parliamentary constituency: population estimates, 2001 census, electorate counts, and patient register counts

Ward code	Ward name	Population Estimate Mid-2002	Electorate December 2002	Electorate December 2004	Patient Register July 2002	Patient Register July 2004
00KFMP	Belfairs	8,871	7,315	7,373	9,426	9,568
00KFMQ	Blenheim Park	10,035	7,565	7,684	10,805	10,816
00KFMR	Chalkwell	9,287	7,221	7,368	10,387	10,356
00KFMS	Eastwood Park	9,343	7,555	7,663	9,787	9,929
00KFMU	Leigh	9,004	6,998	7,120	9,727	9,794
00KFMX	Prittlewell[1]	9,575	7,617	7,521	10,267	10,429
00KFMY	St Laurence	9,678	7,468	7,597	10,139	10,154
00KFNE	Westborough	10,214	6,873	7,102	11,014	11,113
00KFNF	West Leigh	8,668	6,886	6,931	9,210	9,335

[1] This ward also falls within Rochford and Southend East Parliamentary Constituency. Data for the whole ward are shown, as it is not possible to split this data for this ward into the two constituencies.
Notes:
1. The mid-2002 ward population estimates are consistent with the published mid-2002 local authority estimates (September 2004 revisions).
2. Whilst the ward population estimates are produced down to unit level, it is not implied that the estimates are accurate to this level of detail.
3. The electorate counts are taken from the statutory RPF 29 returns.
Source:
Office for National Statistics

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the accuracy of the most recent population figures provided by the Office for National Statistics for the City of Peterborough. [51394]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 14 February 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your question about what assessment of the accuracy of the population figures provided by the Office for National Statistics has made in relation to Peterborough. (51394)

Population estimates are calculated using an internationally respected methodology. Further information can be found in the detailed methodology guide 'Making a population estimate in England and Wales'. This is published here: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk = 575

It is becoming increasingly difficult to estimate the size of the population because of changes in society, which include increased mobility and different living arrangements. The decennial Census provides a benchmark against which national and sub-national population estimates can be assessed. Substantial work has been done on the difference between mid-year population estimates and the 2001 Census. This work is summarised in the final report of the 2004 Local Authority Population Studies, which can be found here: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/LAStudy_FullReport.pdf

These studies confirmed that the 2001 Census had worked well in most areas, including Peterborough, but there were a few cases where the adjustment for under-enumeration was not able to adjust sufficiently for exceptional circumstances. This work, together with revised international migration estimates, accounted for a large proportion of the initial 1.1 million difference between mid year estimates and the Census; reducing the difference to a little over 0.2 million.

In addition, extensive annual quality assurance is undertaken in order to ensure the accuracy of the annual mid-year estimates. Quality assurance starts with detailed checking of the source data used in the components of change (birth, deaths, etc.). Procedures are then in place to ensure that these data sources are correctly processed when deriving the estimates. The calculated national and sub-national estimates, for all 376 local authorities in England and Wales, are then subject to a further set of quality assurance procedures before they are published. These procedures include reviews of sex ratios and age profiles, comparisons of change over time, and comparisons of fertility and mortality rates. Substantial effort has already been undertaken, in recent years, to improve the quality assurance of population estimates.

ONS is also now investing substantially in a project to Improve Migration and Population Statistics (IMPS). (More information on this project can be found at: www.statistics.gov.uk/IMPS). The key aims of this project are to reduce the size of the difference between the 2011 Census results and the mid-year estimates and to better understand any difference that does remain. As part of

this project, we are developing a data comparator tool to enable us to compare the annual mid-year estimates against a range of administrative sources. This work is ongoing and the results will inform our understanding of the accuracy of the mid-year population estimates. The tool was trialled in the mid-2004 population estimates, which were published in August 2005.

Another strand of the IMPS project is a review of the quality assurance procedures that are currently in place for population estimates. One of the aims of this review is to assess what improvements can be made to existing procedures, and determine whether additional quality assurance is required.

ONS also produces population projections for each local authority area. The methodology used in the production of the subnational population projections is an established and recognised methodology. Subnational population projections undergo extensive quality assurance before publication. In addition, local authorities and health authorities are consulted on the first year of migration assumptions used as the baseline trend for migration.

Population estimates and projections are supplied to the ODPM. I understand that ODPM make checks to ensure that the data as provided by the ONS have been correctly entered into their calculations for allocating Formula Grant to local authorities. Otherwise, they do not make any assessment of accuracy of the data supplied, as this responsibility lies with the ONS.

Mr. Burrowes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the accuracy of the population figures provided by the Office for National Statistics in relation to Enfield. [50864]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 14 February 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your question about what assessment of the accuracy of the population figures provided by the Office for National Statistics has made in relation to Enfield. (50864)

Population estimates are calculated using an internationally respected methodology. Further information can be found in the detailed methodology guide 'Making a population estimate in England and Wales'. This is published here: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Productasp?vlnk=575

It is becoming increasingly difficult to estimate the size of the population because of changes in society, which include increased mobility and different living arrangements. The decennial Census provides a benchmark against which national and sub-national population estimates can be assessed. Substantial work has been done on the difference between mid-year population estimates and the 2001 Census. This work is summarised in the final report of the 2004 Local Authority Population Studies, which can be found here:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/LAStudy_FullReport.pdf

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Population estimates and projections are supplied to the ODPM. I understand that ODPM make checks to ensure that the data as provided by the ONS have been correctly entered into their calculations for allocating Formula Grant to local authorities. Otherwise, they do not make any assessment of accuracy of the data supplied, as this responsibility lies with the ONS.

Post Office Card Account (West Lancashire)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in West Lancashire use a Post Office Card Account to access child benefit. [51123]

Dawn Primarolo: Approximately 950 recipients in the parliamentary constituency of West Lancashire used a Post Office Card Account to access child benefit in November 2005.

Press Coverage

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 he has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* his Department; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47083]

Mr. Des Browne: None.

Public Contracts

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will introduce regulations to ensure that no Government department or public body will be able to award public contracts to any organisation or firm without checking that it has paid the taxes due to HM Treasury. [50570]

John Healey: Decisions on awarding public contracts are for contracting authorities to make consistent with their legal obligations and responsibility for achieving value for money.

The Public Contracts Regulations 2006, which implement the EU Public Procurement Directive, permit contracting authorities to exclude from a public procurement, any candidate who has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of taxes in any part of the United Kingdom. The Regulations also include a new provision requiring the mandatory exclusion of companies who have been convicted of fraud and corruption offences including offences relating to cheating the Revenue, defrauding the Customs and taxation in the European Community.

Public Information

Mr. Gale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was spent on the Department's public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [48952]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Treasury's only spending on public relations and information services in the financial years 2002–03, 2003–04 and 2004–05 has been the costs of its Press Office and the costs of its main external website. The totals for the three years are 2002–03 £1,234,000; 2003–04 £1,268,000; and 2004–05 £1,167,000. Information in respect of earlier years could be provided only at disproportionate cost due to a change in accounting system in 2002–03.

Self-assessment Awareness Campaign

Anne Milton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1208W, on the self-assessment awareness campaign, what the results of the value for money audit carried out by Billetts have been to date. [50603]

Dawn Primarolo: The conclusion of the Billetts value for money audit is that costs were better than their industry standard measure—and on a par with industry standard in terms of the quality of airtime bought. In conjunction with a cheaper channel mix this represents very good value for money.

Student Loans

Tim Farron: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what mechanisms are in place for HM Revenue and Customs to inform the Student Loans Company when graduates' income exceeds the threshold above which loans must be repaid. [50838]

Dawn Primarolo: The Student Loan Company is sent details of student loan deductions taken from the annual return that the employer makes to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) for each employee. HMRC notifies the employer that they should start making student loan deductions where the employee's earnings exceed the annual threshold.

Syngenta

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials last met representatives of Syngenta. [50554]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: To the best of my knowledge, no meetings have taken place between the Chancellor or Treasury officials and representatives of Syngenta for at least the last three years.

Tax Credits

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many letters the Office of the Paymaster General has received from hon. Members concerning problems with tax credits since 2003; and how many were replied to within *(a)* one, *(b)* two, *(c)* three, *(d)* four, *(e)* five and *(f)* six months or over. [23684]

Dawn Primarolo: I very much regret the delay in replying to the right hon. Member, the more so since it is not possible to provide a breakdown of correspondence by subject matter except at disproportionate cost. TCO aims to deal with 80 per cent. of tax credits correspondence within 15 working days and 95 per cent. of correspondence within 40 working days.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what estimate has been made of the extent of involvement of organised crime in the tax credit system in Northern Ireland since its introduction; [44586]

(2) how many applications for tax credits have been halted in Northern Ireland in each month since their introduction due to suspicion that organised criminals have tried to obtain tax credits; [44587]

(3) how many staff within HM Revenue and Customs in Northern Ireland have been tasked with investigating *(a)* fraud and *(b)* other criminal activity by organised gangs in each of the last three years, broken down by grade; and if he will make a statement; [44588]

(4) how many staff within HM Revenue and Customs in Northern Ireland have been tasked with investigating *(a)* fraud and *(b)* other criminal activity by organised gangs in each of the last three years, broken down by grade; and if he will make a statement. [48712]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 20 January 2006]*: I refer the hon. Lady to the statements made in the House on 18 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1358W and 23 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1736W.

To disclose detailed information about the deployment of staff investigating fraud and other criminal activity would prejudice the prevention, investigation and detection of crime or the prosecution of offenders.

Tax Credits

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost of changing the tax credits income increase disregard from £2,500 to £25,000. [46043]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to my response to the hon. Member for Ludlow (Mr. Dunne) on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2246W.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will establish a fully staffed tax credits office in Belfast. [47644]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 2 February 2006]*: The Tax Credit Office is located in three cities; Belfast, Liverpool and Preston. These offices deal with aspects of tax credit claims made by claimants from across the UK.

Mr. Gale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many appeals against repayments of tax credits were outstanding at 1 February 2006. [50216]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 13 February 2006]*: At 31 January 2006, around 44,000 disputed overpayments were awaiting a decision.

Mr. Gale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total value was of outstanding repayments of tax credits at 1st February 2006. [50217]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 13 February 2006]*: The information is not available in the format requested.

Information on the value of 2003–04 overpayments, the amount of 2003–04 overpayments that was recovered in 2004–05 and the expected recovery of 2003–04 overpayments in 2005–06, 2006–07, 2007–08 and 2008–09 were published in part two of the 'Comptroller and Auditor General's Standard Report on the Accounts of the Inland Revenue 2004–05'.

This can be found on the HMRC website at:
http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/about/ir-report2005.pdf

Information on the levels of overpayments incurred by 2004–05 awards will be published in May 2006.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the technical issues affecting the tax credit system; on what date each was *(a)* identified and *(b)* resolved; and what the cost of rectification of each was. [50600]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not available in the format requested.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit payments were made to bank accounts outside the UK in each of the last 12 months. [51457]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer to the reply given to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws)on 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 556W.

Tax Credits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the proposal announced in the pre-Budget report 2005 to double the number of security checks in the tax credit system will be implemented; and at what stages of a tax credit claim *(a)* security checks will be increased and *(b)* new security checks will be introduced. [45700]

Dawn Primarolo: HMRC have already increased the number of checks carried out on the highest risk claims including those involving suspect payments and those where an undeclared partner is suspected to be living with the claimant. They have also been investigating links between claimants' failure to confirm their entitlement and suspected fraud.

In addition, from April the number of checks being carried out before a claim goes into payment will be more than doubled.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what changes there have been in the requirements for *(a)* homes and *(b)* businesses to provide information to the Valuation Office Agency since May 1997; and what changes there have been to the penalties for non-compliance with these requirements in each category in this period. [49777]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is as follows:

(a) For council tax purposes there has been no change to the requirements to provide information to the VOA since May 1997. Neither have there been changes to the penalties for non-compliance.

(b) There have been no changes in the requirements for businesses to provide information to the Valuation Office Agency. However, the penalties for non-compliance changed when the Local Government Act 2003 came into effect on 18 September 2003. This Act introduced liability to a civil penalty where information is not supplied within 56 days, allowing a series of escalating financial penalties for continued non-compliance up to a maximum of the rateable value of the property concerned or £500, whichever is the greater. Prior to 18 September 2003, a person who failed to supply information required by a valuation officer within 21 days was liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* his Ministers have had with Ministers from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister about (i) the operation of and (ii) departmental responsibility for the Valuation Office Agency. [50423]

Dawn Primarolo: Treasury Ministers and officials discuss a wide range of issues with their colleagues in ODPM and other departments. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 529W, on the Valuation Office Agency, whether the Valuation Office Agency *(a)* is permitted and *(b)* has access to data held by HM Revenue and Customs to facilitate or assist in the levying, assessment and valuation of properties for council tax or business rates. [50909]

Dawn Primarolo: The Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005 provides that information acquired by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in connection with a function may be used by them in connection with any other function. As the Valuation Office is an executive Agency of HMRC, and has been since 30 September 1991, it is permitted to access data held by HMRC.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden of 30 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 529W, on the Valuation Office Agency, whether HM Revenues and Customs has access to data held by the Valuation Office Agency for the purposes of charging taxes to individuals. [50959]

Dawn Primarolo: The Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005 provides for information acquired by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in connection with one function to be used in connection with any other function of HMRC.

As the Valuation Office is an executive agency of HMRC, and has been since 30 September 1991, the use of information and data collected for council tax valuation purposes can be used in connection with any other function of HMRC including the charging of taxes on individuals.

Working Tax Credit

Danny Alexander: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will estimate the cost of amending the qualifying conditions for working tax credit to include hours spent as a carer in the same category as hours spent in employment. [47485]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 31 January 2006]*: The information is not available.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Parliamentary Information Management System

Mr. Pickles: To ask the hon. Member for North Devon, representing the House of Commons Commission pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) of 31 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 738W, on the Parliamentary Information Management System (PIMS), whether *(a)* the business case has been completed and *(b)* a decision has been taken on making the PIMS search engine available to the public on the parliamentary internet site. [50953]

Nick Harvey: The business case for the redesign of the parliamentary internet has been written. It was considered by the Finance and Services Committee on 9 February, and will receive further consideration when the Committee next meets on 9 March. The redesign is not dependent on and does not replace the PIMS implementation. It does seek to build on the knowledge and systems generated by that project where these will provide the best value for money for Parliament. Subject to the necessary approvals, detailed plans will be drawn up for the search facilities that will be available to the public on the parliamentary internet site.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Air Ambulance Service

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether there are plans to introduce an air ambulance service in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [51048]

Mr. Woodward: There are no plans to introduce an air ambulance in Northern Ireland. A helicopter emergency medical service (HEMS) feasibility study published in 2004, which was commissioned by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Republic of Ireland's Department of Health and Children, concluded that, other than for inter-hospital transfers, there was no clear advantage in helicopter emergency medical services.

The priority for DHSSPS is to ensure that the Northern Ireland ambulance service uses its resources to achieve improved response times to life threatening calls, both in urban and in more remote and isolated rural communities. In this context, the available evidence suggests that an air ambulance would not constitute the most effective use of resources, compared with other approaches. DHSSPS is working closely with the Northern Ireland ambulance service and the four Health and Social Services Boards to improve ambulance services in terms of speed and appropriateness of response and clinical quality.

Ambulance Service

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many emergency calls were received by the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service in each service district in each year since 2000; how many of these have later been categorised as hoax calls; and what estimate has been made of the cost to the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service of hoax calls during this period. [51052]

Mr. Woodward: The following data for emergency and hoax calls was provided by the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS):

NIAS service district	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Eastern Division						
Emergency Calls	34,489	37,093	40,212	40,530	41,741	42,950
Hoaxes	643	1,304	1,433	1,264	1,392	1,423
Northern Division						
Emergency Calls	15,765	15,441	17,104	17,964	18,647	19,723
Hoaxes	270	582	736	729	712	586
Southern Division						
Emergency Calls	8,993	8,903	10,065	10,551	11,695	12,948
Hoaxes	332	550	670	527	604	512
Western Division						
Emergency Calls	8,826	9,114	10,118	10,352	10,741	11,753
Hoaxes	309	642	563	656	728	470

NIAS estimates that the cost of despatching an A&E ambulance to a hoax call is around £150 at current prices.

Benefit Claimants

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what change there has been in the numbers of unemployed benefit claimants in the past 12 months in each of Northern Ireland's constituencies. [51358]

Angela E. Smith: Unemployment levels from the claimant count in each of the Northern Ireland parliamentary constituencies at December 2004 and December 2005, and the change in levels, are provided in the following table.

Parliamentary constituency	*December 2004*	*December 2005*	*Change in levels December 2004-December 2005*
Belfast East	1,040	993	-47
Belfast North	1,952	2,108	156
Belfast South	1,387	1,355	-32
Belfast West	3,066	2,900	-166
East Antrim	1,502	1,362	-140
East Londonderry	1,983	1,685	-298
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	1,459	1,329	-130
Foyle	3,401	3,368	-33
Lagan Valley	839	872	33
Mid Ulster	788	845	57
Newry and Armagh	1,716	1,388	-328
North Antrim	1,293	1,368	75
North Down	1,001	1,020	19
South Antrim	908	1,044	136
South Down	1,382	1,312	-70
Strangford	1,203	1,143	-60
Upper Bann	1,096	1,193	97
West Tyrone	1,828	1,914	86

Decommissioning

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what amount of arms has been decommissioned by Loyalist paramilitaries in each of the last five years. [50499]

Mr. Woodward: In December 1998, the LVF decommissioned what the IICD described as a "small but significant" quantity of arms. Since then, the IICD has not reported any decommissioning by Loyalist groups.

Employment (East Londonderry)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change in numbers of *(a)* males and *(b)* females in part-time employment in East Londonderry constituency has been in each of the last five years. [51327]

Angela E. Smith: Estimates of the number of employee jobs below Northern Ireland level are only available from the Census of Employment on a biennial basis and the most up to date figures relate to September 2003. Estimates of the number of part-time e in the East Londonderry parliamentary constituency area for September 1999, September 2001 and September 2003 can be so presents the change in the number of male and female part-time employee jobs between each census.

Number of part-time employee jobs split by male and female in the East Londonderry parliamentary constituency area for September 1999, September 2001 and September 2003 and the change between censuses

	(a) Male part-time employee jobs	*(b) Female part-time employee jobs*
September 1999	2,118	7,008
September 2001	2,263	7,494
September 2003	2,501	8,002

Number of part-time employee jobs split by male and female in the East Londonderry parliamentary constituency area for September 1999, September 2001 and September 2003 and the change between censuses

	(a) Male part-time employee jobs	*(b) Female part-time employee jobs*
Change: September 1999-September 2001	145	486
Change: September 2001-September 2003	238	508

Source:

Census of Employment, DETI

Food Safety Standards

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many prosecutions there were in 2005 of establishments in Northern Ireland serving hot food in contravention of food safety standards. [51355]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested for the calendar year of 2005 is not yet available.

The Food Standards Agency collects data on district council enforcement activities in relation to food hygiene on a financial yearly basis. The most recent available data relates to the period 1 April 2004–31 March 2005.

During this period there were 10 restaurants and other catering premises in Northern Ireland prosecuted by district councils for food hygiene offences.

District council returns for the period 1 April 2005–31 March 2006 are required to be submitted to the Food Standards Agency by 31 May 2006. Collated data on this period will be available after this date.

Olympic Games

Dr. Alasdair McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much financial support the Government will be providing for the special Olympics Ireland games taking place in Belfast in 2006. [46546]

Mr. Hanson: Government are considering financial support to the special Olympic Ireland games taking place in Belfast in 2006 and discussions with the organisers about the details are continuing. A formal announcement will be issued on completion.

School Crossing Patrol Services

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* primary schools in Northern Ireland and *(b)* children attending them were affected by the decisions of education and library boards to withdraw school crossing patrol services within the past 12 months. [51325]

Angela E. Smith: Education and Library Boards have withdrawn school crossing patrols at 80 primary schools across Northern Ireland in the last 12 months. The decision to withdraw patrols is one that is taken very carefully, and only in cases where a review using the agreed local authority road safety officers' association guidelines has determined that underlying hazards have either declined significantly, or disappeared completely.

It is not possible to provide information regarding the number of pupils affected by the withdrawal of the crossing patrols as not every pupil attending the schools will have been affected by the change. Some schools have more than one crossing patrol point, or indeed more than one entrance; in other cases, the crossing patrol was not located at the school gates. 44 of the patrols removed were lunchtime patrols which few pupils used.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Asylum Appeals

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps the Government are taking to reduce the time appellants wait for a hearing in the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal. [51384]

Bridget Prentice: The commencement of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) on 4 April 2005, together with changes to the lodging arrangements for asylum appeals, has had a significant impact on the time between the lodging of an asylum appeal and the service of the Immigration Judge's decision.

Information for the period April to September 2005, indicates that asylum appeals, arising from a decision served on or after 4 April 2005, took on average 6 weeks from receipt of the appeal by the AIT to a decision by an Immigration Judge. This does not include the 28 days provided for the Home Office to serve the decision on the appellant and their representative in accordance with procedure rules.

Additionally, the AIT is currently working closely with UKvisas and the Home Office to introduce further improvements to the entry clearance appeals process aiming to reduce the overall time an appellant waits from first application to their appeal being heard by an average of seven weeks.

Departmental Recruitment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many job advertisements were placed by her Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in print newspapers and magazines and *(c)* on a recruitment website in each year since 1997; and at what (i) total and (ii) average cost in each case. [50748]

Ms Harman: My Department does not hold this information centrally and it is, therefore, not possible to collate this without incurring disproportionate costs.

The Department ensures that job vacancies are advertised in a wide range of publications, including those targeted at minority communities where it is appropriate. Details of vacancies are placed on the Civil Service Recruitment Website, which was launched in December 2002 as the site of first choice for central Government recruitment. There is no advertising cost associated with this facility.

Electoral Registration

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment her Department has made of the accuracy of the electoral register. [43094]

Ms Harman: The joint Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Constitutional Affairs Select Committee's March 2005 report "Electoral Registration" included evidence on the accuracy of the electoral register.

In December 2005, my Department made an assessment of electoral registration rates in London which estimated that some 550,000 eligible adults in London were not registered to vote.

This assessment followed Electoral Commission's report "Understanding Electoral Registration", published in September 2005, which estimated that around 3.5 million people in England and Wales were eligible to be on the register at their main residence but were missing from it in 2000.

My Department is currently working with a number of partners to promote awareness of electoral registration in London where the issue of under-registration is most acute. The Department also considers the issue of the accuracy of electoral registers in relation to the development of policies to prevent and detect electoral fraud.

Inquests (Oxfordshire)

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many inquests on military fatalities are outstanding at Oxfordshire's coroner's court. [50572]

Ms Harman: The Oxfordshire coroner has informed me that of the 103 military and other fatalities where bodies have been returned from Iraq since 2003, 30

inquests have been concluded, two cases have been transferred to other coroners, 11 inquests are due to be concluded within the next few weeks and in 60 cases a date for the inquest is yet to be fixed.

Magistrates Courts

Mr. David: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what account is taken of a tenderer's previous performance in the evaluation of tenders for provision of enforcement services to magistrates' courts. [51656]

Ms Harman: Previous performance within similar contracts was taken account of at appropriate stages of the procurement exercise for enforcement services for HMCS. In particular it was a factor in the "pre-qualification stage" in the evaluation process. At this stage those wishing to tender were evaluated against a number of factors to assess that they were a suitable and viable company, which could meet the needs of the specified requirement, and could therefore be invited to tender.

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many parliamentary questions tabled by in the last 12 months for answer by her on a named day *(a)* were transferred and *(b)* received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named. [49886]

Bridget Prentice: My Department aims to ensure that Members receive a substantive response to their named day question on the named day. From January 2005 to December 2005, my Department received 256 named day parliamentary questions of which 15 were transferred, 177 received a substantive answer on the day named and 64 were answered after the day named.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by her in the last 12 months have been answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* between 14 and 28 days, *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if she will make a statement. [49907]

Bridget Prentice: My Department endeavours to answer ordinary written questions within a working week of being tabled. From January 2005 to December 2005, my Department received 1,141 parliamentary questions of which *(a)* 1,104 were answered within 14 days *(b)* 37 were answered between 14 and 28 days *(c)* none between 28 days and two months and *(d)* none in excess of two months after the date of tabling.

Vandalism

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will list the acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of her Department's buildings in the last 12 months. [49508]

Ms Harman: For DCA Headquarters buildings:

(a) one internal incident, when a vending machine was dislodged from a wall; and

(b) one external incident, when an individual threw paint against the entrance.

For the courts estate, DCA's courts and tribunals reported a total of 18 incidents of damage to property in the period from 1 January to 31 March 2005:

(a) internal incidents at: Llanelli county court (damage to furniture); Southwark Crown court (twice flooded toilets); Blackfriars Crown (damage to internal door); Birkenhead county court (sign ripped down); Swindon combined court (cell door damaged); and

(b) external damage at Carmarthen county court (windows broken twice); Romford county court (crest removed from front); Chelmsford county court (car park barrier arm damaged); and eight incidents involving graffiti and minor damage at Loughborough Immigration Appellate Authority.

Since April 2005, when Her Majesty's Courts Service was formed, it has had 85 reported acts of damage to property in the period to 31 December 2005. Detail is held locally, including the nature of the damage or cause, and whether incidents were internal or external. Obtaining such an analysis would involve disproportionate cost.

SCOTLAND

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the items valued at over £100 that have been reported as stolen from Scotland Office buildings in the past 12 months. [43440]

David Cairns: From 1 January to 31 December 2005, only one item was reported as stolen from any Scotland Office building.

Item description	*Value at date of loss (£)*
Multi-media projector	766 approximately

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47676]

David Cairns: From 1 January to 31 December 2005, the Scotland Office had one item of property reported as lost with a value over £100.

Item	*Value at date of loss (£)*
BlackBerry	249

There have been no reports of broken items, with a value over £100.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the annual expenditure on vehicles by his Department was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [40127]

David Cairns: For details of expenditure on ministerial vehicles provided to the Office by the Government Car and Despatch Agency I refer the hon. Member to the

letter of 20 December 2005 from the chief executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker). Copies of this letter are available in the Library.

Departmental Staff

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what plans his Department has to change the London allowance of its staff; and if he will make a statement. [50009]

David Cairns: The London pay allowance is automatically increased in line with the all-items retail price index each July.

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what total sum has been received by his Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48491]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office has not received any monies in relation to the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act in its first year of operation.

The Freedom of Information Act allows for public authorities to determine when the cost of processing a request will exceed the appropriate limit, which for central Government is set at £600 and for the wider public sector £450. In this instance the public authority may decide to either approach the applicant to help them refine their request and where possible to bring it under the appropriate limit. Alternatively, public authorities may charge the applicant the cost of processing the request. There is, however, no obligation for Departments to provide information if the cost of processing the request exceeds the appropriate limit.

Public authorities may also charge for disbursements when handling requests where it is deemed appropriate. Further information on the FOI fees regime can be found on the DCA website at http://www.foi.gov.uk/feesguide.htm

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Administrative Costs

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the administrative costs were of each non-departmental public body for which he has responsibility in the last year for which figures are available; what the total of such costs was in that year; and whether the costs are regarded for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable. [40064]

Alan Johnson: The DTI is currently responsible for 31 executive non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), including eight regional development agencies and 8 research councils, 22 advisory NDPBs and eight tribunal NDPBs. Apart from the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas), an executive NDPB, these NDPBs are not covered by the Treasury's administration budgets regime.

For the year 2004–05 the administration costs of Acas were £49,048k. This expenditure is regarded as non-identifiable for the purposes of the public expenditure statistical analyses. Expenditure by the other NDPBs does not distinguish between administration costs and other costs in a comparable manner. Expenditure by such bodies is a mixture of identifiable and non-identifiable, depending on the nature and purpose of the particular body.

Further information on the DTIs NDPBs, including details of Government funding and expenditure by the Department, can be found in Public Bodies 2005, a copy of which is in the Libraries of the House, and which is available online at:

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/the_future_of_the_civil_service/agencies_and_public_bodies/publications/pdf/public-bodies/publicbodies2005.pdf.

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on his plans for the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. [48171]

Barry Gardiner: NERC's science budget allocation has doubled since 1997 to £334 million for this year, demonstrating our commitment to maintaining the quality of environmental research in the UK. NERC is currently consulting widely with stakeholders and staff on a proposed restructuring of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH). The aim of the proposal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of CEH and its continued capacity to contribute to environmental research in the UK into the future. These consultations close on 15 February 2006. I am sure that NERC Council will consider carefully all evidence and views on the potential impact of the proposals.

If, following consultation, NERC decides to proceed with the restructuring, the costs would be met from NERC's science budget allocation, and the Department has indicated that it would be willing to increase NERC's allocation by up to £14.2 million over 2006–08 so as to support the delivery of its core programmes in these circumstances.

Civil Servants

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost of the enhanced early retirement scheme for civil servants in his Department and its agencies was in each year from 1997–98 to 2004–05; what the estimated cost is for each year from 2005–06 to 2007–08; and if he will make a statement. [44769]

Alan Johnson: The Department records total annual liabilities for all early departure schemes, including continuing costs of compensation payments and early severance payments that are not retirements. It does not keep separate records of the costs that relate specifically to enhanced early retirement schemes. This information for eight financial years could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. The estimated cost of enhanced early retirement schemes in 2005–06 including flexible and compulsory early retirements and approved early retirement schemes (including the Insolvency Service) is £8.1 million. It is expected that the reduction of DTI staff by 1,010 civil servants will lead to cumulative

savings of £37.20 million by 2007–08. This should offset the initial expenditure on the enhanced early retirement schemes.

My Department may run early retirement schemes during future years to deal with areas where staff cannot be re-deployed by alternative means but currently has no firm plans to do so.

DTPs agencies will be replying to the hon. Member directly.

Letter from Dr. Jeff Llewellyn, dated 14 February 2006:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question regarding what the cost of the enhanced early retirement scheme for civil servants in his Department and its agencies was in each year from 1997–98 to 2004–05; and what the estimated cost is for each year from 2005–06 to 2007–08.

NWML has not run any enhanced early retirement schemes for the period 1997–98 to 2004–05, and is not currently considering such a scheme for the period 2005–06 to 2007–08.

Letter from Claire Clancy, dated 14 February 2006:

I am responding to your recently tabled Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

Companies House did not have an enhanced early retirement scheme from 1997 to 2005 therefore the cost is nil. We have budgeted for spend of £1.5m on voluntary early retirement in 2006-7. This is an estimated maximum figure and will depend on take-up, so is not the actual cost. We are not currently planning for any early retirement schemes in 2007/8.

Letter from Ron Marchant, dated 14 February 2006:

I am responding to this parliamentary question, tabled on 19 January 2006, regarding what the cost of the enhanced early retirement scheme for civil servants in the Patent Office was in each year from 1997–98 to 2004–05 and what the estimated cost is for each year from 2005–06 to 2007–08.

The total cost, on an accruals basis, of early retirements with enhanced terms (added years) for the Patent Office is:

	Amount (£)
2007–08	est 0
2006–07	est 0
2005–06	est 39,000
2004–05	0
2003–04	0
2002–03	267,000
2001–02	0
2000–01	0
1999–2000	101,000
1998–99	0
1997–98	0

Letter from Jeanne Spinks, dated 14 February 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, what the cost of the enhanced early retirement scheme for civil servants in his Department and its agencies was in each year from 1997–98 to 2004–05; and what the estimated cost is for each year from 2005–06 to 2007–08.

The cost of the enhanced early retirement scheme for civil servants in the Employment Tribunals Service for the year 1999–2000 was £28,000. The estimated cost of this scheme for the year 2005–2006 is £26,000. However we are unable to provide an estimated cost for this scheme for future years because the Agency has no plans at present for any schemes.

Civil Service

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress his Department has made towards achieving targets to reduce the number of civil service posts set by the Independent Review of Public Sector Efficiency; and if he will make a statement. [51618]

Alan Johnson: As set out in the 2004 Independent Review of Public Sector Efficiency, DTI plans, by 2007–08, to achieve a total reduction of 1010 posts in core DTI and Regional Government Offices.

Since 1 April 2004 core DTI numbers have decreased from 4179.7 'full-time equivalent' people to 3401.9 'full-time equivalent' people, a reduction of 777.8 as of 1 February 2006. The regional Government Offices have also reduced by 80 posts giving a total reduction of 857.8 against our target of 1010.

DTI is confident that the 1010 target will be met early.

Companies House Register

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment the Government have made of the cost of removing home addresses from the Companies House register. [51174]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The estimated cost of removing each instance of an individual home address from the register of companies by Companies House is £40.00.

Information held by Companies House is already in the public domain. For example, it is held by the large business information providing companies who take daily downloads of the information held by Companies House. This means that even if the records at Companies House could be expunged the information would still be available from other sources.

Company Law

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will seek to introduce legislation to require companies to publish details of their transfer pricing policies. [50021]

Alun Michael: Transfer pricing describes the charge or cost that is made when one company transfers or "sells" a product to another company within the same group of companies (often in different countries). There are no Companies Act disclosure requirements; there are tax implications that are governed by guidelines and requirements.

We have no plans to introduce legislation to require companies to publish details of their transfer pricing policies.

Departmental Contracts

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value was of *(a)* public opinion research and *(b)* public relations contracts awarded by his Department in 2004–05 in (i) each (A) nation and (B) region of the UK and (ii) London. [35960]

Alan Johnson: *(a)* The Department does not centrally collect the information sought at the required level of detail and to provide it would entail disproportionate cost.

(b) A comprehensive list of all projects is not held centrally. Information from the Central Office of Information shows that the following amounts were spent in 2004-05. These relate to contracts where the major element of work was for public relations.

	Amount (£)
Dispute resolution	68,405.05
Renewable energy	516,490.60
Best business practice	338,443.29
Best practice	151,827.51

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total value is of *(a)* catering and *(b)* entertainment contracts let by his Department; and what value of such contracts has been let in each nation and region of the United Kingdom, including London. [37465]

Alan Johnson: Expenditure on catering services in financial year 2004-2005 for DTI's London Headquarters estate was approximately £1.1 million. Expenditure on entertaining and hospitality (excluding expenditure overseas) was a further £468,000.

A breakdown of expenditure on a regional basis is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Deregulation

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the impact of deregulation on productivity; and if he will make a statement. [43106]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* A recent study by the OECD shows that lower levels of regulation have contributed to accelerated growth in the UK by stimulating business investment and promoting innovation and technological catch up. OECD data also shows that the UK is the second least restrictive OECD country, only marginally behind Australia, in terms of economic and administrative regulation.

The Government have launched one of the most radical reform programmes in the world to ensure administrative and other burdens arising from regulations are minimised.

Directors (Minimum Age)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will bring forward legislation under which the minimum age of directors for public limited companies will be at least 18 years. [51511]

Mr. Sutcliffe: At present, under company law, there is no minimum age for directors. The Company Law Reform Bill introduces a minimum age, 16, for a natural person to be a director of any company.

Energy Review 2000

Sir Robert Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many stakeholder meetings he is holding for the Energy Review 2006; and to how many of these meetings he is inviting representatives of the energy efficiency industry. [51454]

Malcolm Wicks: During the course of the consultation, eight seminars are taking place across England, Wales and Scotland. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment will host a seminar on the Energy Review in Belfast. The seminar that took place in Birmingham on 31 January 2006 concentrated on Energy Efficiency.

All the seminars involve a broad range of organisation. Invitees include representatives from unions; energy providers; energy generators; industry associations; network operators; non-governmental organisations with an interest in energy, environment, or fuel poverty issues; regulatory bodies; official advisory bodies to the Government; national, devolved, regional and local Government and Government Agencies; think tanks and academia. Clearly, energy efficiency cuts across many issues to do with energy, so organisations with an interest in energy efficiency are being invited to all the seminars.

In addition to these seminars, my officials and I will be meeting a number of stakeholders individually or in small groups.

Equality Bill

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will introduce proposals to extend the provisions of the Equality Bill to Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [49034]

Meg Munn: Northern Ireland has its own body of discrimination law, and its own Equality Commission and Human Rights Commission. The Equality Bill has already been extended to Northern Ireland to the extent necessary to ensure that there are no significant gaps in protection.

Gas Supplies

Mr. MacShane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of whether speculation is distorting the market for gas prices. [49786]

Malcolm Wicks: In spring 2005, the DTI commissioned a detailed report by Global Insight, an energy consultancy, on the operation of the UK gas forward markets. This is available at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/publications/policy/forward_gas_markets.pdf. The report concluded, among other things, that the UK gas forward market was "a functional hedging and trading market, free from major distortions and market abuse, with efficient price-formation outside of short spike periods". However, the report also said that, whilst the market was functionally liquid, more could be done to boost confidence in it and encourage participation by banks, traders etc. The DTI and Ofgem have therefore been discussing with the Futures and Options Association (FOA) why there is not more participation in the forward market and whether there are

any barriers to entry. Following a roundtable with some of its members on 6 December, the FOA has developed a programme of actions to try to improve liquidity.

Heating Oil

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to tackle the increase in the cost of heating oil; and if he will make a statement. [51531]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government takes the problem of rising fuel prices and its targets on the eradication of fuel poverty very seriously. The provision of affordable warmth is a keystone of our energy policy, and one of the four goals set out in the Energy White Paper.

Tackling fuel poverty is devolved. In Scotland the overall objective for fuel poverty is to ensure that, so far as reasonably practicable, people are not living in fuel poverty by November 2016. The central heating and warm deal programmes improve the energy efficiency of the housing stock for vulnerable people. So far the Scottish Executive has invested over £240 million in these programmes, putting in over 63,000 central heating systems and insulating over 223,000 homes.

Increases in the cost of heating oil over the past year primarily reflect rises in the international price of crude oil. Through its presidencies of the G8, G7 and EU, the UK promoted international efforts to improve the functioning of the global oil market and tackle market inefficiencies that contribute to oil price volatility.

Domestically, the Government's policy is not to intervene in commercial price setting because it believes that the consumer is best served by the operation of open competition between companies. The supply of domestic bulk liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) is, however, subject to UK competition law under the Competition Act 1998 and is currently under investigation by the Competition Commission. Provisional findings are available at http://www.competition-commission.org.uk/inquiries/current/gas/, with the final report to be published in March.

Indian Financial Services Companies

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which five Indian companies in the UK with a presence in the financial services sector have the largest number of employees; and how many employees each has. [51453]

Ian Pearson: The Table below shows the latest available UK employee information from publicly available data from Companies House for Indian companies with a known UK subsidiary or a UK branch in the financial services sector.

Indian companies with known UK presence in financial services sector

	Status	Number of UK employees
ICICI Bank UK Limited	UK subsidiary	51
J.B. Boda and Co. (UK) Limited	UK subsidiary	[1]
K.M. Dastur and Co Limited	UK subsidiary	3
First Global (UK) Ltd	UK subsidiary	3
Ridge Futures Limited	UK subsidiary	[1]
Bob (UK) Ltd	UK subsidiary	4
State Bank Of India	UK branch	[1]
Bank Of India	UK branch	[1]
Syndicate Bank	UK branch	20
The New India Assurance Co Ltd	UK branch	[1]
Life Insurance Corporation of India	UK branch	15
Bank of Baroda	UK branch	60
Cabara Bank	UK branch	[1]

[1] Not available.

Source:
Companies House.

Migrant Workers from Poland

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures he is taking to ensure that migrant workers from Poland are protected under UK employment laws. [51614]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Legal migrant workers in the UK have the same employment rights and recourses as their indigenous equivalents.

We are aware that migrant workers may face difficulties in understanding and asserting their rights. We have offered to work with the Governments of all the new member states, to prepare bi-lingual "know before you go" leaflets giving advice on questions to ask before leaving the country and on legal protections offered to workers including agency workers.

To date we have produced leaflets in partnership with the Polish and Lithuanian Governments, and are in discussions with other Governments. The two existing leaflets followed a similar leaflet we produced in partnership with the Portuguese Government, and benefited from input from the TUC, the CBI and other stakeholders. These leaflets have been distributed widely in both the workers' home country and the UK. In Poland, for example, they have been publicised on television and our embassy and the Polish authorities have worked hard to distribute them via job centres, recruitment fairs and other channels. The text of the leaflets is also available on the DTI website—http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/agency/migrant_workers.htm.

Post Offices

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the number of post offices that could be expected to close as a result of the possible loss of income arising from the ending of the contract for the Post Office card account in 2010. [50872]

Barry Gardiner: *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The future size of the network will depend on many factors including the outcome of ongoing discussions between Post Office Ltd. and Department for Work and Pensions on what accounts, other than the Post Office card account, will be available after 2010.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he plans to take to prevent the closure of post offices following the ending of the contract for the Post Office card account. [51483]

Barry Gardiner: The future of the network will depend on many factors including the outcome of ongoing discussions between Post Office Ltd. and

Department for Work and Pensions on what accounts, other than the Post Office card account, will be available after 2010.

Regional Development Agencies

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether regional development agencies have a role in the regeneration of market towns. [51057]

Alun Michael: Yes. In April 2005, England's Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) took over responsibility from the Countryside Agency for delivery of rural economic and social regeneration policies, including responsibility for the regeneration of market towns. The RDAs work with local communities and businesses to deliver long term strategic investment plans that will sustain market towns as important rural service centres, geared to the particular needs and characteristics of each region.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what responsibilities the regional development agencies have taken over from the Countryside Agency in the last two years. [51058]

Jim Knight: I have been asked to reply.

As announced in Rural Strategy 2004, from 1 April 2005, Defra has devolved decision-making on delivery of economic and social regeneration policies to the Regional Development Agencies. This includes areas of activity such as those formerly covered by the Countryside Agency's Vital Villages and Market Towns programmes. The transfer of Countryside Agency funding aims to create an integrated rural funding programme and allow RDAs the flexibility to manage their own resources to meet their regional and Defra priorities. Additional resources from the Countryside Agency will also increase the RDAs expertise in innovation, countryside issues, research and rural development.

This move to devolve funding to the regions through RDAs is part of Central Government's devolving decision-making agenda. RDAs, working in partnership, will decide how to spend their resources to meet national targets and address regional needs. However, Defra is confident that by devolving these responsibilities to the RDAs and increasing their resources, rural delivery will become more responsive to local priorities and better focused on areas and people that need it most.

Sunday Trading

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many organisations his Department considered to carry out the cost-benefit report into extending Sunday trading hours; which organisation was selected; what estimate he has made of the cost to his Department of compiling the report; and what measures are in place to ensure that the report will be independent. [51418]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) invited several organisations to submit a proposal for the study. Indepen Consulting Ltd. was selected to carry out the study. The project fee is currently commercially sensitive information and the DTI is unable to release this figure. The contractor has declared no potential conflicts of interest and the DTI is satisfied that the study will be independent.

TRANSPORT

Bus Services

11. **Hugh Bayley:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what obligations bus companies have to consult local authorities on changes in their timetables and fares. [51251]

Ms Buck: Bus companies outside London are not required by law to consult on fare or timetable changes, but must give the traffic commissioner and all relevant local authorities at least 56 days notice of variations to timetables of registered local bus services. Timetables and fares for the London bus network are set by Transport for London.

Public Transport

12. **Mr. Simon:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps he is taking to improve access to public transport for pensioners. [51252]

Ms Buck: From 1 April 2006 people 60 or over will be entitled to free off-peak bus travel within their local authority boundary or passenger Transport Executive area.

We have also introduced regulations for trains and buses and coaches which require new vehicles to be accessible and so easier to use for older people.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department has taken to ensure greater access to public transport for people with disabilities and visual impairments. [51259]

Ms Buck: We are committed to providing an accessible public transport system. We have regulated to ensure that all new trains, buses and coaches are accessible to disabled people. We made provision in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 to extend the "right of access" disabled people already have to other services to transport and to introduce other measures to improve accessibility.

Gatwick Express

13. **Mr. David Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the future of the Gatwick Express. [51253]

Derek Twigg: The concept of a fast frequent service between Gatwick and Victoria will remain. The Brighton main line route utilisation strategy, however, made clear the need to improve punctuality and to reduce overcrowding on this busy route. Detailed proposals about how we resolve this are now being evaluated by the Department in discussion with Network Rail.

Road Safety

14. **Dr. Iddon:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance has been issued on the use of variable message signs on motorways. [51254]

Dr. Ladyman: Variable message signs can be set by the Highways Agency's national traffic control centre and regional control centres and currently by police control offices.

The messages which can be set on the signs and guidance on their use, are contained in operational documents.

The Highways Agency has also produced a brochure to explain the background to, and use of variable message signs.

Road Network

15. **Lynda Waltho:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress the Government have made on improving management of the road network. [51255]

Dr. Ladyman: Highways Agency traffic officers have begun patrolling motorways across the country to clear incidents and keep traffic flowing, and local highway authorities have now appointed traffic managers with new duties under the Traffic Management Act 2004. Trials of innovative new traffic management systems are in progress.

Road Building Programme

16. **Mr. Yeo:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the Government's road building programme. [51256]

Dr. Ladyman: We are making good progress in delivering our programme of major improvements to the strategic road network. Since 2001 we have completed 35 major trunk road and motorway schemes. 15 schemes are currently under construction and we plan to start construction work on a further 27 schemes by April 2008. In the three years to 2007–08 we plan to spend £1.9 billionn on major improvement schemes on the trunk road and motorway network.

20. **Anne Main:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the Government's road building programme. [51260]

Dr. Ladyman: We are making good progress in delivering our programme of major improvements to the strategic road network. Since 2001 we have completed 35 major trunk road and motorway schemes 15 schemes are currently under construction and we plan to start construction work on a further 27 schemes by April 2008. In the three years to 2007–08 we plan to spend £1.9 billion on major improvement schemes on the trunk road and motorway network.

Great Western Franchise

17. **Andrew George:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent discussions he has had with First Group on the future of the Great Western franchise. [51257]

Derek Twigg: I met First Group on 30 January 2006, together with Network Rail, to discuss future plans to improve performance.

Road Pricing

18. **Mr. Hurd:** To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the Government's plans for road pricing. [51258]

Dr. Ladyman: We are working with local authorities and areas to develop road pricing schemes that tackle congestion. This will allow us to pilot technology for a national scheme in the longer term, and we would like to see the first pilot schemes up and running within the next five years.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the potential use of satellite navigation systems in charging for road use. [51390]

Dr. Ladyman: Satellite based road charging systems are already being used in other countries with some success. The potential for use here is being considered as part of our work in moving towards a national road pricing system.

Air Travel Fund

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funds are held within the Air Travel Organisers Licensing Air Travel Trust Fund; and whether he plans to increase the fund. [50783]

Ms Buck: The Air Travel Trust Fund (ATTF) is currently in deficit, with borrowings of £13.7 million.

For some years the Government have been guaranteeing the overdraft that enables the fund to operate. We are taking the legislative opportunity of the Civil Aviation Bill, currently before Parliament, to transfer responsibility for the fund back to the market. The Civil Aviation Bill will give the Secretary of State the necessary powers to enable the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to make regulations requiring air travel organisers to contribute to the Air Travel Trust Fund (ATTF), thereby ensuring the continued financial protection of consumers purchasing package holidays in the event of the failure of a tour operator.

Aircraft Movements (Heathrow)

Susan Kramer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average number of aircraft movements at Heathrow airport was during each hour between 7a.m. and 11p.m. in the most recent year for which figures are available. [50542]

Ms Buck: The following table shows the 2005 mean number of air transport movements at Heathrow airport each hour.

Time band	*Annual average number of air transport movements*
0700 to 0759	75
0800 to 0859	75
0900 to 0959	79
1000 to 1059	80
1100 to 1159	80
1200 to 1259	80
1300 to 1359	78

Time band	Annual average number of air transport movements
1400 to 1459	79
1500 to 1559	80
1600 to 1659	82
1700 to 1759	82
1800 to 1859	82
1900 to 1959	80
2000 to 2059	73
2100 to 2159	55
2200 to 2259	24

Source:
Civil Aviation Authority

Aircraft Noise

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what definition of excessive noise his Department uses in documents relating to *(a)* the noise from aircraft and *(b)* other civil aviation matters; [50289]

(2) pursuant to his Department's consultation on night flying restrictions, how he plans to measure the effectiveness of the proposals to bear down on noise. [50831]

Ms Buck: We have stated in consulting on our proposals for night flying restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted that one of our broad aims is

"to strike a fair balance between the protection of local communities from excessive aircraft noise levels at night and the provision of air services at night where they are of benefit to the national, regional or local economy".

The expression 'excessive noise' does not apply to a specific level of aircraft noise: what is excessive will vary according to locations and individuals.

Based on research, the Government use various measurements of aircraft noise as indicators of disturbance or of potential annoyance, or as criteria for mitigation measures, including advice for land use planning purposes.

'Bearing down' on night noise from aircraft arriving at or departing from Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted is expressed by the new proposed environmental and night noise abatement objectives for the airport on which we invited comments as part of the consultation on night flying restrictions.

The final objectives will be announced as part of the decision on future night flying restrictions. The way in which their effect in practice will be assessed will depend on what the objectives are.

Buses

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what definition his Department uses of a *(a)* coach and *(b)* bus service; and what provisions relating to access for the disabled apply to each type of service. [50102]

Ms Buck: For the purposes of defining accessibility requirements, The Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000 define a 'bus' as a public service vehicle which is designed to carry both seated and standing passengers with a carrying capacity exceeding 22 passengers, in addition to the driver. A 'coach' has a similar definition, but is designed for the carriage of seated passengers only. These regulations have applied to new buses and coaches since 31 December 2000, used to operate local or scheduled services only.

The Regulations are intended to enable passengers with a broad range of disabilities, including wheelchair users to board, alight and travel in safety and in reasonable comfort. They include requirements for a designated wheelchair position, appropriate wheelchair boarding device, low first step height, provision of suitable handrails, seat dimensions, visual contrasts marking specific features, and route and destination displays.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact of free bus travel on the existing arrangements for bus travel between *(a)* Northumberland and Tyne and Wear, *(b)* Durham and Tyne and Wear and *(c)* Northumberland and Durham. [51462]

Ms Buck: None. Cross-boundary concessionary travel is offered is at the discretion of the local authority based on their judgement of local needs and their overall financial priorities.

Condover Parish Council

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from Condover parish council; and if he will make a statement. [51548]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency has received a number of communications from Condover parish council concerning the provision of a pedestrian crossing facility on the A49 Trunk Road in the village of Dorrington. Unfortunately, to date it has not been possible to find a solution that would satisfy relevant design and financial requirements but discussions are continuing with Shrewsbury and Atcham borough council in their capacity as local planning authority. The parish council will be kept informed of any developments.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47674]

Ms Buck: The requested information, where available, is as follows:

	Description	Quantity	Average value per item	DfT Organisational unit
(a)	Laptop	1	925	Vehicle Certification Agency
	Pager	2	117	Air Accident Investigation Branch
(b)	Camera	1	250	Marine Accident Investigation Branch

For the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency and our HQ buildings (in respect of broken maintenance items) the data is not available in the required format and can be extracted only at disproportionate costs. The Highways Agency have also advised that no data is held on broken items.

Departmental Staff

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans his Department has to change the London allowance of its staff; and if he will make a statement. [50004]

Ms Buck: Within the Department, the Driving Standards Agency retains a separate London Working Allowance based on those workplaces located within the M25. This will increase by £100 as at 1 April 2006. However, this will not apply to those staff working within the equivalent of the old Inner London weighting area (DSA Charles House Area Office)

There are no further planned changes to the London Allowance, where paid.

Disabled Parking

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will introduce legislation to make it a fineable offence for a non-blue badge holder to park in designated disabled parking bays. [51539]

Ms Buck: It is already an offence under section 47 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to park a vehicle which is not displaying a blue badge in a designated disabled person's parking bay. The maximum fine on conviction is £1,000 and this applies in addition to whatever penalty may be imposed for the associated parking offence.

East Coast Main Line

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent assessment he has made of capacity on the East Coast main line. [51647]

Derek Twigg: Capacity assessments for the national rail network are the responsibility of Network Rail. They have recently started work on a route utilisation strategy for the East Coast main line, and draft conclusions are expected later this year.

Emissions

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of total UK emissions he estimates will be provided by aviation in *(a)* 2030 and *(b)* 2050 (i) with and (ii) without allowance for radiative forcing calculated at 2.7. [35573]

Ms Buck: Emissions from international flights do not currently count in the national inventories of greenhouse gas emissions, there being no international agreement yet on ways of allocating such emissions. There is, therefore, no agreed definition for UK aviation. In order to provide illustrative figures we have previously provided data based on a number of assumptions—that the UK takes responsibility for emissions from all departing flights, that all other sectors of the economy reduce their CO_2 emissions in line with the Energy White Paper goal. These figures do not take into account the impact of economic instruments like emissions trading.

The Department for Transport provided an illustrative table showing the relative contribution of aviation to UK emissions to the Environmental Audit Committee (published on 7 June 2004 in "Aviation: Sustainability and the Government Response", HC 623). On this basis, aviation would be responsible for 15.2 per cent. of UK CO_2 emissions in 2030 and 21.3 per cent. in 2050. Using a radiative forcing factor of 2.7, aviation would be responsible for 27.6 per cent. in 2030 and 34.3 per cent. in 2050 of the UK's contribution to global warming.

The Air Transport White Paper sets out the Government's belief that the best way of ensuring aviation contributes towards the goal of climate stabilisation would be through a well-designed emissions trading regime, for which we are pressing at international and European level. We are working through the International Civil Aviation Organisation towards an international emissions trading scheme for aviation—this is consistent with the request to ICAO from the UN Climate Change Convention for action on aviation emissions. We are also pursuing the inclusion of aviation in the EU emissions trading scheme. The details of how a scheme would work in practice, like the overall cap and the distribution of allowances between member states will be subject to discussion with other member states' governments.

Fair Trade

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's policy is on the procurement of fair trade produce for consumption on its premises. [49962]

Ms Buck: I can confirm that our policy on catering is to source items from fair trade producers wherever possible within the boundaries set by the public procurement rules and value for money policies. In addition, as part of any tendering process for the supply of catering services to the Department, we specify that the contractor should take account and support the Department in our response to the relevant parts of the Government's "Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food—Facing the Future". This sets out the Government's aims and objectives for sustainability within the farming and food sectors, contributing to a better environment and healthy and prosperous communities.

Products that are consistently purchased which typically relate to this ethos are fair trade bulk brew filter coffee and down to earth fair trade enveloped tea as part of our hospitality arrangements. These products are also made available in staff restaurants as well as fair trade sweets and chocolate, free range eggs and organic pasta.

Free Travel (Greater Manchester)

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions his Department has had with *(a)* bus operators in Greater Manchester and *(b)* Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive

to ensure that any increase in demand caused by the introduction of free off-peak travel for pensioners is met. [51740]

Ms Buck: The Department set up a working group consisting of representatives from local authorities, the Passenger Transport Executives and the Confederation of Passenger Transport to advise on the overall implementation of the free local off-peak travel for those 60 and over and disabled people. There have been no specific discussions on Manchester.

Highways Agency (Litter)

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what obligations the Highways Agency is under to remove litter from motorway embankments and verges; and how often the agency has undertaken to remove litter from the *(a)* M60 and *(b)* M67 motorways in Denton and Reddish constituency in its cleansing programme. [51141]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency is obliged, by the Environmental Protection Act 1990, to remove litter from motorways, including the central reservations, verges, and embankments. This arrangement has regard to the nature and use of the highway, and the need to limit disruption to traffic. To comply with the Act, which specifies, through a supplementary Code of Practice, standards of cleanliness and response times, the Agency undertakes a regime of sweeping and litter picking on the M60 and M67 Motorways.

Litter picking on the verges and embankments is undertaken at regular three-monthly intervals on both the M60 and M67. The offside lane and central reserve is routinely swept and litter picked every three months on the M60 and every two months oh the M67.

The hard shoulders are swept every two months on the M60, and every three months on the M67. Where the Agency's daily routine inspections identify a particular problem, additional litter picking and sweeping is undertaken.

Identity Cards

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 7 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1313W, on identity cards, whether he has finalised current best estimates of the cost of using the identity cards scheme to support the services which he oversees. [50321]

Ms Buck: The Department for Transport contributed to the Benefits Overview Document which was published by the Identity Cards Programme in June 2005. The Department has not yet finalised its estimates of the benefits or costs of using the ID Cards Scheme to support the services which it oversees. Officials from across the department are working with the Home Office ID Cards Programme to identify and quantify benefits and develop a realisation plan in line with the recommendation of the ministerial committee on ID Cards.

Motor Cycling (Disabled Badges)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures he plans to introduce to ensure that disabled motorcyclists can display disabled badges without risking theft; and if he will make a statement. [50251]

Ms Buck: There are no plans to introduce specific measures.

For motorcycles we advise that the badge should be exhibited in a conspicuous position on the vehicle so that the relevant details on the front are visible. The precise method of attaching and securing the badge is a matter for the badge holder to determine.

Motor Vehicles (Air Conditioning Emissions)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact in the United Kingdom of the current draft regulations on emissions from air conditioning systems in motor vehicles; and if he will make a statement. [51284]

Dr. Ladyman: The European Commission's proposal controlling greenhouse gas emissions from Mobile Air Conditioning systems has been analysed by an inter-departmental project team. The costs and benefits of the proposed legislation has been estimated and compared with other options. The proposal is estimated to save 14–17 Megatonnes CO_2 equivalent of greenhouse gas emissions in 2005–25. Estimated costs are in the range £18–67 million per annum.

The proposal was adopted by the European Parliament and Council on 31 January 2006 and has not yet been published in the Official Journal. Work has therefore not yet begun on drafting Regulations to implement this Directive in UK law. However the Directive is in essence a type approval standard applying to new vehicles only. It does not apply retrospectively, nor does the Department have any intention of adopting retrospective provisions in implementing UK Regulations. Further to DEFRA's consultation on the Commission's proposal, DfT will conduct a formal consultation exercise on implementing Regulations in due course.

Article 6 of the Directive does prohibit retrofitting of air conditioning systems with high Global Warming Potential (GWP) refrigerants to vehicles type approved on or after 1 January 2011. Such air conditioning systems may not be retrofitted to any vehicle from 1 January 2017. However the Directive does allow continued use of high GWP refrigerants for refilling air conditioning systems which originally used such gases. This ensures that air conditioning systems on existing vehicles may be maintained in working order without necessitating their replacement with systems designed to use lower GWP refrigerants.

Parking Fines

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what changes the Government have made to guidance to highways authorities on parking *(a)* spaces, *(b)* charges and *(c)* fines, since May 1997. [50955]

Ms Buck: Since May 1997 the Secretary of State has amended paragraphs 4.9 to 4.29 of Local Authority Circular 1/95 "Guidance on Decriminalised Parking Enforcement Outside London" which deals with the parking charges and penalty charges set by local authorities. The Mayor for London is responsible for guidance to local authorities in London.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many appeals against parking penalty charge notices there were in each local authority in England in the last five years for which figures are available; and how many were successful. [51685]

Ms Buck: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 11 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 671W.

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many parliamentary questions tabled in the last 12 months for answer by him on a named day *(a)* were transferred and *(b)* received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named. [49881]

Ms Buck: My ministerial colleagues and I aim to ensure that hon. Members receive a substantive response to their named day question on the named day and to endeavour to answer ordinary written questions within a working week of being tabled.

During the period 31 January 2005 to 31 January 2006, 657 named day parliamentary questions were tabled to the Department for Transport. Of those, 485 (74 per cent.) received a substantive answer on the day named and 172 (26 per cent.) received a substantive answer after the day named. A further 11 named day questions were transferred to another Government Department. The Department for Transport does not hold information on when those questions were answered.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by him in the last 12 months have been answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* between 14 and 28 days, *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if he will make a statement. [49895]

Ms Buck: The information is not available in the format requested.

As at 8 February, the Department for Transport had received 2,937 ordinary written parliamentary questions between the 31 January 2005 and the 31 January 2006. Of these, 2,370 (82 per cent.) were answered within five sitting days, 125 (4 per cent.) were answered one day late, 256 (9 per cent.) were answered between two and five days late, 85 (3 per cent.) were answered between six and 10 days late and 63 (2 per cent.) were answered 11 + days late. 38 (1 per cent.) are awaiting an answer.

Public Information

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was spent on the Department's public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [48967]

Ms Buck: The Department spent the following amounts in each year since it was established on public relations, primarily to support our marketing activities for example the THINK! road safety campaign.

£

	DFT (central)	*DFT (agencies)*
2002-03	496,004	302,250
2003-04	357,146	503,788
2004-05	438,210	373,328

Figures for all information services which range from call centres, websites, customer service centres to campaign hotlines can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Railways

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* regional train services, *(b)* long distance train services and *(c)* train services in London and the South East have been cancelled due to non-driver availability in each of the past five years; and how many passenger journeys have been affected. [48225]

Derek Twigg: The number of trains cancelled for reasons associated with train crew in the current financial year up to December 2005 is given as follows:

	Number
(a) Regional services	6,042
(b) Long distance services	183
(c) London and South East services	5,279

As a percentage of services due to have operated in each sector, this equates to:

	Percentage
(a) Regional services	0.30
(b) Long distance services	0.08
(c) London and South East services	0.21

The equivalent information for previous years, and information relating to the number of passengers affected by such cancellations is not held centrally.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent representations he has received from train operating companies on industrial disputes. [49841]

Derek Twigg: Although train operating companies (TOCs) have not made representations to the Secretary of State, the nature of the franchise agreement means that TOCs do talk to the franchise managers about potential industrial disputes. Currently the only TOC which is in discussion with their franchise manager in this way is Virgin Cross Country.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make provision for additional capacity on the rail line linking Wellingborough to London. [51525]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Transport has recently begun detailed assessment and development work on the service definition for the new East Midlands

franchise. The work will take account of the growth expected in the Wellingborough area as part of the Milton Keynes South Midlands growth area proposals. We expect to consult on the franchise specification this summer.

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made with the extension of the East London line; and if he will make a statement. [51722]

Derek Twigg: Enabling works for Phase 1 of the extension, which will take the line to Dalston Junction in the North and Crystal Palace and East Croydon in the South, are currently under way. This includes work on 21 bridges along the Kingsland Viaduct in Hackney. The main works tender went out in December 2005 and a contract will be awarded in summer 2006, after which the main works on Phase 1 can begin.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* reviewed that benchmarks the costs of rail services provision in the UK against other developed countries. [48504]

Derek Twigg: The Department has not commissioned specific work on benchmarking of costs of rail services provision against other developed countries. However other UK and international bodies, for example the Office of Rail Regulation, and the European Commission, have done so from time to time. The Department reviews the available material to inform policy development.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had in the last 12 months with the Association of Train Operating Companies on the regulation of rail fares; when he expects to have further discussions on this matter; and if he will make a statement. [50512]

Derek Twigg: Fares regulation is a contractual matter set out in the franchise agreement between the Department for Transport and each individual train operator. Discussions have been held with the Association of Train Operating Companies, in relation to simplified zonal fares for rail services in London, where co-operation between train companies will be necessary.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to extend the Community Rail Strategy; and if he will make a statement. [50514]

Derek Twigg: The Community Rail Development Strategy was published by the Strategic Rail Authority in November 2004. Six lines have so far been designated as community rail lines: St. Erth to St. Ives, Liskeard to Looe, St. Budeaux Junction to Gunnislake, Watford Junction to St Albans, Guisborough Junction to Whitby and Barnsley to Huddersfield. Consultation has taken place to designate the lines from Grantham to Skegness and from Ryde Pier Head to Shanklin, and we hope to consult shortly about a number of other lines. It remains our intention progressively to designate the lines listed in the Strategy and to continue to implement other elements of the Strategy.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with rail operators concerning the impact on *(a)* rail freight services and *(b)* rail congestion on lines into and out of London Paddington of the Crossrail project; and if he will make a statement. [51217]

Derek Twigg: I recently consulted the rail industry on a policy paper describing the development of an access option for Crossrail services. This sets out the principles by which Crossrail will share the capacity with other traffic on the existing rail network.

In parallel with work on the access option, a cross-industry timetabling working group oversees timetable testing that looks ahead to the start of Crossrail services.

Additionally, a number of freight and other rail interests attend the Crossrail High Level Forum. There is also a forum just for railway stakeholders to discuss Crossrail issues. I chair both meetings. There are also regular and ad hoc official level meetings with the rail industry about Crossrail.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the public subsidy paid to each constituent part of the railway in each year since 1992. [49030]

Derek Twigg: Details of public subsidy to the railway are set out in the Department's Annual Reports, copies of which are available in the House Library.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what financial penalties are available when Network Rail fails to complete renewals on time. [49804]

Derek Twigg: Network Rail pays compensation to train operators where changes to train timetables are made as a result of Network Rail requiring access to the network to undertake renewals and other work. These provisions are contained within train operators' track access contracts. The amount of compensation payable relates in part to the duration of the period of disruption.

If the renewals work overruns, further compensation is provided by Network Rail to train operators for unforeseen delays and cancellations to services.

More generally, Network Rail must manage the network in accordance with its network licence. This is enforceable by the Office of Rail Regulation, which may impose a financial penalty in the event of a breach of a licence condition.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether it is his policy to retain all operating rural railway lines. [43613]

Derek Twigg: There are no current proposals for closure of rural lines. The White Paper on The Future of Rail announced that the Government supported the better use of lightly used rural rail services. This is being taken forward through the Community Rail Development Strategy which aims to improve the usage and reduce costs of rural rail services.

There are now a number of local community rail partnerships and early indications are they are having a positive impact.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance his Department has issued to members of the public wishing to complain about *(a)* increases in fares and *(b)* the services provided by train operators; and if he will make a statement. [50459]

Derek Twigg: Each train operator's passenger licence and station licence requires them to have an approved complaints handling procedure (CHP). Each operator's CHP commits them to displaying both their own contact details for comments and complaints, and the address for the Rail Passengers Council, recently renamed Passenger Focus, in each carriage on board every train, on posters at every station, and in their timetables and publications.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures he can take to ensure that the 20:03 Crewe to North Wales train leaves Crewe after the Euston to Liverpool train arrives at Crewe at 20:05. [45670]

Derek Twigg: Timetabling and connections are matters between Train Operating Companies and Network Rail who work together to optimise connections, taking into consideration the interests of passengers and the available capacity and pathing.

Roads

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will ask the Highways Agency to carry out dry scrim testing on stone mastic asphalt. [51368]

Dr. Ladyman: As stone mastic asphalt is not used on motorways and trunk roads, it would be inappropriate for the Highways Agency to carry out dry SCRIM tests.

For the thin surfaces used by the Highways Agency, the testing of dry skid resistance is undertaken by a pavement friction tester (PFT).

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment has been made of whether stone mastic asphalt surfaces have the same skid co-efficient as hot rolled asphalt. [51369]

Dr. Ladyman: Extensive research on the skid resistance of road surfacings over the last ten years has included measurements of both stone mastic asphalt and hot rolled asphalt. This has shown that provided the appropriate aggregate is used and the surface texture is adequate, the skid resistance of stone mastic asphalt falls within the expected range for typical hot rolled asphalt surfacing.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment has been made of whether there has been a change in the incidence of accidents involving pedestrians on crossings where shellgrip is no longer used. [51370]

Dr. Ladyman: There have been no studies of accidents involving pedestrians in situations where shellgrip was once used and either not been replaced or where it has been replaced with a high friction surfacing of a different type.

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Highways Agency has tested chemical washing on new thin surface material road surfaces. [51440]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency has not tested chemical washing on new thin surface material road surfaces.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with the Highways Agency on a bypass for Dorrington near Shrewsbury on the A49. [51231]

Dr. Ladyman: The Secretary of State has had no discussions with the Highways Agency on the A49 Dorrington bypass (near Shrewsbury) since the scheme was withdrawn from the Trunk Roads Programme in 1994.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will meet the Highways Agency to discuss the merits of a pedestrian crossing in the village of Westbury near Shrewsbury; [51232]

(2) if he will visit the village of Westbury near Shrewsbury to address the safety of the road through the village. [51236]

Dr. Ladyman: As Westbury is not situated on the trunk road network, responsibility for the management of the road through the village rests with Shropshire county council as local highway authority, rather than the Highways Agency. The hon. Member should approach the county council about these issues.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was spent on road *(a)* improvements and *(b)* modernisation in Shrewsbury and Atcham constituency in (i) 1997, (ii) 1999 and (iii) 2005. [51233]

Dr. Ladyman: The information summarised in the following table has been supplied from Shropshire county council. It summarises the county council's expenditure on highways and transport infrastructure in the Shrewsbury and Atcham district in the three financial years most closely corresponding to 1997, 1999 and 2005.

Expenditure £000

	1997-98 (actual)	*1999-2000 (actual)*	*2005-06 (budget)*
Integrated Transport improvements and Local Safety Schemes	909	932	1,329
Battlefield Link Road	584	0	0
Sub total (Improvements)	1,493	932	1,329
Structural Maintenance of Roads	1,422	1,812	2,710
Routine Maintenance of Roads	434	502	642
Total	3,349	3,246	4,681

It is not possible to provide a breakdown of spending on trunk roads as this is neither allocated nor recorded on a county or parliamentary constituency basis.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will meet representatives of Shrewsbury Friends of the Earth to discuss the proposal to build a north west relief road on the outskirts of Shrewsbury. [51234]

Dr. Ladyman: We have not received any detailed proposal from Shropshire county council for a relief road to the North West of Shrewsbury. I will consider written representations from stakeholders should I receive such a proposal.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will direct the Highways Agency to install a sign for Shrewsbury on the M6 junction with the M54. [51235]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 932–3W.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will visit Shrewsbury to address the safety of the Dobbies roundabout at the junction of the A5 and A49. [51237]

Dr. Ladyman: The Highways Agency, which has responsibility for the A5 and A49 Trunk Roads, is fully aware of the difficulties at the Dobbies roundabout. An investigation currently being carried out is designed to identify measures to improve the operation of the roundabout, including any that would reduce traffic speeds. The results are due within the next two to three months.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what powers exist to place a permanent stopping order on a road where the use of the road has changed; and if he will make a statement. [50701]

Ms Buck *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The Secretary of State has powers under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to authorise the permanent stopping up of a highway in England outside London to enable development to take place or to improve safety and/or traffic flow if it crosses or enters the route of a new or improved highway. In London, these powers are exercised by the London boroughs.

The Secretary of State also has power under the Highways Act 1980 to permanently stop up a highway if he considers it necessary as part of the construction or improvement of a trunk road or a classified road.

A magistrate has power under the Highways Act 1980 to stop up a highway that is unnecessary or can be diverted to improve for the public its capacity or convenience.

These Acts provide all the powers necessary to carry out stopping up but the procedures involved are under review.

Speed Limits

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to issue draft guidance on rural speed limits. [51846]

Dr. Ladyman: Guidance on setting local speed limits, including those on rural roads, is currently contained in Circular Roads 1/93. The Department has consulted on draft updated guidance and this will be published shortly.

Toll Roads

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much income from toll roads his Department has received in each of the last five years. [51391]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department only receives income from one undertaking — the Dartford-Thurrock river crossing. Income from tolls at other statutory tolled undertakings is retained by the operator.

Prior to 1 April 2002 the concessionaire operating the Dartford-Thurrock river crossing retained all income.

Gross toll income received at the crossing for the year to 31 March 2003 amounted to £69.34 million.

Since the 1 April 2003 a road user charging scheme under the Transport Act 2000 has been in operation at the crossing. The gross income received is as follows:

2003–04 —£68.12 million (includes rental income and/or interest received)

2004–05 —£69.02 million (Includes rental income and/or interest received)

2005–06 —£58.32 million (un-audited figure for the period from 1 April 2005 to the 31 January 2006)

Travel Subsidies

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on subsidies for *(a)* rail and *(b)* bus travel in the Peterborough city council area in each of the last five years. [50430]

Ms Buck: Subsidies for the rail network are paid to Network Rail and to the various franchises which operate in a number of regions and cities. The Department does not collect figures showing rail subsidy to individual cities.

Individual local authorities are responsible for their own decisions on spending on support for local bus services in their area. The majority of this expenditure is provided by local authorities from their revenue support grant allocations. Expenditure by Peterborough city council on support of bus services in each of the last five years is shown in the following table:

	Bus subsidy (£000)
2000–01	373
2001–02	384
2002–03	528
2003–04	635
2004–05	592

Note:
Figures from administrative returns from the local authority. They include expenditure met from the Department's rural bus subsidy grant and bus challenge schemes.

Vehicle Air Conditioning Systems

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had, and with whom, on the draft regulations on emissions from air conditioning systems in motor vehicles; if he will ensure that changes to such regulations are not retrospective; and if he will make a statement. [51218]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the right hon. Member to my answer given today [UIN 51284].

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Business Rates (Gloucestershire)

Steve Webb: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was paid in business rates in South Gloucestershire in each year since 1996–97; and how much was received by South Gloucestershire council from the central rate pool. [51854]

Mr. Woolas: The amounts South Gloucestershire collected in business rates and the amounts they received back from the central pool from 1997–98 to 2004–05 are tabled as follows. Unfortunately this information is not readily available for 1996–97.

National non-domestic business rates (NNDR), South Gloucestershire

£

	Collected by the authority	*Received from the NNDR pool*
1997–98	44,601,072	52,753,236
1998–99	59,678,585	55,416,657
1999–2000	68,084,810	60,929,163
2000–01	72,094,171	69,397,236
2001–02	83,185,520	68,767,124
2002–03	82,160,313	76,277,087
2003–04	75,608,660	74,517,052
2004–05	84,023,245	68,795,989

Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to enable low-income households to purchase carbon monoxide alarms. [51451]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Home Fire Risk Check Initiative established in October 2004, enables all English fire and rescue services to work up a dedicated programme of home fire risk checks combined with the installation of free 10-year battery operated smoke alarms in vulnerable homes. The funding may be used to install other protective devices such as specialist deaf smoke alarms, community link fire alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

Carbon monoxide detectors are a useful back-up precaution, but they must not be regarded as a substitute for proper installation and maintenance of gas equipment. All householders are encouraged to install at least one smoke alarm and regularly maintain existing devices.

Mr. Crabb: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the percentage of households equipped with *(a)* carbon monoxide alarms and *(b)* fire alarms. [51450]

Jim Fitzpatrick: Information on the percentage of households equipped with carbon monoxide detectors is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Latest figures released on 31 January 2006, show that an estimated 80 per cent. of households in England are equipped with at least one working smoke alarm.

Departmental Information

Mr. Gale: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was spent on his Department's public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [48954]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime minister was created on 29 May 2002 The spend on public relations and information services is tabled as follows:

	Public relations	*Information services*
2002–03	247,000	30,000
2003–04	99,000	30,000
2004–05	160,000	55,000
2005–06	112,000	41,000

The majority of this spend has been through the Central Office of Information to help promote fire safety in the home.

Firefighters

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many firefighters have been employed in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England in each year between 1997 and 2005. [51502]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The number of firefighters that have been employed in Leicester is not held centrally. However, the number of firefighters employed in Leicestershire fire and rescue service and England in each year between 1997 and 2005 is tabled as follows:

	Leicestershire			*England*		
	Wholetime firefighter	*Retained duty system firefighter*	*Total*	*Wholetime firefighter*	*Retained duty system firefighter*	*Total*
1997	484	228	712	32,033	13,016	45,049
1998	486	235	721	31,855	12,847	44,702
1999	488	222	710	31,918	13,022	44,940
2000	495	223	718	31,616	13,021	44,637
2001	494	236	730	31,597	13,097	44,694
2002	476	225	701	31,592	13,013	44,605
2003	478	218	696	31,614	13,044	44,658
2004	476	218	694	31,856	13,015	44,871
2005[1]	474	212	686	31,037	13,520	44,557

[1] Figures for 2005 are provisional

The figures provided are a snapshot at 31 March each year

Source

ODPM annual Returns

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many firefighters in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England retired on the grounds of ill-health in each of the last five years. [51501]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The number of firefighters retiring on the grounds of ill-health in Leicester is not held centrally. However, the number of firefighters that retired on the grounds of ill-health in the Leicestershire fire and rescue service and England in each year is tabled as follows:

	Leicestershire			*England*[1]		
	Wholetime firefighter	*Retained duty system firefighter*	*Total*	*Wholetime firefighter*	*Retained duty system firefighter*	*Total*
1999–2000	4	0	4	557	68	625
2000–01	3	1	4	578	69	647
2001–02	6	0	6	570	60	630
2002–03	8	1	9	545	42	587
2003–04	2	0	2	485	46	531

[1] 2000–01 figures for West Sussex are not available

Source:
ODPM annual returns

Leisure Facilities

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the provision of leisure facilities by local authorities in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England. [50446]

Mr. Caborn: I have been asked to reply.

Specific information on the delivery of leisure services by local authorities is not centrally collated. However, information from the Leisure Data Base Company suggests that some 60 per cent. of public leisure facilities in England are managed in-house, 22 per cent. are provided through trusts and 18 per cent. by private contractors.

The Audit Commission is currently undertaking a study into the different types of management arrangements available to local authorities for running their leisure services and how they approach the task of choosing the option best suited to local needs. This is expected to include a consideration of the potential implications of each of the options available.

I will ensure a copy of the study is placed in the House Libraries once it is published.

University Students (Council Tax)

Mr. McGovern: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what estimate he has made of the effect on revenue in each of the last three years of allowing students an exemption from council tax; [51667]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number of university students who lived in households that were not their family home and who paid council tax in 2004–05. [51666]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Vandalism

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of his Office's buildings in the last 12 months. [49496]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has had no recorded incidents of vandalism in the last 12 months.

This answer does not include buildings occupied by Government offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Leader of the House how many staff in his Office are paid on a performance-related basis. [50490]

Mr. Hoon: All staff in the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons are paid on a performance-related basis that includes a mixture of consolidated base pay awards and non-consolidated bonuses both of which are linked to individual performance and delivery.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress has been made with mine clearing in Afghanistan; and whether the UK troops being deployed to Afghanistan in the coming months will be involved in mine clearing. [49308]

Mr. Ingram: DfID has provided support to mine clearance in Afghanistan over a number of years and takes the lead on larger-scale humanitarian decontamination operations. The following table shows the contributions covering the last three years.

£

	HALO Trust	*Mines Advisory Group (MAG)*	*United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)*
2003–04	—	—	2,000,000
2004–05	879,668	583,708	—
2005–06	2,189,428	—	[1]175,000

[1] For coordination

Information obtained from the 2005 Landmine Monitor report estimates that the area of landmine contamination has been reduced from 1,350 square kilometres to 715 square kilometres. In 2004, over 33 square kilometres of mined areas and nearly 70 square

kilometres of battle areas were cleared, destroying over 5,000 antipersonnel mines, 500 antivehicle mines and 1 million other explosives. Significant decreases in new casualties from landmines, Unexploded Ordinance (UXO) and cluster munitions compared with 2003 were also reported.

Teams from the UK Explosive Ordinance Disposal group will react to newly discovered minefields and UXO where there is a threat to coalition forces or their mission. In emergencies, civilian groups can request support from the UK EOD. UK forces co-ordinate with the UN, DfID and civilian contractors to ensure that the threat to local populations from minefields is minimised. This approach will continue as the UK presence increases, though the situation will be kept under review.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 28–29W, on Afghanistan, whether the breakdowns by severity of injuries sustained by service personnel in Afghanistan and Iraq are based on the same definitions; and if he will provide equivalent figures for each theatre of conflict where British troops are deployed. [49634]

John Reid: Standard definitions are used to describe the severity of injuries sustained in military service and these are applied consistently in all circumstances. I stated in my answer of 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 704–05W, that the Ministry of Defence has pledged to provide regularly updated injury statistics for operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan and to publish these on the MOD website. Similar arrangements will apply in future to all major operational deployments overseas, once the system has been successfully introduced.

Ammunition Supplies

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) when he last met representatives of BAE Land Systems at the former Royal Ordnance site at Chorley to discuss ammunition supply; [50986]

(2) when he last met representatives of *(a)* BAE Systems and *(b)* trades unions to discuss the future of Chorley Royal Ordnance; and if he will make a statement. [51526]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not met with representatives of BAE Systems Land Systems at Chorley to discuss ammunition supply.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the value of the contract for ammunition produced at Royal Ordnance Chorley was in each of the last five years. [51528]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The Ministry of Defence contracts for the supply of general munitions with BAE Systems Land Systems under the terms of the Munitions Framework Partnering Agreement.

Division of production between the company's various sites is a matter for BAE Systems Land Systems.

Ascension Island

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions his Department has had with *(a)* the US Defense Department and *(b)* the US Air Force in the last 12 months on the use of the airfield on Ascension Island. [50947]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* There have been no discussions with the US Defense Department or the US Air Force in the last 12 months on the use of the airfield on Ascension Island. However, representatives from the Permanent Joint Headquarters met with the US Air Force Space Command at Peterson AFB Colorado Springs on 5 January 2006 to identify options for efficiencies through burden sharing of facilities on the Island, including those on the airfield.

Defence Vetting Agency

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Defence Vetting Agency carries out overseas checks when processing *(a)* security checks and *(b)* developed vetting. [49754]

Mr. Ingram: The DVA carries out a range of checks appropriate to the level of clearance required and the circumstances and background of the subject to be vetted and this includes overseas checks where appropriate.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many staff in his Department are paid on a performance-related basis. [50080]

Mr. Touhig: Based on the numbers of staff as at the end of January 2006, around 82,000 staff receive an annual consolidated pay rise based on satisfactory performance. This includes civilian staff covered by the main departmental pay deal, those working in trading funds and the senior civil service. These staff also have performance management arrangements in place from which they are eligible for non-consolidated awards. There are also civilian staff including police, fire, teachers and medical staff whose pay is linked to counterparts outside the Department which means their pay is determined by whatever system is in place for their analogous link.

The armed forces also receive consolidated pay rise based on satisfactory performance but have not been included in the above figures.

Gulf War-related Illnesses

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is his latest assessment of the *(a)* scale, *(b)* nature and *(c)* causes of Gulf War-related illnesses. [50300]

Mr. Touhig: Over 53,000 United Kingdom Servicemen and women deployed to the Gulf in 1990–91. We do not know how many UK Gulf veterans are ill or what illnesses they have reported because there is no single database, not least with respect to those who have left the armed forces whose current records the Department does not hold. However, at the end of September 2005, some 2,960 Gulf veterans were in receipt of a war disablement pension and 2,445 veterans had received a gratuity for

disablements assessed at under 20 per cent. There will be some overlap between those figures, as some individuals will have received first a gratuity and then, if this disablement has become more severe, a pension. The awards will not necessarily relate to the individual's service in the Gulf and we would expect a substantial proportion to relate to non-Gulf service.

In some cases veterans' illnesses are due to disorders which are unrelated to service. The majority will be musculo-skeletal conditions relating most commonly to injuries sustained in training, operations or fitness activities. Others are recognised medical conditions such as PTSD, where service links may again be accepted. A third group relates to multi-system, multi-organ, non-specific, medically unexplained symptoms and illnesses which epidemiological evidence shows are not specific to, but are more common among those who served in 1990–91.

The pattern of ill health is not unique to UK Gulf veterans, and is repeated among 1990–91 Gulf veterans from the other coalition countries. Evidence so far suggests that this is unaffected by the specific experiences and exposures of the personnel concerned. Similar symptoms and illness are also reported among personnel who did not deploy. There is no consensus either in the US or the UK as to the causes of the non-specific conditions commonly covered by the umbrella term "Gulf War Syndrome".

HELEN Laser

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 825W, on the HELEN laser, whether AWE has supplied *(a)* the Environment Agency and *(b)* the local planning authority with the required method statement detailing remediation requirements to minimise the impact on ground and surface waters as a result of the construction of the new ORION laser at Aldermaston. [50858]

John Reid: A site investigation undertaken as part of the planning process revealed that there is no requirement for any remediation and therefore no requirement for a method statement. The local planning authority agree with this analysis. The results of the site investigation have been provided to the Environment Agency.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 825W, on the HELEN laser, what *(a)* construction work has already taken place and *(b)* has begun on the new ORION laser at Aldermaston. [50859]

John Reid: Construction work on the allocated site for the ORION laser facility has not commenced. The work currently ongoing is site clearance and enabling work only.

Iraq

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has held with *(a)* Ministers in his Department and *(b)* defence staff regarding proposals to withdraw troops from Iraq in the next 12 months. [50363]

John Reid: I meet regularly with Ministers and defence officials to discuss our commitments in Iraq and other operational theatres. As I have made clear to the House, any withdrawal of UK troops from Iraq will be conditions based and will not be driven by arbitrary timetables.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on which dates *(a)* he and *(b)* Ministers in his Department have visited British soldiers injured in Iraq; and what locations were visited. [50366]

John Reid: I have visited British Service personnel who were wounded in Iraq on four occasions since May 2005. My predecessor visited on three occasions since the start of Operation Telic. Other Defence Ministers have made 13 visits between them. The detail of the visits is as follows:

Secretary of State for Defence

Date	*Location of visit*
April 2003	Royal Centre for Defence Medicine (RCDM), Birmingham
December 2003	Shaibah Field Hospital, Iraq
June 2004	Shaibah
May 2005	Shaibah
December 2005	Shaibah
January 2006	Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre, Headley Court
January 2006	RCDM (in a private capacity as part of a wider official visit)

Under-Secretary of State for Defence and Minister for Veterans

Date	*Location of visit*
February 2004	Chilwell Rehabilitation Centre
March 2004	Shaibah
March 2004	Cyprus
October 2004	Joint HQ Medical Centre, Germany
February 2005	RCDM
September 2005	RCDM (in a private capacity as part of a wider official visit)

Minister for the Armed Forces

Date	*Location of visit*
May 2003	Shaibah
October 2003	Shaibah
March 2005	Shaibah
June 2005	RCDM

Minister for Defence Procurement

Date	*Location of visit*
April 2004	Shaibah
July 2005	Shaibah
November 2005	RCDM

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has discussed with his counterparts in Arab nations the partial replacement of coalition troops in Iraq with their forces following the beginning of a reduction in British troop presence. [51579]

John Reid: Our aim is to put the Iraqis in charge of their own security, when the appropriate conditions have been met. We continue to encourage Arab nations to support the emerging democracy in Iraq, but not specifically for troop contributions.

Senior Officers

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* commodores and *(b)* admirals were on the active list in the Royal Navy in each year since 1997; and what the total strength of the Royal Navy was in each year. [50180]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 February 2006]*: The numbers of Commodores/Brigadiers and Admirals/Generals on the Active List in the Royal Navy/Royal Marines each year since 1997 was:

	Royal Navy		Royal Marines	
As at April each year	*Admirals*	*Commodores*	*Generals*	*Brigadiers*
1997	40	[1]	1	[1]
1998	40	[1]	1	[1]
1999	40	[1]	2	[1]
2000	40	[1]	3	10
2001	40	[1]	4	4
2002	40	7	4	7
2003	40	10	4	8
2004	40	40	4	7
2005	50	50	4	7

[1] Brigadier/Commodores were not included as substantive ranks in the RN/RM Active list at these times.

The total strength of the Royal Naval Services (RN/RM) each year since 1997, showing the Admirals/Commodores and equivalents included on the strength, was:

	Adm/Gen	*Cdre/Brig*	*Trained Strength*	*Untrained Strength*	*Total Strength*
April 1997	40	80	41,680	3,470	45,150
April 1998	40	90	40,360	4,110	44,470
April 1999	40	100	39,070	4,630	43,700
April 2000	40	90	38,540	4,310	42,850
April 2001	40	90	38,020	4,400	42,420
April 2002	40	90	36,770	4,860	41,630
April 2003	40	90	36,590	4,960	41,550
April 2004	40	90	36,380	4,500	40,880
April 2005	50	80	35,420	4,520	39,940
December 2005	50	80	34,860	4,560	39,430

Notes

1. The Admiral/Commodore strengths above include Medical Officers and the Chaplain of the Fleet, who are not included on the Active List.
2. The Active List figures includes some 4-star Admirals (between 7–11 over the period) who have retired and are not included in the regular strengths.
3. Commodore/Brigadiers strengths include those who were classed as Commodores even before this was considered a separate substantive rank.
4. Regular Strengths exclude Full Time Reserve Service and Mobilised Reservist.
5. "Admirals" includes Rear Admirals and Vice Admirals, "Generals" includes Major Generals and Lieutenant Generals.
6. All figures have been rounded to the nearest 10 except for figures under 10. Figures ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what trends he has identified in the numbers of senior officers appointed to each of the services since 1997, as a proportion of the overall size of each service. [50183]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 February 2006]*: The number of personnel promoted to ranks equivalent to NATO rank OF-7 and above (which equates to rear admirals, major generals and air vice marshals), the average strength of each service and the promotions as a proportion of average strength, in each financial year 1996–97 to 2004–05, are shown in the following table:

Number of promotions to	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Naval Service									
OF-7 and above[1]	8	10	12	13	8	11	12	9	20
Average strength[2]	46,320	44,660	44,010	43,260	42,550	41,840	41,420	41,180	40,360
Promotions as a proportion of average strength (percentage)	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.05
Army									
OF-7 and above[1]	17	11	14	13	13	9	20	10	20
Average strength[2]	108,530	109,300	109,800	109,890	109,290	109,290	110,680	112,550	111,040
Promotions as a proportion of average strength (percentage)	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02
RAF									
OF-7 and above[1]	6	12	17	7	11	9	11	16	11
Average strength[2]	61,910	56,340	55,510	54,930	54,230	53,270	52,950	53,240	52,710
Promotions as a proportion of average strength (percentage)	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.02

[1] For the purpose of this question, senior officers are considered to be those equivalent to NATO rank OF-7 and above. This is consistent with the coverage of the Senior Salaries Review Body.

[2] Average strength is calculated as a 13 month centred average of the strength in the individual months.

Notes

1. Figures are for UK regular forces (including both trained and untrained personnel) and therefore exclude Gurkhas, Full Time Reserve Service personnel, the Home Service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment, Mobilised Reservists and Naval Activated Reservists.
2. Figures less than 100 have been left unrounded so as not to obscure the data.
3. Percentages are calculated from unrounded figures.
4. When rounding to the nearest 10, numbers ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.
5. The table shows the number of promotions in a given financial year.

Source: DASA (Tri-Service)

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Departmental Staff

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans her Department has to change the London allowance of its staff; and if she will make a statement. [50013]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport does not pay a London allowance and has no plans to introduce one. All of the Department's staff are based in central London.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many of her Department's staff are paid on a performance-related basis. [50081]

Mr. Lammy: All permanent staff employed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport are paid on a performance-related basis.

Engagements

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will visit Shrewsbury to open the new caravan centre there. [51270]

James Purnell: Neither my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State nor I have any plans to visit Shrewsbury to open the new caravan centre. I will be pleased to consider an invitation to do so in the future, should circumstances permit.

Football Foundation

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what schemes have been financed by the Football Foundation in *(a)* Leicestershire and *(b)* Loughborough constituency area since it was established. [51127]

Mr. Caborn: The Loughborough constituency has received 13 junior kit vouchers worth £5,200 as well as a Barclays Spaces for Sport Coaching pack worth £750. Further applications to the foundation's capital projects, small grants scheme, junior kit and stand up speak up scheme are currently under consideration with a total project cost of £333,930.

Leicestershire itself has received £3,119,834 of foundation funds towards 96 projects with a total value of £9,026,748. A further £1,311,944 worth of projects are now under consideration.

Licensing

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many appeals under the Licensing Act 2003 *(a)* have been lodged with local authorities since 24 November 2005, *(b)* have been determined and *(c)* are outstanding; and what the estimated cost is to the courts system of determining such appeals. [50469]

James Purnell: The Government are monitoring the pattern of appeals, in particular with the 10 Scrutiny Councils, but we do not currently hold information on the number and cost of appeals across all licensing authorities.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with *(a)* the Department of Health on the possible effects of the implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 on requirements for (i) staffing and (ii) funding for accident and emergency departments and *(b)* the Home Office regarding the implications of that Act for the cost of policing late night drinking in town and city centres. [50470]

James Purnell: The Licensing Act 2003 was subject to consultation and agreement across Government, including the Department of Health and the Home Office. Licensing reform is part of the Government's Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy which considered the cost of alcohol harm to public services, including health and the police.

On the specific impact of the implementation of Licensing Act 2003, the Government believes that the removal of artificially fixed closing times will encourage a more orderly and gradual dispersal of customers which, together with the tough new powers for the police, should help reduce the level of violent crime which the police and accident and emergency departments are required to deal with.

Local Authority Leisure Facilities

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the effect of the transfer of leisure facilities from local authority control to sports trusts on their ability to access capital for the improvement of their facilities. [51547]

Mr. Caborn: Specific information on the transfer of ownership of leisure centres from local authorities to newly-formed charitable trusts is not centrally collated. However, information from the Leisure Data Base Company suggests that approximately one-fifth of public leisure facilities in England are provided through trusts.

My Department recognises the importance of this issue in ensuring the continued sustainability of publicly provided sports facilities. The Audit Commission is currently undertaking a study into the different types of management arrangements available to local authorities for running these services and how they approach the task of choosing the option best suited to local needs. This is expected to include a consideration of the potential implications of each of these options, including for charitable trusts.

I will ensure a copy of the study is placed in the House Libraries once it is published.

National Sports Foundation

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport where the National Sports Foundation will be based. [51128]

Mr. Caborn: The National Sports Foundation (NSF) will be based at Sport England's offices and will use their existing administrative systems for the processing of applications. The NSF will however have a distinct identity and its own website.

Sport (Drug Testing)

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many drug tests have been carried out by UK Sport on members of the British 2006 Winter Olympics team in the 12 months prior to the Turin games. [51786]

Mr. Caborn: There were 52 tests carried out on the 40 members of the British Winter Olympic squad in the 12 months leading up to the 2006 Turin Winter Olympic Games.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many drug tests were undertaken by UK Sport in 2004–05; how many prime facie adverse findings there were for *(a)* male and *(b)* female sports people in 2004–05; and how many findings were of performance-enhancing drugs. [51812]

Mr. Caborn: The UK's national anti-doping organisation, UK Sport, undertook a total of 6,520 anti-doping tests in 2004–05. Of these, 60 male athletes and one female athlete were found to have committed anti-doping infringements. In the same period there were a total of 57 findings for performance-enhancing drugs and four infringements for missed tests.

Television Licences

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people over 75 are in receipt of free television licences in each Northern Ireland constituency; and what percentage of viewing households in each constituency the figure represents. [51324]

James Purnell: TV Licensing, who administer free television licences for people aged 75 or over as agents for the BBC, are not able to provide geographical breakdowns of the number of free licences issued. However, the estimated number of benefit units claiming the retirement pension in each parliamentary constituency in Northern Ireland, where at least one person is aged 75 years or over, and the percentage this represents of all households in the constituency, is:

Constituency	*Retirement pension benefit units with at least one person aged 75 or over*[1]	*Percentage of total households in constituency*[2]
Belfast East	5,802	16.7
Belfast North	5,227	14.4
Belfast South	5,004	12.6
Belfast West	3,610	11.6
East Antrim	4,016	12.2
East Londonderry	3,956	12.3
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	4,046	12.6
Foyle	3,476	9.7
Lagan Valley	4,796	12.5
Mid Ulster	3,541	12.5
Newry and Armagh	4,370	12.7
North Antrim	5,265	14.0
North Down	5,503	15.8
South Antrim	4,038	11.0
South Down	4,772	13.4
Strangford	4,713	12.4
Upper Bann	4,468	11.6
West Tyrone	3,523	12.1
Missing postcode*	1,199	–

* In producing this analysis, individual records were attributed to parliamentary constituencies (PC's) on the basis of their postcode. Not all records can be correctly allocated to a PC using this method, and some cannot be allocated at all. Past investigation has demonstrated that mis-allocations and non-allocations do not necessarily occur randomly between areas, and at ward level the proportion of records mis-allocated or unallocated can be substantial. At present, it seems likely that a higher than average proportion of the records that cannot be attributed to a ward are in the following areas: Fermanagh district council, Deny district council and parts of Belfast city council.

Sources:

1 Department for Social Development. Figures taken from Retirement Pension scan dated 5 November 2005.

2 Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency Census 2001 Output Key Statistics.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many pensioners over 75 years of age in Tamworth constituency are in receipt of a free television licence. [51411]

James Purnell: TV Licensing, who administer free television licences for people aged 75 or over as agents for the BBC, are not able to provide geographical breakdowns of the number of free licences issued. However, the number of households with at least one person aged 75 or over claiming the winter fuel payment in the Tamworth constituency in 2004–05 was 4,005, according to Department for Work and Pensions records.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions have taken place with each of Afghanistan's neighbouring countries on *(a)* blocking of supply routes for and *(b)* confiscation of opium; and what the results were of those discussions. [48932]

Dr. Howells: Regular discussions on counter narcotics (CN) issues take place between the UK and Afghanistan's neighbouring countries. The aim of these meetings is to work towards improving the capacity of the latter to interdict drugs entering their countries from Afghanistan. These discussions take place in bilateral,

multilateral and regional frameworks. There are also a series of inter-regional meetings between Afghanistan and her neighbours to foster CN information and intelligence exchange.

Results of these discussions are encouraging. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) report that seizure rates of opiates in the countries surrounding Afghanistan has increased reflecting improved enforcement activities in the region. Much of this can be attributed to the regular dialogue to improve information/intelligence sharing and donor assistance to strengthen Afghanistan's neighbours borders. The UNODC World Drug Report 2005 reports the countries with the largest total opiates seizures for 2003 (latest available published figures) were Pakistan (34.7 mt) and Iran (26.1 mt)-equivalent to 31 per cent. and 24 per cent. of global opiate seizures respectively.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what his estimate is of the *(a)* farm gate value and *(b)* export value of opium production in (i) Nimrooz, (ii) Farah, (iii) Ghor, (iv) Oruzgan, (v) Kandahar and (vi) Helmand provinces in each of the last five years; [50347]

(2) what his estimate is of *(a)* the area of poppy fields and *(b)* the level of opium production in (i) Nimrooz, (ii) Farah, (iii) Ghor, (iv) Oruzgan, (v) Kandahar and (vi) Helmand provinces in each of the last five years. [50348]

Dr. Howells: We have made no such assessment. However, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) publishes information relating to the global illicit cultivation of opium poppy and the production of opium and heroin in its annual Afghanistan Opium Survey. Full details can be found on their website at:

http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crop_monitoring.html#afg.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what measures he is taking to prevent *(a)* corruption and *(b)* infiltration by militants among (i) police and (ii) provincial politicians in Helmand. [50352]

Dr. Howells: Tackling corruption across Afghanistan was recognised as a major challenge by delegations attending the London Conference on Afghanistan from 31 January–1 February. It features prominently in the Afghanistan Compact, the framework document setting out the agreed priorities for Afghanistan's long-term reconstruction. The Afghan Government is committed to ratifying the UN Convention against Corruption by end 2006, and to put in place the necessary supporting legislation by end 2007. This will benefit all of Afghanistan.

In this context, the focus of our effort in Helmand will be to build institutional capacity in governance and to reduce the corrosive influence of the drugs trade. We will provide support to the Governor of Helmand training and mentoring for the police and judicial authorities and advice and mentoring for the counter-narcotics police. The task of securing against infiltration by militants will be achieved both by the training and support provided to the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police, and by the presence of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence's statement of 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1529, announced the UK's contribution.

Ascension Island

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the UK's estimated contingent liabilities attributable to Ascension Island are; what the liabilities were estimated to be in 1999; and if he will make a statement. [50935]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: We do not seek to place a precise monetary value on the contingent liabilities that the UK faces due to its relationship with the Overseas Territories. We recognise, however, that liabilities exist in a wide variety of areas including maritime safety and security, aviation safety and security, natural disasters, judicial matters, international financial services and domestic financial issues.

We do not consider that the UK's contingent liabilities due to its relationship with Ascension Island have changed materially since 1999 as the relationship has not changed.

Cuba

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list meetings in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* USA and *(c)* elsewhere that have taken place between (i) Ministers and (ii) officials of his Department with (A) Caleb McCarry and (B) officials of the Cuba Transition programme within the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [50778]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Caleb McCarry was appointed as the Cuba Transition Co-ordinator in July 2005 following the recommendations of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba. The Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba consists of senior US politicians, not officials. Ministers have met with many of these politicians over the past 12 months, but not in their capacity as members of the Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba. In the last 12 months, Ministers have not met with Caleb McCarry and officials have met with him only once in London on 7 November 2005.

Cyprus

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his recent visit to Cyprus. [50679]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary's answer to the House on 7 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 733–36.

Departmental Staff

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans his Department has to change the London allowance of its staff; and if he will make a statement. [50012]

Mr. Straw: None.

EU Sugar Regime

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received on the effects of reform of the EU sugar regime on African, Caribbean and Pacific sugar producers. [49630]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Governments of sugar producing countries have made their concerns about the effect of the EU sugar reform clear. Specific representations were made to my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary during his visit to Jamaica in October 2005 and to my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in November 2005.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with other Government Departments on help to African, Caribbean and Pacific countries to mitigate the effect on jobs of reform of the EU sugar regime. [49664]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Officials from the relevant Government Departments, including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the Department for the Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs, the Department for International Development (DFID) and Her Majesty's Treasury, have met frequently under Cabinet Office coordination in recent months to discuss ways of helping African, Caribbean and Pacific sugar producers adjust to the reform of the EU sugar regime, and to secure the support of the European Commission and other member states for an adequate level of assistance. The subject has also been discussed in meetings between the Parliamentary Under-Secretaries at the FCO and DFID.

Falkland Islands

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the total oil production in the Falkland Islands was in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2005. [50762]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: No oil was produced in the Falkland Islands in 2001, 2002 and 2005.

Foreign Travel (Health and Safety)

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many UK citizens have *(a)* died and *(b)* been seriously injured as a result of crowd action or stampedes surrounding the annual Hajj to Saudi Arabia in each of the last 20 years. [51542]

Dr. Howells: We are unable to provide definitive figures for the number of British Nationals killed as a result of crowd action or stampedes at the Hajj in the last 20 years as our consular records do not list deaths by this category. Generally, we also only have records of those cases in which consular assistance has been sought and only keep these for three years after our last action on the case. We are aware, however, of three British Nationals who died as a result of the stampede at Mina on 11 January 2006. Consular staff in Jeddah and in London provided the families of the three with assistance, and were also aware of a further two British Nationals who suffered minor injuries.

Gibraltar

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the precise location is of the wreck of HMS Sussex off the coast of Gibraltar; and whether this site is in international waters. [50540]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The wreck, which we believe could be The Sussex, lies in the Straits of Gibraltar. We cannot give exact details of its location due to concerns about the security of the wreck, but it lies outside British Gibraltar territorial waters in international waters.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs why the British Government have not claimed the 12 nautical miles on the eastern shoreline of Gibraltar to which it is entitled under the UN law of the sea convention. [50541]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Under international law, States are entitled, but not required, to extend their territorial sea up to a maximum breadth of 12 nautical miles. Where the coasts of two States are opposite or adjacent, the general rule is that neither is entitled, unless they agree otherwise, to extend its territorial sea beyond the median line. The UK Government considers that a limit of three nautical miles is sufficient in the case of Gibraltar.

Gulf of Aden (Trafficking)

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of *(a)* illegal trafficking of (i) arms, (ii) people and (iii) cigarettes across the Gulf of Aden and *(b)* the implications of trafficking on the funding of terrorism; and if he will make a statement. [51423]

Dr. Howells: The Gulf of Aden is used for illegal trafficking, but because of its clandestine nature it is impossible to make an accurate assessment of the scale of trafficking. The UK provides substantial support and training to the Yemeni coastguard to boost interdiction efforts.

We do not have any evidence of a systematic link between illegal trafficking of arms, people and cigarettes across the Gulf of Aden and the funding of terrorism.

India

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support the Government provides to religious freedom organisations in *(a)* Madhya Pradesh and *(b)* elsewhere in India. [51131]

Dr. Howells: None. However, through our High Commission in Delhi we provide support to some human rights groups whose activities include support for freedom of religion.

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans his Department has to meet representatives of the Indian government to discuss religious militant groups threatening Christian minorities. [51132]

Dr. Howells: None. However, the Deputy High Commissioner plans to meet the Minorities Commission in New Delhi, when he will raise concerns about freedom of worship for all minorities. Through our High

Commission we regularly raise such concerns with non-governmental organisations and the relevant Indian authorities.

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the *(a)* Indian government and *(b)* Madhya Pradesh State government on the attacks against minority Christians on 25 to 28 January in Madhya Pradesh. [51133]

Dr. Howells: None. However, through our High Commission in New Delhi we have regular contact with the Indian authorities in New Delhi and with non-governmental organisations and raise our general concerns about problems experienced by religious minorities in India.

International Arrest Warrants

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government have received from officials from other countries on changes in the law on seeking international warrants for the arrest of people suspected of serious human rights abuses; and if he will list the countries which have made such representations. [50425]

Ian Pearson: The Government are currently considering a range of issues relating to the issuing of arrest warrants in international cases, but has not yet concluded what changes, if any, are required to current legislation. Any proposals for amending the current legislation would be a matter for Parliament. The Government have received representations from the Government of Israel. All views expressed, by both Governments and non-governmental organisations, will be considered during the Government's analysis of this issue.

Iran

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of sites in Iran that the Iranian Government are using in the research, development and production of nuclear technologies. [51385]

Dr. Howells: In its report of November 2004, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) identified 22 facilities at nine locations as being "relevant to the implementation of Agency Safeguards". Under its voluntary implementation of the provisions of the additional protocol, Iran also declared a further four facilities at three additional locations.

In connection with its voluntary suspension of enrichment-related activities, Iran also notified the IAEA of a number of engineering facilities involved in domestic manufacture of uranium enrichment centrifuge components. The IAEA has in addition sought access to sites at Lavisan-Shian and Parchin to establish whether any nuclear-related activities have taken place there.

Further details can be found on the IAEA's website: www.iaea.org.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what evidence he has received of Iranian infiltration into southern Iraq. [51448]

Dr. Howells: As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has said, the nature of some explosive devices used in Iraq, including against British troops, leads us to suspect either Iranian elements or Lebanese Hezbollah. We are unable to provide further details as to do so could prejudice the capability, effectiveness, and security of the armed forces.

Kosovo

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will place in the Library copies of the recent statements made by senior British officials in Serbia on Kosovo's independence. [51578]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: A copy of the Contact Group Ministerial statement of 31 January has already been placed in the Library of the House. John Sawers, Political Director in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, made a number of comments to the press during his recent visit to the region. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him today (UIN 51514). We do not hold formal transcripts of these.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what conclusions the Contact Group has reached on the question of Kosovan independence. [51580]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: On 31 January, in the margins of the Afghanistan Conference, the Contact Group met in London to discuss Kosovo. Following this meeting, Contact Group Ministers issued a statement, which has been placed in the Library of the House.

The Contact Group in its 'Guiding Principles' ruled out options that would not contribute to long-term security and stability in Kosovo and the wider region. These included no partition of Kosovo and no union of Kosovo with any country or part of any country. These 'Guiding Principles' have also been placed in the Library of the House.

Middle East

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the impact of the closure of the Karni crossing in the Gaza Strip on the Palestinian economy; and if he will make a statement. [50473]

Dr. Howells: The Karni crossing point between Israel and Gaza reopened on 5 February. The United Nations Office for Humanitarian Affairs estimates Palestinian losses at US$500,000 a day during the closure. It is essential for the Palestinian economy that crossing points in and out of Gaza remain open. We condemn recent attacks by Palestinian militants on the Karni and Erez checkpoints which can only hinder efforts to improve access to Gaza and the economic prospects of the area. We will continue to support the work of Quartet Special Envoy James Wolfensohn in helping to

implement this agreement and urge both parties to fulfil their obligations under the Movement and Access Agreement.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what discussions the Government have had with *(a)* Israel and *(b)* the Palestinian Authority on ensuring that it fulfils its obligations under the Road Map; [50684]

(2) what the *(a)* current status and *(b)* future direction are of the Israeli-Palestinian Road Map. [50688]

Dr. Howells: Neither side has met its full Phase One commitments. As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary told the House on 7 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 735,

> "we, along with our EU partners, will continue to work with the Palestinians, the Israelis and the international community to make progress on the road map, to which both the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and the Israeli Government remain committed".

Official Residences

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the official residences for which his Department is responsible; who occupies each one; what the annual cost is of running each property; what contribution the occupants of each make towards running costs; what the total capital and refurbishment expenditure was on those properties in 2004-05; how much was spent in each property on *(a)* flowers and plants, *(b)* wine and entertaining, *(c)* food, *(d)* telephone bills and *(e)* electricity and gas in 2004-05; how many (i) domestic and (ii) maintenance staff are employed at each property, broken down by post; and what the total cost of staff employment was in 2004-05. [50877]

Mr. Straw: In the UK, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) maintains official residential accommodation and conference facilities at 1 Carlton Gardens, London. The running costs in 2004-05 for the residential accommodation, on the second and third floors and currently unoccupied, are as follows:

	2004-05 (£)
Maintenance	1,109
Renovation (Capital and refurbishment)	Nil
Council Tax	1,089
Running costs	
Rent	54,772
Utilities	735
Total	57,705

No maintenance or domestic staff are employed. There are no separate records available for expenditure on *(a)* flowers and plants, *(b)* wine and entertaining, *(c)* food, *(d)* telephone bills at this property but as the premises are currently unoccupied no expenditure on these items will have arisen apart from the phone rental.

The separate conference facilities on the ground and first floor are used frequently for official meetings and entertainment.

The FCO is also responsible for running Head of Missions' Residences overseas. The budgets for this are held at Posts; the information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Overseas Territories

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with British overseas territories to establish how much support they gave to international development in 2005. [50248]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right. hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has had no discussions with the Governments of the British overseas territories regarding how much support they gave to international development in 2005.

Palestine

Mr. Burrowes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 7 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 736, on Palestinian elections, whether it is Government policy that a Hamas-led Palestinian Authority which commits itself to the principle for non-violence will not receive financial assistance unless Hamas renounces its commitment to destroy the State of Israel. [51180]

Dr. Howells: As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister said at the Liaison Committee on 7 February

> 'We have said we will not be able to have contact with an Hamas-led government unless it is clear that they are prepared to forswear that part of their constitution that says they want rid of the State of Israel and that they are prepared to embrace democratic and non violent means of achieving an independent, viable Palestinian state. If they do not make those changes that will stand in the way of us being able to help.'

Serbia and Montenegro

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether his Political Director discussed with representatives of the Serbian government acceptance of Kosovo's independence during his recent visit to Serbia. [51514]

Mr. Douglas Alexander *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* John Sawers, Political Director at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, met Prime Minister Kostunica of Serbia and other Serbian representatives on his trip to Belgrade. He also visited Kosovo. The purpose of these visits was to follow up the 31 January 2006 Contact Group Ministerial meeting.

Mr. Sawers gave a number of messages to his interlocutors in line with the recommendations Martti Ahtisaari, the UN status envoy, gave to Ministers at the 31 January meeting. The messages Mr. Sawers gave in his private meetings in both Belgrade and Pristina were fully consistent with the Contact Group statement and the Guiding Principles, both of which have been placed in the Library of the House.

The 31 January statement makes clear that the outcome of the final status should be acceptable to the people of Kosovo. In response to questions from the media, Mr. Sawers noted that independence for Kosovo was an option, and that some might say it was the only sustainable option. The legacy of the Milosevic era in Kosovo—violence, ethnic cleansing and the conflict in 1999—had led to the present UN mandate, and the future status process would need to reflect this background. It was incumbent on the Kosovo Albanians to create the conditions under which their aspirations could be met. That meant arrangements in Kosovo that guaranteed minority rights, protected Serb historic and cultural monuments and allowed those displaced from Kosovo to return.

Trade Boycotts

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to try to end boycotts of Western goods in Islamic countries. [50527]

Dr. Howells: Where there is evidence of an official boycott of goods and discrimination against an EU member state, we support action by the European Commission to resolve the issue. For example, at the 7 November 2005 General Affairs and External Relations Council, the European Union called on Iran to lift all discriminatory restrictions against individual member states, which could impact negatively on Iran's stated desire to pursue greater co-operation with the EU.

Uganda

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with *(a)* the UN, *(b)* the African Union and *(c)* the Governments of African countries where the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) operates on how to take forward the aims of the International Criminal Court in relation to the LRA. [49957]

Ian Pearson: The aim of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in relation to the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) is to ensure that the five commanders with arrest warrants issued for them are detained and brought to The Hague to face trial. The UK supports the ICC's efforts to bring to justice the perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

We have stressed to the Governments of Uganda, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) their obligations to detain the LRA commanders facing arrest warrants. We, and the ICC, are in close contact with the African Union and the UN. On 23 January 2006, the UN force in DRC (MONUC) demonstrated in its operation in Garamba National Park, that it is committed to tackling the LRA contingent based in DRC.

UK Overseas Territories

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the value was of the agricultural products imported by UK overseas territories in *(a)* 2000 and *(b)* 2005. [50764]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: The Government of the territory is responsible for the compilation of statistics of this kind and several of them have been unable to provide the information requested. The most up-to-date information available on the value of agricultural products imported by the UK overseas territories is as follows:

£

	2000	2003	2004	2005
Anguilla	7,649,470	—	—	12,572,036
Bermuda	60,749,079	—	—	79,008,740
British Antarctic Territory	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
British Indian Ocean Territory	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
British Virgin Islands	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Cayman Islands	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Falkland Islands	3,575,042	4,100,704		
Gibraltar	32,600,000	—	16,700,000	
Montserrat	19,823.00	—		3,447.00
Pitcairn	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
St. Helena	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Ascension Island	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Tristan da Cunha	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Sovereign Base Areas (Akrotiri and Dhekelia)	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Turks and Caicos Islands	14,588,275	—	18,693,089	—

[1] Detailed figures for the import of agricultural products are not available.

Note:
Beverages and spirits are included in the total amount for agricultural imports.

United Nations

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made towards a UN rapid reaction capability for traditional peace-keeping operations. [50163]

Dr. Howells: The UN world summit in September 2005 supported and encouraged the development of rapid deployment arrangements in support of UN peacekeeping. In particular, it welcomed efforts by regional organisations such as the European Union and African Union to develop relevant capabilities.

The UN Department of peacekeeping operations is currently considering three options to provide timely additional support to UN missions at times of crisis: provision of a rapid deployment capability by regional organisations; provision of a short-term capability by

one or more individual countries; and providing co-operation arrangements between UN missions in the same region. The report recommends that all these options be considered in parallel.

Progress has already been made on two of these recommendations. In the area of regional rapid reaction, the EU and UN are discussing how the EU battle groups could be used in appropriate circumstances in support of UN missions. The EU is currently considering a request from the UN to provide additional support to the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo during elections later this year. The African Union is also taking steps towards the establishment of an African stand-by force, supported by the UK and other international partners.

Progress is also being made on arrangements between UN missions. The Security Council has recently authorised the deployment of a force from the UN mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to support UN forces in Cote d' Ivoire in view of recent events there. Similarly UNMIL is providing a contingency force to support the UN forces providing security for the Sierra Leone special court, should the need arise.

The UK is playing an active role in both the UN and EU in developing appropriate rapid reaction capabilities in support of UN peacekeeping operations.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in developing the UN standby arrangements system. [50164]

Mr. Straw: The United Nations stand-by arrangements system (UNSAS) has been introduced by the UN to increase the availability of forces for peacekeeping operations, and to reduce the time taken for their deployment. The system is based on conditional commitments made by UN member states to make available specified military and other resources within agreed response times. The system has taken some time to bed down, but is now proving increasingly useful for the generation of force units and the provision of individuals, including military observers and staff officers, to peacekeeping operations.

The UN Secretary-General recently reported that force generation for complex peacekeeping missions in Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Burundi and Haiti have shown that resources pledged are now more adequate to mission needs and that the declarations made by member states under the UNSAS arrangements are more realistic and up to date. However, getting member states to commit forces to rapid deployment as part of the UNSAS process has shown limited success. The UN's Department of peacekeeping operations is examining ways of making it more attractive for member states to commit to rapid deployments as part of UNSAS.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in developing the Multinational Stand-by Forces High Readiness Brigade for UN operations. [50165]

Mr. Straw: The establishment of the multinational Stand-by Forces High Readiness Brigade in 1996 (SHIRBRIG) followed a recommendation from the UN Secretary General that UN member states should consider establishing a rapid deployment force to support UN peacekeeping operations. SHIRBRIG was established by Austria, Canada, Denmark, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Sweden. Fifteen countries now participate in the brigade, with a number of others taking part as observers.

SHIRBRIG is available to take part in Security Council-mandated operations for a period of up to six months. It is able to provide an initial headquarters and planning capability as part of the start-up of an operation, or to deploy as a whole brigade as part of a UN peacekeeping operation.

SHIRBRIG is made up of three elements: a Steering Committee which makes policy and oversees force generation and deployment; a Planning Element which serves as the nucleus for the force headquarters and plans for individual deployments; and a Brigade Pool of Forces consisting of the troops made available to SHIRBRIG by the participating countries. The Brigade aims to be able to deploy 4,000–5,000 troops.

Since its inception, SHIRBRIG has made the following deployments:

In 2000, SHIRBRIG deployed a headquarters, an infantry battalion and a headquarters company to the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

In March 2003, SHIRBRIG provided a planning team to assist the Economic Community of West African States in the planning of a peacekeeping mission in Côte d'Ivoire.

In September 2003, SHIRBRIG deployed 20 members to assist the UN to form the core of the Interim UN headquarters in Liberia.

In 2005, SHIRBRIG's Planning Element provided the core for the Headquarters of the new UN Mission in Sudan.

Uranium Enrichment

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is on which countries may legitimately operate uranium enrichment facilities. [50211]

Dr. Howells: The nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) affirms the right of all parties, including non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS), to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Pursuit of peaceful nuclear technology by these states, including the more sensitive aspects of the fuel cycle such as enrichment of uranium, may be undertaken provided the state does so in conformity with articles I, II and III of the treaty. Article III of the treaty requires all NNWS states party to have International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards on such facilities in order to verify the fulfilment of the state's obligations under the NPT. The safeguards required under article III are to be applied to all nuclear material under the state's control.

The three states not party to the NPT (India, Pakistan and Israel) are not bound by the provisions of the treaty.

Yemen

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the security situation in Yemen. [51425]

Dr. Howells: We are concerned about the security situation in Yemen, in particular because of the recent escape of 23 al-Qaeda prisoners and also the spate of kidnappings of Western tourists in December 2005 and January. We judge that there is a continuing high threat from terrorism.

I visited Yemen in January and emphasised to Government Ministers that determined action against terrorist threats was vital. The UK is providing practical Counter Terrorism support to Yemen.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the activities of *(a)* al-Qaeda and *(b)* Islamic fundamentalists in Yemen. [51426]

Dr. Howells: We are aware that members of al-Qaeda and other similar groups continue to exist in Yemen and we monitor reports on their activities there. We maintain a wide-ranging dialogue with the Government of Yemen which includes security issues, in particular counter-terrorism (CT). We have an extensive programme of CT capacity-building with the Yemeni authorities; this includes training of the coastguard, as well as training in investigative techniques, forensic science and crime scene management. During my recent visit to Yemen, I expressed the hope that our CT relationship would continue to develop, with an enhanced two-way flow of co-operation.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of whether the Jawf and Mareb tribes in Yemen have contact with *(a)* al-Qaeda and *(b)* other Islamic fundamentalist groups; and if he will make a statement. [51437]

Dr. Howells: Al-Jawf and Marib are regions of Yemen where members of al-Qaeda and related groups are known to have been present. It is possible that tribes living in these areas have offered funding and/or logistical assistance to members of such groups; this support may have been with or without tribal knowledge of the al-Qaeda background of the individuals concerned.

CABINET OFFICE

Government Information Technology

24. **David Taylor:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on progress with development of the Government's IT strategy. [51264]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Transformational Government strategy was published in November 2005 and was followed by a three-month (public) consultation period. Responses are being incorporated into an implementation plan that will be published by the end of this financial year.

Civil Service

25. **Sarah McCarthy-Fry:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what steps he is taking to increase the number of women in the senior civil service. [51265]

Mr. Jim Murphy: There have been significant increases in the proportion of women in senior posts since 1998: the civil service has met its target to double the proportion of women in top management posts, from 12.7 per cent. in 1998 to 25.5 per cent. in 2005.

But there is still more work to do: we have set challenging new targets for 2008, underpinned by a Diversity 10 Point Plan.

26. **Mr. Lancaster:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster when he expects to be in a position to bring forward a Civil Service Bill. [51266]

Mr. Jim Murphy: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I provided to the hon. Member for North East Hertfordshire (Mr. Heald) on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 199W.

28. **Harry Cohen:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what recent discussions he has had with other Departments on the pay of civil servants. [51268]

Mr. Jim Murphy: There has been no need for me to have discussions with Departments. They have delegated authority to determine their own pay arrangements, outside of the senior civil service, that are tailored to meet their business needs. However, my officials have regular discussions with Departments regarding pay issues.

Public Appointments

27. **Keith Vaz:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what further steps he has taken to increase diversity in public appointments. [51267]

Mr. Jim Murphy: This Government are committed to achieving greater diversity in public appointments. All Department's including my own, will in due course publish an Annual Appointments Plan. These will provide more detail and clarity than before, on the overall policy, approach, and diversity objectives set by individual Department's to public appointments.

Departmental Energy Costs

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much was spent by his Department on *(a)* gas and *(b)* electricity in 2004–05. [51781]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Spending on gas and electricity by the Cabinet Office in 2004–05 is shown in the table.

	£
Gas	63,743
Electricity	588,248

Departmental Entertainment

Mr. Heald: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much was spent on entertainment by his Department in 2004–05, broken down by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [50883]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Cabinet Office spent £571,940 on entertainment in 2004–05. Expenditure broken down into the four categories requested is not separately identifiable on the department's accounting system and is therefore only available at disproportionate cost.

Entertainment expenditure includes working breakfasts or lunches, refreshments at meetings and all similar types of entertainment expenditure.

All Cabinet Office expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in "Government Accounting".

Departmental Recruitment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many job advertisements were placed by his Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in print newspapers and magazines and *(c)* on a recruitment website in each year since 1997; and at what cost in each case. [50756]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Cabinet Office expenditure on recruitment advertising for 2004–05 and 2005–06 is shown in the table.

Information prior to 1 April 2004 could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Cabinet Office expenditure on recruitment advertising for 2005–06

	Total	*Print*[1]	*Website only*[2]
Numbers	62	27	35
Total cost	172,736	172,576	160
Average cost	—	6,392	4.57

Cabinet Office expenditure on recruitment advertising for 2004–05

	Total	*Print*[1]	*Website only*[2]
Numbers	93	47	46
Total cost	236,828	236,828	0
Average cost	—	5,039	0

[1] Includes press associated website. These posts were also advertised on the civil service Gateway.
[2] Vacancies advertised on the civil service gateway only.

Departmental Staff

Kate Hoey: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what plans his Department has to change the London allowance of its staff; and if he will make a statement. [50005]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Cabinet Office does not pay a specific allowance to employees located in London. There are, however, two pay scales: one covering employees located in London, Sunningdale and Basingstoke and a national pay scale for employees in other locations.

E-government

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many Government IT projects processed as part of the e-government programmes have gone *(a)* over budget and *(b)* over time since 1997. [51791]

Mr. Jim Murphy: This information is not held centrally and could only be collected at disproportionate cost.

Energy Review

Sir Robert Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what assumptions regarding energy intensity improvements the strategy unit made in its preparation of background papers for the current energy review. [51396]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The strategy unit has not made any assumptions about future energy intensity improvements.

Public Services

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on progress with the reform of delivery of public services. [51262]

Mr. Jim Murphy: This Government have made considerable progress on the reform of our public services.

We are committed to investment and reform in our public services.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Academies

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list donations received by each city academy from *(a)* commercial and business organisations and *(b)* private individuals. [48031]

Jacqui Smith: Information on sponsors' donations received to date towards open academies' capital costs—rather than total sponsorship committed—is given in the following table.

Sponsors' donations are normally made over the lifetime of the building costs of the project, so in some cases a number of payments towards capital costs remain to be made. In other cases, sponsors' payments have been made, but are not recorded in the table as auditors have not yet completed their checks on whether these were spent on capital or recurrent costs.

We do not keep a record of sponsors' non-capital donations to academies.

Open academy	*Sponsor*	*Total evidence of use of sponsor contributions to capital costs to end January 2006 (£000)*
2002 openers		
The Business Academy, Bexley	Garrard Education Trust	947
Greig	Greig Trust with the London Diocesan Board for Schools	1,375
Unity City	Amey plc	1,948
2003 openers		
City Academy, Bristol	John Laycock/University of the West of England	1,748
Capital City (Brent)	Sir Frank Lowe	1,993
City of London (Southwark)	Corporation of London	1,097
Djanogly City Academy, Nottingham	Sir Harry Djanogly	250
King's	Emmanuel Schools Foundation	2,000
Manchester	ULT	336
Peckham	Harris Charitable Trust/Whitgift Foundation	1,187
Walsall	The Mercers Company/Thomas Telford online	2,062
West London (Ealing)	Alec Reed	1,700
2004 openers		
Lambeth	ULT	1,000
London (Barnet)	Peter Shalson	1,254
Mossbourne	Sir Clive Bourne	1,656
Northampton	ULT	624
Stockley	Barry Townsley	431
2005 openers		
Dixons City	Dixons CTC Trust	264
Harefield	David Meller and others	42

Open academy	Sponsor	Total evidence of use of sponsor contributions to capital costs to end January 2006 (£000)
Marlowe	Roger de Haan/Kent County Council	1,462
St. Francis of Assisi	Diocese of Liverpool/RC Archdiocese of Liverpool	950
St. Paul's (Greenwich)	Archdiocese of Southwark/London Borough of Greenwich	200
Trinity (Doncaster)	Emmanuel Schools Foundation	1,741

Adoption

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children were adopted in each local authority area in 2005. [48066]

Maria Eagle: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 11 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 801W. The publication "Children Looked After by Local Authorities Year Ending 31 March 2005" will be published by the Department in March 2006.

Bullying

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what steps her Department is taking *(a)* to prevent (i) bullying and (ii) the causes of bullying and *(b)* to help those who are victims of bullying; [49599]

(2) how many children have changed schools as a result of being victims of bullying since 1997; and how many children have been *(a)* suspended and *(b)* expelled from school for bullying in that period; [49601]

(3) how much funding her Department made available for schools to tackle the problem of bullying in each academic year between 1997 and 2005; [49602]

(4) if she will make a statement on Government plans to tackle bullying; [49637]

(5) what support her Department provides to *(a)* ChildLine, *(b)* the NSPCC and *(c)* other charitable organisations to help them support victims of bullying; [49639]

(6) what research her Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* published on bullying in schools since 1997; [49640]

(7) what training teachers receive to deal with bullying in schools; and how much funding her Department allocated for training teachers to deal with bullying in schools in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England in the last five years. [50146]

Jacqui Smith: This Government have given an unprecedented high profile to preventing bullying and supporting those who have been bullied. Our anti-bullying work, including the anti-bullying Charter for Action, takes an integrated approach to preventing bullying, to addressing causes of bullying—for example prejudice—and to helping those who are bullied.

Since 1999 it has been compulsory for every school to have an anti-bullying policy in place which details how the school will tackle bullying.

We have secured a very broad consensus, with all the teaching professional associations and the Anti Bullying Alliance signing up to our Anti-Bullying Charter for Action. The Charter is a voluntary commitment to creating a school community where bullying is not tolerated. In line with commitments outlined in the White Paper we re-issued the Charter during Anti-Bullying Week 2005 and therefore expect an increase in the number being returned to us via the ABA over the coming months. In 2006 we plan to share examples of where the Charter has been particularly well implemented with other schools, which can learn from this best practice.

Through our work with the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA), an organisation comprising over 65 leading anti-bullying charities and experts, we provide schools and local authorities with expert help to tackle bullying.

We have put more adults than ever in our schools—teachers, classroom assistants, learning mentors, Connexions personal advisers, Behaviour and Education Support Teams and police officers—so that a wide range of people are available to help prevent and tackle bullying.

Further to the White Paper, in 2006 we shall issue guidance on prejudice driven bullying, including racist and homophobic bullying, providing school staff with valuable support in an area they often find challenging. We plan to launch our advice on countering racist bullying online at the end of February.

Anti-bullying week continues to be a successful event with a large number of schools taking part in November 2005's activities through a wide variety of national and local events. There was a considerable amount of positive press coverage and this year over 325,000 wristbands were distributed.

Our anti-bullying resource pack for schools "Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence", updated in 2000 and September 2002 will be revised and re-issued in 2006 to ensure schools have the most up-to-date information available on tackling bullying.

In addition the Department has recently launched the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) curriculum resource—an intervention to develop children's social, emotional and behavioural skills from Foundation Stage to Year 6. It is available to all primary schools and the evidence from the pilot suggests that it helps reduce bullying and promotes positive behaviour generally. It is an important arm of the Department's longer term policy to promote positive behaviour and attendance. The Department is hoping to build on the work carried out in primary schools by providing a similar whole school curriculum based resource for secondary schools (SEBS). At present the programme is in a very early pilot stage.

Data on bullying is not collected centrally and thus there is no reliable basis for an estimate of how many children have changed schools as a result of being bullied.

The first time the reason for exclusion was collected was in the academic year 2003/04. In that year 150 pupils were permanently excluded and 6,750 were given fixed

period exclusions for bullying. This information comes from the Statistical First Release on "Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusion from Schools and Exclusion Appeals in England, 2003/04".

Funds for schools to devote to anti-bullying work form part of their overall budgets; they are not ring fenced so we have no information on how much they have devoted to this.

The figures for the anti-bullying strand of the Improving Behaviour and Attendance strategy, which is used centrally to support schools and local authorities in their anti bullying work, are given as follows:

	Amount (£)
2002/03	184,000
2003/04	1,054,000
2004/05	1,613,000
2005/06	1,145,000

Figures for earlier years are not available because the anti-bullying strand of behaviour work was not disaggregated.

In 2005/06 the Department has contributed a further £200,000 of funding to CHIPS (ChildLine in Partnership with Schools). The CHIPS scheme encourages young people to set up programmes, with the help of ChildLine and their teachers, to support their peers and to create safe environments in which to learn.

We note that ChildLine and the NSPCC have recently joined forces and we hope to continue working with both in their joint efforts to protect and support those who have been bullied.

We have provided the ABA, with £600,000 of funding for the 2005/06 period.

The Department has committed £200,000 for 2005/06 to Parent Line Plus, a telephone advice line for parents offering guidance on a range of subjects. Between April 2003 and March 2004 21 per cent. of all calls received related to bullying. In conjunction with the DFES and the ABA, the line can also refer parents who have not received satisfactory help at a local level to a one to one advice line.

The Diana Memorial Award for anti-bullying was launched in 2004 and highlights the achievements of young people trying to tackle bullying in their school or community. The Department has shown its continuing support for this initiative by contributing £50,000 of funding for 2005/06.

Our guidance to schools on tackling bullying, "Don't Suffer in Silence", has been externally evaluated by researchers at Goldsmith's College, University of London. The results, though based on a fairly low response rate from schools, show that the schools found that the pack met their expectations and helped in drawing up their anti-bullying policies.

This evaluation included research into the perceived success of the anti bullying strategies and interventions recommended in the guidance. Schools generally reported a high level of satisfaction with the interventions they had used.

The Department commissioned the Thomas Coram Research Unit at the Institute of Education, University of London, to review the research evidence relating to homophobia in schools and to talk to groups with an interest in this area. The Department published their work in its Research Report series in late 2004, number 594, entitled "Homophobia, Sexual Orientation and Schools: A Review and Implications for Action".

Training has been provided in each Government Office region through the Make The Difference conferences and through ABA training events and direct ABA work with individual schools. Training is also being provided through dissemination events linked to forthcoming advice on countering prejudice driven bullying.

Through the National Strategies the Department makes high-quality staff training materials on managing behaviour, including bullying, available to all schools. In addition each local authority is also supported by at least one expert Behaviour and Attendance consultant in each local authority.

Through the National Programme for Specialist Leaders of Behaviour and Attendance (NPSL-BA), the Department has developed a programme for training specialist staff who have leadership roles in relation to behaviour and attendance, including anti-bullying.

In addition our resources such as the Charter and "Don't Suffer in Silence" offer further support and advice to teachers in this area.

As anti-bullying training funding is not disaggregated or devolved directly, it is not possible to identify national funds or funds for Leicester.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what statistics her Department *(a)* collects and *(b)* publishes on bullying in schools in England. [49638]

Jacqui Smith: The Department does not collect national data on instances of bullying in England and schools. However, there are surveys run by, or supported by, the Department which do give an indication of the extent of bullying in schools in England.

The Department contributes funds to the Department for Work and Pensions' 'Families and Children Study'. This is an annual survey of a representative sample of families with dependent children in Britain. The study includes questions to parents and children on bullying (either in or out of schools). Reports from this study are published by DWP and are available from http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/facs/facs_publication.asp

The Department also runs the Longitudinal Study of Young People in Education (LSYPE) which is following a sample of young people in schools in England from Year 9 onwards. This survey covers pupils in both maintained and independent sectors and includes questions to parents and children on bullying. Although data from the first wave of this study are not yet available there are plans to make the data publicly available from the UK Data Archive.

Community Schools

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the total value of public assets which would be transferred from local authorities to independent trusts if *(a)* all community secondary schools and *(b)* all community primary and secondary schools chose to become trust schools. [47237]

Jacqui Smith: No estimate has been made of the value of those public assets that would transfer to and vest in the trustees of a new trust school. Measures similar to those already in place to protect publicly funded assets that have transferred to existing foundation schools will be introduced. These will require the trustees to obtain the appropriate consent before disposing of any assets transferred to them from the local authority.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department are taking to promote community schools. [50507]

Jacqui Smith: The Government expects all schools to sit at the heart of their communities and to work with other schools and services to meet the needs of those communities, regardless of their category.

The Government wishes to promote a diverse range of schools, reflecting the diversity of the communities that they serve. We have accordingly introduced legislation to require a competition to be held wherever a new secondary school is required so that a variety of providers can bring forward proposals and local people have the opportunity to make their views known about a number of options. The White Paper envisages extending this requirement to apply to new primary schools. The Secretary of State has recently made clear that where a local authority believe a community school is the right option for a particular area they will be able to seek the Secretary of State's consent to publish proposals for such a school. The final decision on proposals made by a local authority will be for the independent schools adjudicator.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47684]

Maria Eagle: My Department has no record of any items worth over £100 being reported as lost in the last 12 months. The following chart shows items of IT equipment that have been replaced in the last 12 months due to their being broken, either accidentally or due to normal wear and tear.

Item	*Number*	*Total value (£)*
Laptop computers	186	148,800
Personal computers	117	46,800
Laserjet printers	33	28,050

Departmental Catering Budget

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much and what proportion of her Department's catering budget was spent on fair trade produce in the last period for which figures are available. [49915]

Maria Eagle: The information could be supplied only at disproportionate cost.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Kerry McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students in Bristol were in receipt of education maintenance allowance at the rate of *(a)* £30, *(b)* £20 and *(c)* £10 per week in the last year for which figures are available. [44130]

Maria Eagle: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council, who operate Education Maintenance Allowances for the DfES and hold the information about take-up of the scheme. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, has written to my hon. Friend with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the House Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom, dated 30 January 2006:

I am writing in response to your Parliamentary Question that asked "how many students in Bristol were in receipt of education maintenance allowance at the rate of *(a)* £30, *(b)* £20 and *(c)* £10 per week in the last year for which figures are available."

During the academic year 2004/05 the number of young people who had received one or more EMA payments in City of Bristol Local Education Authority area was 1,484.

EMA is awarded in three defined payment bands of £30, £20 and £10, depending on household income. In Bristol Local Education Authority area the take-up of EMA by payment band is split as follows: 1,138 on £30 per week, 168 on £20 per week and 178 on £10 per week.

I hope this information is helpful and addresses your question. If you would like further details please contact Chris Bradley at the LSC National Office on 0114 207 4512 or Christopher.Bradley@lsc.gov.uk

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of students in receipt of education maintenance allowance who have continued into further education who otherwise would not have continued in education. [48936]

Maria Eagle: Education maintenance allowance (EMA) was subject to a very comprehensive evaluation. It was piloted by following two cohorts of 16-year-olds in 10 areas for four years from 1999/2000. It was rolled out to a further 36 areas in 2000/01, meaning that it was operating in around one third of the country. The evaluation showed an increase in participation of 16-year-olds in full-time education of 3.8 percent pts. This remains our most robust estimate of the impact of EMA on participation.

EMA was rolled out for 16-year-olds across the remaining two thirds of the country in September 2004. Administrative figures indicate that there was a 1.9 percent. pts increase in 16-year-old participation

between 2003/04 and 2004/05, which is almost in line with the increase that would have been expected from the further roll out of EMA. Therefore, while it is not possible to attribute all of the increase to the roll out of EMA we remain confident in the evaluation estimate of 3.8 percent. pts. 3.8 percent. pts of the 16-year-old cohort in 2004/05 represents just over 25,000 young people.

Examinations

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many 15-year-olds took Level 2 Key Skills and Basic Skills qualifications regarded as functional equivalents to a GCSE in mathematics or English in the last year for which figures are available. [36025]

Jacqui Smith: The figures requested are included in the following table:

Key skill/basic skill qualification[1]	*Number of 15-year-old pupils*[2] *achieving*[3] *level 2 in 2005*
Application of number/Adult Numeracy	3,186
Communication skills/Adult Literacy	3,754

[1] These qualifications are included in the definitions for 5 A*-C including functional English and mathematics.
[2] The figures shown relate to pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year (i.e. 31 August 2004).
[3] The Department only holds information on the number of pupils achieving-not attempting-key skills and basic skills.

Failing Schools

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many failing schools there were in each local education authority area in each year since 1997. [48130]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested has been placed in the House Libraries.

Former Teachers

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers have left the profession in each of the last five years, broken down by *(a)* subject and *(b)* length of service. [48131]

Jacqui Smith: The following table provides the number of full and part-time regular qualified teachers who left maintained sector service in England, including retirements, by length of service in each year between 1999–2000 and 2003–04, the latest year available.

A subject breakdown is not available.

Some of these teachers may have subsequently re-entered service or gone to teach outside of the English maintained sector.

Although the numbers of teachers leaving service has risen over the period, the number of new entrants has shown a greater increase. As a result the number of teachers in service has risen continually since 1998 and the full-time equivalent number of teachers in service is now 32,700 higher than in 1997. Between 2004 and 2005 the increase was 4,200. Teacher numbers are now at their highest level since 1981.

Full and part-time regular teachers leaving service in the maintained sector by length of service in England, 1999–2000 to 2003–04

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03[1]	2003–04[1]
Length of service					
0–4 years	9,690	10,010	9,930	9,070	8,930
5–9 years	5,930	6,320	6,110	7,060	6,730
10–14 years	4,450	4,480	4,350	4,830	4,560
15–19 years	4,230	4,330	4,170	4,220	3,890
20+ years	11,090	12,820	13,010	14,770	15,450
Total	35,390	37,960	37,550	39,950	39,550

[1] Provisional estimates.
Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Database of teacher records.

Further Education Funding

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2414W, on further education funding, how many 16 to 19-year-olds were unfunded as a consequence of further education colleges exceeding their recruitment targets agreed with the relevant local learning and skills council in *(a)* 2002/03 and *(b)* 2003/04 in (i) each local learning and skills council area and (ii) each college. [50829]

Bill Rammell *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* No 16 to 19-year-olds were unfunded in 2002/03 or 2003/04. Further education colleges delivering learning for young people above the planned volumes agreed with the Learning and Skills Council were provided with extra funding for these additional learners.

GCSEs

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many GCSEs on average were taken by a year 10 pupil in 2005; and what the range in the number of GCSEs taken was. [36045]

Jacqui Smith: Year 10 pupils can be defined in two ways; those who are one year away from completing Key Stage 4 and those who are aged 14 at the start of the academic year. Figures for 2005 have been presented on both bases (there are no pupils included in both groups).

Number of GCSEs attempted[1] *2004/05*

Number of GCSEs attempted	*14-year-olds*	*1 year before end of key stage 4*
1	62	788
2	33	182
3	36	42
4	25	36

Number of GCSEs attempted[1] 2004/05

Number of GCSEs attempted	14-year-olds	1 year before end of key stage 4
5	60	24
6	64	30
7	69	38
8	113	28
9	445	41
10	409	14
11	165	3
12	35	0
13	7	0
Average	8	2

[1] Including attempts in previous academic years.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average number of GCSE passes obtained per pupil was in *(a)* comprehensive schools and *(b)* selective schools in 2004–05. [43923]

Jacqui Smith: The figures requested for 2004/05 are included in the following table:

Maintained mainstream schools

School type (admissions basis)	Number of 15-year-old pupils[2] in 2004/05[3]	Average number of full GCSEs[1] achieved at grades A*-C per 15-year-old pupil[2]
Comprehensive	526,319	5
Selective	22,334	9

[1] The average number of full GCSEs has been calculated by summing the number of GCSE qualifications achieved and dividing by the number of 15 year old pupils.
[2] The figures shown relate to pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year (i.e. 31 August 2004).
[3] Figures for 2004/05 are revised.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in how many schools less than *(a)* 90, *(b)* 85, *(c)* 80 and *(d)* 70 per cent. of pupils achieved five or more GCSEs or equivalent at (i) grades A* to C and (ii) A* to G including English and mathematics in 2004–05. [47049]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested on the number of schools with particular proportions of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades and 5+ A*-G including English and mathematics can be founding the following table.

Number of maintained mainstream schools, by percentage of 15-year-old pupils achieving 5+ A-C and 5+ A*-G including English and mathematics 2004/05*

	5+ A*-C grades	5+ A*-G inc. English and mathematics
Less than 70 percent	2,415	95
Less than 80 percent	2,774	402
Less than 85 percent	2,849	729
Less than 90 percent	2,885	1,296

Notes
[1] Includes those schools with results published in the achievement and attainment tables.
[2] Includes City Technology Colleges and Academies.
[3] Age at the start of the academic year.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in how many and what proportion of schools less than *(a)* 90, *(b)* 85, *(c)* 80 and *(d)* 70 per cent. of pupils achieved one or more GCSEs, or equivalent, at grades A* to C in 2004–05. [47360]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested on the number of schools with particular proportions of pupils achieving one or more GCSEs and equivalents at grades A*-C in 2004–05 can be found as follows.

Number of maintained mainstream schools[1,2] by percentage of 15-year-old pupils[3] achieving 1+ A-C, 2004/05*

Less than (percentage)	Number	Percentage
70	814	26.3
80	1,600	51.7
85	2,073	67.0
90	2,526	81.6

[1] Includes those schools with results published in the Achievement and Attainment tables.
[2] Includes city technology colleges and academies.
[3] Age at the start of the academic year.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in how many schools in England less than *(a)* 10 per cent. and *(b)* 25 per cent. of 15-year-olds attained five A* to C grade GCSE examinations in (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005. [47371]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested on the number of schools with particular proportions of pupils achieving five plus A* to C grades at GCSE and equivalent can be found as follows.

Number of maintained mainstream schools[1,2], by percentage of 15-year-old pupils[3] achieving five plus A to C*

	Less than 10 per cent.	Less than 25 per cent.
2003/04	9	186
2004/05	5	112

[1] Includes those schools with results published in the achievement and attainment tables.
[2] Includes city technology colleges and academies.
[3] Age at the start of the academic year.

Higher Education (16 to 19-year-old Parents)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many 16 to 19-year-old parents have returned to higher education in Tamworth constituency in each year since 1997. [48654]

Bill Rammell: The information is not held centrally.

Independent Schools

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research she has commissioned into the possible involvement of religious cults in schools in the independent sector; and if she will make a statement. [47797]

Maria Eagle: My Department has not commissioned any research on this subject.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 80W, to the hon. Member for Altrincham and Sale, West (Mr. Brady), on independent schools, how many and what percentage of children of *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school age in each London borough attended independent schools in each year since 1999–2000. [49307]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is shown in the following tables.

Number and percentage of pupils attending independent schools by age[1, 2, 3]

	Position in January each year							
	2000				2001			
	Aged 5 to 10		Aged 11 to 15		Aged 5 to 10		Aged 11 to 15	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
England[5]	203,120	5.3	213,270	6.9	205,590	5.4	217,620	6.9
London[4]	49,460	9.0	39,140	9.6	50,330	9.2	40,130	9.7
Inner London[4]	23,600	11.7	17,010	12.4	24,190	12.0	17,560	12.6
Camden	3,558	28.5	1,794	17.1	3,600	28.6	1,764	16.9
City of London	238	57.9	1,059	100.0	230	56.8	1,072	100.0
Hackney	2,655	16.3	1,254	14.0	2,784	16.9	1,269	14.0
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,441	16.1	1,748	22.6	1,481	16.6	1,815	22.5
Haringey	625	3.6	799	7.3	624	3.6	820	7.2
Islington	301	2.4	68	0.9	324	2.6	73	1.0
Kensington and Chelsea	4,886	47.6	2,479	44.2	4,992	47.9	2,485	44.1
Lambeth	1,057	6.4	363	4.8	1,094	6.7	420	5.4
Lewisham	768	4.1	832	6.5	742	4.0	838	6.4
Newham	75	0.3	50	0.3	69	0.3	76	0.4
Southwark	1,437	7.3	2,257	17.2	1,443	7.3	2,302	16.9
Tower Hamlets	129	0.8	256	1.9	139	0.8	401	2.9
Wandsworth	4,186	23.7	1,736	15.1	4,367	24.6	1,812	15.5
Westminster	2,241	22.4	2,316	25.3	2,304	22.7	2,414	25.9
Outer London[4]	25,860	7.4	22,130	8.2	26,130	7.5	22,570	8.2
Barking and Dagenham	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Barnet	2,227	9.6	2,156	10.9	2,157	9.3	2,246	11.2
Bexley	561	3.0	0	0.0	557	3.0	0	0.0
Brent	1,038	5.6	535	4.2	996	5.3	528	4.1
Bromley	2,190	9.3	1,651	8.8	2,200	9.4	1,700	8.7
Croydon	2,416	8.7	3,053	14.7	2,468	8.9	3,038	14.2
Ealing	2,388	10.3	2,236	14.3	2,397	10.4	2,113	13.6
Enfield	939	4.1	292	1.6	963	4.2	299	1.7
Greenwich	796	4.5	914	6.8	872	5.0	968	7.1
Harrow	1,436	8.9	2,061	16.0	1,457	9.1	2,160	16.5
Havering	512	2.8	117	0.8	534	3.0	135	0.9
Hillingdon	1,612	7.8	1,229	8.2	1,642	8.0	1,251	8.1
Hounslow	398	2.6	207	1.5	393	2.6	218	1.6
Kingston upon Thames	1,399	13.3	1,271	15.2	1,394	13.2	1,331	15.5
Merton	1,521	12.2	1,169	12.6	1,555	12.7	1,152	12.5
Redbridge	2,107	10.3	890	5.6	2,125	10.2	895	5.6
Richmond upon Thames	3,098	23.9	3,045	28.7	3,171	24.1	3,220	29.7
Sutton	858	6.5	504	4.1	897	6.7	500	3.9
Waltham Forest	362	2.0	795	6.0	355	2.0	812	6.0

	2002				2003			
	Aged 5 to 10		Aged 11 to 15		Aged 5 to 10		Aged 11 to 15	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
England[5]	207,090	5.5	222,150	7.0	206,510	5.5	226,180	7.0
London[4]	50,940	9.3	41,340	9.8	51,140	9.4	41,990	9.9
Inner London[4]	24,680	12.3	18,320	13.0	25,010	12.4	18,650	13.2
Camden	3,705	29.5	1,833	17.4	3,695	29.5	1,840	19.7
City of London	233	100.0	1,077	100.0	245	58.5	1,046	100.0
Hackney	2,884	17.5	1,415	15.1	2,982	17.9	1,485	16.0
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,544	17.2	1,826	22.4	1,599	17.6	2,035	24.3
Haringey	620	3.5	862	7.5	596	3.4	834	7.1
Islington	315	2.5	86	1.1	359	3.0	96	1.2
Kensington and Chelsea	5,069	48.3	2,611	45.8	4,755	46.6	2,387	43.4
Lambeth	1,183	7.2	479	6.1	1,221	7.4	479	6.0
Lewisham	770	4.2	812	6.4	758	4.1	832	6.4
Newham	72	0.3	88	0.5	77	0.3	96	0.5
Southwark	1,491	7.5	2,317	16.7	1,498	7.5	2,344	16.5
Tower Hamlets	117	0.7	522	3.8	170	1.0	563	4.0
Wandsworth	4,356	24.7	1,965	16.5	4,442	25.0	2,077	17.3
Westminster	2,323	22.5	2,427	25.7	2,613	24.1	2,536	26.2
Outer London[4]	26,250	7.6	23,020	8.3	26,130	7.6	23,340	8.2
Barking and Dagenham	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Barnet	2,228	9.8	2,267	11.4	2,213	9.7	2,301	11.6
Bexley	546	3.0	0	0.0	544	3.1	0	0.0
Brent	1,002	5.4	627	4.9	1,030	5.5	695	4.9
Bromley	2,149	9.3	1,765	8.8	1,907	8.3	1,787	8.9
Croydon	2,466	9.0	3,083	14.2	2,479	9.2	3,122	14.0
Ealing	2,387	10.5	2,112	13.4	2,434	10.8	2,056	12.9
Enfield	962	4.2	316	1.7	953	4.2	350	1.9
Greenwich	903	5.2	987	7.1	935	5.5	989	7.6
Harrow	1,453	9.1	2,152	16.4	1,453	9.1	2,152	16.4
Havering	551	3.1	128	0.8	534	3.0	133	0.9
Hillingdon	1,580	7.8	1,253	7.9	1,545	7.7	1,270	7.8

	2002				2003			
	Aged 5 to 10		Aged 11 to 15		Aged 5 to 10		Aged 11 to 15	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Hounslow	382	2.5	212	1.5	530	3.5	239	1.7
Kingston upon Thames	1,373	13.0	1,373	15.6	1,400	13.3	1,475	16.4
Merton	1,684	13.9	1,202	13.0	1,639	13.5	1,142	12.3
Redbridge	2,150	10.3	867	5.3	2,146	10.3	871	5.2
Richmond upon Thames	3,170	24.3	3,306	30.6	3,100	24.0	3,399	31.2
Sutton	873	6.6	527	4.0	841	6.5	509	3.8
Waltham Forest	394	2.2	838	6.1	449	2.6	852	6.0

Position in January each year

	2004				2005			
	Aged 5 to 10		Aged 11 to 15		Aged 5 to 10		Aged 11 to 15	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
England	205,340	5.5	232,790	7.1	202,670	5.5	232,080	7.1
London[4]	51,390	9.5	43,090	10.0	51,220	9.5	42,980	10.0
Inner London[4]	25,120	12.5	19,370	13.6	25,280	12.6	19,490	13.6
Camden	3,629	29.1	1,847	19.7	3,590	28.7	1,770	19.0
City of London	373	68.4	1,033	100.0	391	69.8	1,074	100.0
Hackney	3,051	18.3	1,580	18.0	3,053	18.3	1,612	17.6
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,634	18.0	2,063	24.8	1,855	20.0	2,082	25.6
Haringey	576	3.3	840	7.1	599	3.5	869	7.3
Islington	256	2.2	119	1.5	250	2.2	115	1.4
Kensington and Chelsea	4,822	46.6	2,592	45.5	5,023	47.6	2,566	45.3
Lambeth	1,240	7.6	489	6.0	1,148	7.0	478	5.7
Lewisham	645	3.6	893	6.9	634	3.6	864	6.8
Newham	126	0.5	163	0.9	273	1.2	243	1.3
Southwark	1,468	7.5	2,337	16.2	1,489	7.7	2,292	15.5
Tower Hamlets	203	1.2	597	4.3	220	1.3	655	4.8
Wandsworth	4,489	25.6	2,202	18.0	4,187	24.0	2,285	18.5
Westminster	2,605	23.9	2,616	26.7	2,567	23.4	2,584	26.4
Outer London[4]	26,270	7.7	23,720	8.3	25,940	7.7	23,490	8.2
Barking and Dagenham	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Barnet	2,296	10.1	2,353	11.9	2,334	10.2	2,361	12.2
Bexley	544	3.1	0	0.0	542	3.1	0	0.0
Brent	1,040	5.5	704	4.9	877	4.7	714	4.9
Bromley	1,966	8.7	1,761	8.7	1,870	8.4	1,725	8.6
Croydon	2,427	9.1	3,149	13.9	2,386	9.1	3,126	13.8
Ealing	2,339	10.4	2,167	13.5	2,223	9.9	2,093	13.1
Enfield	952	4.2	356	1.9	947	4.2	351	1.8
Greenwich	1,093	6.3	1,014	7.2	1,058	6.2	1,009	7.2
Harrow	1,418	8.9	2,156	16.3	1,454	9.1	2,103	16.1
Havering	534	3.1	173	1.1	517	3.0	181	1.2
Hillingdon	1,542	7.7	1,292	7.7	1,574	7.9	1,271	7.7
Hounslow	536	3.5	253	1.8	557	3.7	241	1.7
Kingston upon Thames	1,433	14.2	1,503	16.6	1,374	13.2	1,528	16.7
Merton	1,655	13.6	1,138	12.3	1,651	13.4	1,139	12.4
Redbridge	2,198	10.6	863	5.1	2,187	10.5	866	5.1
Richmond upon Thames	3,009	23.2	3,429	31.5	3,072	23.2	3,410	31.6
Sutton	805	6.3	523	3.9	803	6.3	510	3.8
Waltham Forest	486	2.8	884	6.1	515	3.0	864	6.0

[1] Age as at 31 August in the previous year.
[2] Number of pupils of that age in independent schools expressed as a percentage of pupils of that age in all schools.
[3] Excludes dually registered pupils.
[4] National and regional totals have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source
Annual Schools Census.

Learning Difficulties

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what support and services are available in *(a)* Staffordshire and *(b)* Tamworth constituency for new parents whose children have been diagnosed at birth as suffering from learning difficulties; and whether she plans to increase this assistance. [48653]

Maria Eagle: The Government are committed to improving services for all children and their families, including those with learning disabilities. The Every Child Matters programme, alongside the implementation of the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services and the Government's SEN strategy "Removing Barriers to Achievement", supports and promotes early intervention to help families of very young disabled children and special educational needs. In particular, the Government's Early Support Programme has been funded to improve support to parents of disabled children aged 0–3 and to provide timely interventions at the very earliest stages of disabilities being identified. All local authorities have now been asked to begin using the Early Support approaches and can access the resource materials to help improve services for families with young disabled children. The roll out of Sure Start Children's Centres across the country will also improve the integrated support provided to families with children under five who are disabled or who have special educational needs.

In the Staffordshire area there are currently three designated Children's Centres. Although none of these are in the Tamworth constituency, the Tamworth Sure Start Local Programme and another early years centre in the constituency are planning to become children's centres in 2006–07. Across the county, child development centres (which provide specialist health support services to children with disabilities and SEN) are being co-located with children's centres.

As well as mainstream services, families of children with learning disabilities are entitled to access a range of specialist local authority and health support services, such as the Parent Partnership service and portage services providing home based support to parents. Details about these local services are not collected centrally and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

Looked-after Children

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many looked-after children there were on the latest date for which figures are available; and how they are cared for. [48067]

Maria Eagle: At 31 March 2005, the latest date for which information is available, there were 60,900 children who were looked after. Information on the numbers of children in the various types of care placement can be found in Table 1 of the Department's statistical first release on children looked after in England (including adoptions and care leavers), 2004–05. This can be downloaded from the internet at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000615/index.shtml.

Post-16 Education (Funding)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions she has had in the last three years about equalising funding per student in sixth-form schools and further education colleges; and if she will make a statement. [48939]

Bill Rammell: Ministers have had a number of discussions with a range of organisations in recent years about the different levels of funding for school 6th forms and further education (FE) colleges. The organisations we have met include the Association of Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges' Forum, Trade Unions and a very large number of individual colleges. The funding gap between school sixth forms and further education colleges for like-for-like 16–19 provision is longstanding. The removal of the FE sector from local authority control, efficiency cuts during mid 1990s and increases in schools funding have all contributed to it. When the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) took over responsibility for funding schools sixth forms in April 2002 it became easier to compare the relative funding.

The LSC as part of their 'agenda for change' proposals commissioned the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) to review the funding gap between school sixth forms and colleges. The LSDA report was the first attempt to consider all the elements that contribute to the funding gap and while the report showed a convergence in funding rates it estimated the overall size of the gap to be in the region of 13 per cent.

On 16 November 2005 the Secretary of State announced our plans for narrowing the funding gap. We recognise that the funding gap will not be easy to close but we have taken some important steps in the funding package we announced on 21 October 2005. We have confirmed that for young people in FE in 2006/07 we will match the Schools' Minimum Funding Guarantee of 3.4 per cent. We estimate that this, together with other measures to correct technical anomalies, will reduce the gap from 13 per cent. to 8 per cent. by 2006/07. From 2008 we will look to bring consistency to the treatment of student retention and achievement across school sixth forms and colleges which we expect to narrow the gap by a further 3 per cent. Beyond that we will work to establish a common funding approach across the two sectors as part of the Learning and Skills Council's 'agenda for change'.

Primary Schools (Results)

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Key Stage 2 results in *(a)* each primary school in Doncaster North and *(b)* the constituency as a whole were in each year since 1995. [36389]

Jacqui Smith: The 1996 to 2005 Key Stage 2 results for each primary school are published in the Achievement and Attainment Tables (formally Performance Tables) and are available on the Department's website at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/performancetables/index_archived.shtml

They are also available in the House Library.

The 1997 to 2004 results for the constituency have been placed in the in the Library and are also available within the Department's 'In Your Area' website available at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/inyourarea.

Results for 1996 are not available at constituency level. Results for 2005 will be placed in the Library and made available on the 'In Your Area' website shortly.

Qualifications

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* GCSE passes at grade A-C and *(b)* GNVQ full intermediate passes there were in (i) media studies and (ii) child care in each of the last 20 years. [44702]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested (where available) can be found in the following tables.

Number of A-C passes in GCSE media, film and TV studies, by 15-year-old pupils*[1]

	Number
2000	—
2001	—
2002	15,300
2003	17,600
2004	20,700
2005	24,500

Number of full intermediate GNVQ passes in media communication and production, by 15-year-old pupils[1]

	Number
2000	15
2001	9
2002	48
2003	137
2004	134
2005	761

[1] Age at the start of the academic year.

Figures for GCSE Media Studies are not available pre 2002 and GNVQ Media pre 2000. Courses in Child Care are not available at GCSE or GNVQ level.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of pupils have obtained a GCSE pass at grade A-C in *(a)* mathematics and English and *(b)* mathematics, English, a science subject and a modern foreign language in each of the last 20 years. [44703]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested (where available) can be found in the following table.

Percentage of 15-year-olds[1] *achieving A**-C *grades in the following GCSEs*

	English and mathematics	*English, mathematics, science and a modern language*
1995	34	24
1996	35	25
1997	36	25
1998	37	26
1999	39	28
2000	40	29
2001	42	30
2002	43	30
2003	43	29
2004	44	28
2005	46	28

[1] Age at the start of the academic year.

Figures on these combinations of GCSE subjects are not available before 1995.

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many staff in *(a)* day nurseries and *(b)* schools in (i) Wakefield District and (ii) Normanton constituency are qualified to (A) Level 2, (B) Level 3 and (C) Level 4 standards. [48388]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is not collected centrally.

School Finance

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how the introduction of the proposals in the White Paper Higher Standards: Better Schools for All will affect the *(a)* capital programmes and *(b)* grants for schools whose education authorities have no plans to introduce independent trust schools and academies; and if she will make a statement. [50721]

Jacqui Smith: Decisions to acquire a trust will be for individual schools' governing bodies. Local authorities will be able to object to such proposals, and the schools adjudicator will determine in certain circumstances. Plans for a school to become an academy are agreed between the department, the authority, the academy sponsor, and the predecessor school. Local plans for foundation or trust schools do not impact on capital or revenue allocations to authorities.

School revenue funding for foundation, trust, voluntary aided, voluntary controlled and local authority schools is allocated on the same basis, irrespective of category of school. Academies are funded at the same level as an equivalent school in their area would be.

Strategic capital programmes including Building Schools for the Future are allocated according to need and regardless of category of school. Formulaic capital funding for authorities is allocated on the needs of all their schools, including foundation and trust schools, with a separate allocation on the same basis for voluntary aided schools from the overall voluntary aided fair share of funding. These allocations do not contain amounts in respect of academies, where funding is delivered directly from the department.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what definition of a dedicated capital pot was used in compiling the White Paper Higher Standards: Better Schools for All. [50722]

Jacqui Smith: In our White Paper, local authorities will have a duty to respond positively to parental desire for an entirely new school or for additional provision in an existing school. They will be expected to provide dedicated consultancy support to help parents develop concrete proposals. The local authority will decide whether proposals to establish a new school should be taken forward, or whether the demands could be met in other ways. Parents will have a right of appeal to the schools adjudicator if their proposals are rejected.

Any capital funding needed for new schools will usually be provided by existing capital programmes, including Building Schools for the Future, the Targeted Capital Fund and the formulaic funding which all authorities receive. However, where these or other local resources such as disposal proceeds are not available or are insufficient for the need, we will establish dedicated capital funding arrangements to support strong and innovative proposals that come from parents.

Initially, my Department are holding funds from our overall capital resources from the 2004 spending review settlement to meet any calls until 2007–08. We will, of course, reallocate this funding to other priorities should it not be fully required. For the longer term, from 2008–09, these needs will be reflected in allocation of funding to programme, following the settlement of the comprehensive spending review which will be announced by the Chancellor in mid-2007.

School Food

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the recommendations of the school food trust sub-committee on standards for school food other than lunch will be subject to a full regulatory impact assessment. [49857]

Jacqui Smith: The School Food Trust has been commissioned to develop standards for food and drink provided in schools at times of the day other than lunchtime, for example in vending machines and tuck shops. In the near future we will carry out a consultation

with key stakeholders in education, health and the food industry on the Trust's recommendations. A Regulatory Impact Assessment will accompany the consultation.

School Music

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding her Department has made available for school music facilities in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England in each academic year since 1997. [49641]

Jacqui Smith: Capital allocations made to Leicester local authority and its schools are set out in the following table:

	£ million
1997–98	0.9
1998–99	4.9
1999–2000	10.8
2000–01	11.0
2001–02	11.2
2002–03	9.3
2003–04	12.3
2004–05	18.3
2005–06	25.5

Note:
2004–05 and 2005–06 figures include targeted capital funds of £4.7 million and £15.2 million respectively.

Capital allocations to local authorities and schools are higher than ever before. In 2005–06 they are £5.5 billion and they are planned to rise to £6.3 billion in 2007–08, an increase from £683 million in 1996–97.

Capital allocations made to local authorities and schools in England since 1997–98 are set out in the following table:

	£ billion
1997–98	0.6
1998–99	1.3
1999–2000	1.6
2000–01	2.5
2001–02	2.5
2002–03	3.3
2003–04	4.2
2004–05	4.9
2005–06	5.5

Allocations are made on a financial year basis, not the academic year. It is the responsibility of schools and local authorities to determine how they allocate these funds to different projects, including enhancing school music facilities, taking account of local needs and priorities.

Records are not held centrally that show how much of this funding is spent on school music facilities.

School Sport

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding her Department has made available for improvements to school sports facilities in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England in each year between 1997 and 2005. [49600]

Jacqui Smith: Significant funding is being provided specifically to enhance PE and school sport facilities between 2001 and 2009. In total, £686 million of lottery funding is providing a step change in school sport facilities through the Space for Sport and Arts and Big Lottery's New Opportunities for PE and Sport programmes.

Local authorities and schools may supplement this with the formula capital funding that we provide to them. However, it is the responsibility of the schools and local authorities to determine how they allocate these funds to different projects, including enhancing school sports facilities, taking account of local needs and priorities.

Records are not held centrally that show how much of this funding is spent on school sports facilities, neither am I able to provide a breakdown for Leicester.

Schools

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what changes to the funding formula for schools have been made since 1997; and what effect each change has had on funds per pupil for *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Cambridgeshire at constant prices. [51517]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* For 1998–99, nursery vouchers were abolished and the grant was added to the total distributed through the Standard Spending Assessment (SSA) methodology. The formula used to distribute funding for under 5s was also changed: prior to 1998–99, funding had been distributed on the basis of population of under 5s living within an authority; for 1998–99, 65 per cent. of under 5s funding was distributed on the basis of 4-year-old pupil numbers educated in an authority, with the remainder distributed on the basis of population of under 5s living within an authority. An allowance for sparsity was also introduced into the under 5s formula that year.

For 2001–02, Nursery Education Grant for 4-year-olds ceased to be paid as a separate grant: this funding was included in the total distributed through the SSA methodology, and distributed at a flat rate according to the numbers of four year olds in Private Voluntary and Independent Providers.

For 2002–03, funding for school sixth forms was transferred to the Learning and Skills Council. There were no changes made to the SSA formula that year.

For 2003–04, SSAs were replaced by Formula Spending Shares. Funding for schools provision and LEA central functions was separately identified, and new formulae were introduced to distribute funding for under 5s, primary, secondary and high cost pupils and funding for the Youth Service and LEA central functions. New indicators were introduced to reflect deprivation.

For 2006–07 and 2007–08, the Dedicated Schools Grant was introduced, with the following distribution criteria: every authority receives an initial basic increase of 5 per cent. per pupil in both 2006–07 and 2007–08; beyond this basic increase, the available increase in funding in 2006–07 and 2007–08 reflects the priority which the government attaches to meeting the costs of

greater personalisation of learning, more practical learning options for 14–16 pupils, workforce reform and the increased entitlement to early years provision from 33 to 38 weeks. In relation to each of these priorities, the sums allocated in 2006–07 will be consolidated into the authority's baseline for 2007–08, and any further sums identified for 2007–08 will be on top of that amount. Full details are available on the Teachernet website at: www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/schoolfunding/2006-07_funding_arrangements/DSG200608/

Identification of the effect on primary and secondary funding per pupil caused by these formula changes—as opposed to changes in data or spending totals—would only be possible at disproportionate cost. The following table shows the adjusted percentage increase in SSA, FSS or Dedicated Schools Grant as applicable for each year since 1997–98 for Cambridgeshire.

Increase in SSA/EFSS cash, on adjusted baselines

	Cambridgeshire	*England*
1997–98 to 1998–99	5.5	5.5
1998–99 to 1999–2000	6.3	5.7
1999–2000 to 2000–01	5.6	5.4
2000–01 to 2001–02	4.7	4.8
2001–02 to 2002–03	5.7	6.0
2002–03 to 2003–04	10.0	6.5
2003–04 to 2004–05	6.8	5.4
2004–05 to 2005–06	6.7	5.6

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent on *(a)* repairing and *(b)* rebuilding schools in Tamworth constituency in each year since 1992. [48655]

Jacqui Smith: Allocation and expenditure records are maintained on a local authority rather than on a constituency basis. Accordingly, figures are supplied relating to Staffordshire county council. The figures in the following tables relate to the periods in which information is held centrally.

Public funding spent on *(a)* repairs since 1996–97 is set out in the table.

	£ million
1996–97	3.3
1997–98	3.9
1998–99	6.8
1999–2000	6.4
2000–01	6.9
2001–02	8.3
2002–03	6.3
2003–04	5.7
2004–05	6.6

Note

2002–03 figures exclude figures nursery schools

The table above sets out the available revenue figures received from Staffordshire county council, unaudited by the Department, on maintenance and improvement of schools.

Capital allocations to Staffordshire county council are set out in the following table.

	£ million
1996–97	3.7
1997–98	7.4
1998–99	28.4
1999–2000	18.5
2000–01	34.1
2001–02	27.4
2002–03	32.9
2003–04	35.5
2004–05	41.1
2005–06	29.2

Note

1998–99 figures include Private Finance Initiative credits of £13.7 million. 2004–05 figures include a Targeted Capital Fund allocation of £3.6 million, and a relatively large Basic Need allocation.

We expect local authorities and schools to take decisions locally on allocating funds between new buildings and improvements in accordance with priorities set out in their local asset management plans. Records of these categories of expenditures are not held centrally.

Capital allocations to local authorities and schools are higher than ever before. In 2005–06 they are £5.5 billion and they are planned to increase to £6.3 billion in 2007–08, an increase from £683 million in 1996–97.

Secondary Schools

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* community, *(b)* voluntary-aided, *(c)* voluntary-controlled and *(d)* foundation secondary schools there are; and what proportion has a sixth form. [49749]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is given in the table.

Maintained secondary schools: number of schools by status, as at January 2005

England

	Number of schools	
	Secondary schools with a sixth form[1]	*All secondary schools*
Community	965	2,193
Voluntary aided	337	559
Voluntary controlled	75	120
Foundation	385	513
Total	1,762	3,385

[1] Schools with one or more pupils in national curriculum year groups 12,13 or 14

Note

Includes middle schools as deemed

Source

Annual Schools Census

Specialist Schools/Colleges

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 14 November 2005 to the hon. Member for Bognor Regis and Littlehampton, *Official Report*, column 952W, on selection, what method is used to *(a)* identify pupils as being able to benefit from targeted teaching in a particular subject and *(b)* assess the pupils who demonstrate a

special capacity to succeed in a particular subject; and what guidance is given on this to specialist schools that select on aptitude in the relevant subject. [49784]

Jacqui Smith: Admission authorities are responsible for determining how to assess aptitude. Legislation requires them to ensure that tests do not assess general academic ability or aptitude for any subject other than the subject in question, and are free of racial or gender bias. The School Admissions Code of Practice gives further guidance on what the law permits. And the Schools Adjudicator has upheld objections to admission arrangements where he has found that there is no established test for, or objective assessment against, published criteria.

The Specialist Schools Trust also provides advice on admissions, which emphasises that tests should not "drift into assessing ability or general aptitude, by checking that the ability profile of those selected by aptitude is representative of all applicants, [and] adjusting testing if it is not."

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) which specialist colleges and schools which are not specialist science colleges and schools offer *(a)* separate science and *(b)* dual award science at GCSE; [28587]

(2) what percentage of pupils in *(a)* specialist colleges and *(b)* schools which are not specialist science colleges took (i) separate science and (ii) dual award science in the last period for which figures are available; [28581]

(3) what percentage of pupils studying in specialist colleges and schools, which are not specialist science colleges and schools, have gained *(a)* dual award science, *(b)* biology, *(c)* chemistry and *(d)* physics GCSEs, in each of the last five years broken down by grade. [28762]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is shown in the following tables for the years 2002 to 2005. Information is not presented for 2001 as there were no schools designated as specialist science colleges in that year.

Table 1: List of schools that are not specialist science colleges and schools where 15-year-old pupils have attempted (a) separate science and (b) dual award sciences at GCSE in 2004/05.

The information has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Only schools whose results are published in the achievement and attainment tables are included in this list.

Table 2: Pupils studying in (a) specialist colleges and (b) specialist colleges which are not specialist science colleges being entered for GCSE qualifications in dual award science and separate sciences in 2005

		Percentage
2005 (15-year-olds[1])	*Specialist colleges*	*Non-science specialist colleges*
Biology	6.4	5.7
Chemistry	6.1	5.4
Physics	6.0	5.4
Dual Award Science	75.0	74.5

[1] Age at the start of the academic year, i.e. 31 August.

Table 3: Pupils studying in specialist colleges and schools which are not specialist science colleges and schools being entered for and achieving GCSE qualifications in dual award science and separate sciences by grade

Percentage

Results of 15-year-olds[1]	*GCSE grade*								
	*A**	*A*	*B*	*C*	*D*	*E*	*F*	*G*	*Total[2]*
2005									
Biology	0.7	1.5	1.6	1.2	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.0	5.7
Chemistry	0.8	1.3	1.5	1.3	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.0	5.4
Physics	0.8	1.4	1.4	1.2	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.0	5.4
Dual Award Science	3.1	6.4	10.5	22.0	14.9	9.2	5.0	2.0	74.5
2004									
Biology	0.7	1.5	1.6	1.2	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.0	5.6
Chemistry	0.7	1.3	1.5	1.2	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.0	5.4
Physics	0.7	1.4	1.4	1.2	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.0	5.4
Dual Award Science	3.0	6.5	10.6	23.4	15.8	10.7	5.9	2.4	80.0
2003									
Biology	0.6	1.5	1.7	1.4	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.0	6.2
Chemistry	0.7	1.3	1.5	1.5	0.6	0.1	0.0	0.0	5.7
Physics	0.7	1.4	1.5	1.3	0.6	0.1	0.0	0.0	5.7
Dual Award Science	2.9	6.6	10.6	23.8	16.5	10.9	6.3	2.6	81.8
2002									
Biology	0.6	1.4	1.7	1.2	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.0	5.4
Chemistry	0.5	1.3	1.5	1.3	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.0	5.3
Physics	0.7	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.0	5.3
Dual Award Science	3.1	6.3	10.3	23.4	17.6	11.6	6.0	2.2	82.0

[1] Age at the start of the academic year, i.e. 31 August.

[2] Total proportion of 15-year-old pupils entered for qualification, including those who achieved a 'U' grade, were absent or the result is pending.

St. James' Independent Schools

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent representations she has received on the mistreatment of pupils at St. James' Independent Schools in London, with particular reference to the School of Economic Science. [47911]

Maria Eagle: The Department has been made aware of allegations of abuse by teachers at St. James Independent Schools for Boys between 1975 and 1985. The matter is currently under investigation by Richmond-upon-Thames social services department and the Metropolitan police. We are liaising with them and will consider what, if any, action is required once their investigation has been completed.

Teachers and Lecturers

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers entered into *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time service in maintained schools in the East Riding of Yorkshire in each year since 2001. [49103]

Jacqui Smith: Information on the number of teachers entering service is not available by local authority.

The information requested is available at a national level and this was published in the Statistics of Education, School Workforce in England Volume, 2005 edition, on 26 January 2006. Table C1c refers. This publication is available on the department's website at the following URL:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DBA/OL/v000633/index.shtml

A copy of the relevant tables has been placed in the House of Common's Library.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average *(a)* teacher's and *(b)* lecturer's pay is; and what it was in 1997. [39922]

Jacqui Smith: The latest available figures are shown in the tables. Significant changes were made to the content, structure, coverage and definitions of the source data for HE staff in 2003/04 which means that the figures for 2004/05 are not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Average pay of full-time teachers and further education[1] lecturers—England

As at March	*Teachers*	*Further education lecturers*
1997	22,760	23,720
2004	31,690	29,580

[1] Covers only those FE lecturers who contribute to the teacher's pension scheme.

Source:
Database of teacher's records (DTR).

Average salary[1] of full-time higher education academic staff with teaching responsibilities—England

	Professors	*Senior lecturers[2] and researchers*	*Lecturers*
1996/97	45,300	34,600	25,800
2004/05	59,100	41,500	33,000

[1] The HESA staff record changed markedly in structure, coverage and content in 2003/04. In addition, the definition of salary changed. This means that average salaries for 2003/04 and later years cannot be compared directly with those for earlier years. For the years up to 2002/03, salary represented the monies received in respect of institutional duties actually being paid on the date of the HESA staff count (31 July) or for those Who have left during the year, the salary on leaving, including any regular payments for additional duties, responsibility allowances or honoraria regardless of their source. In 2003/04, the salary represented the gross basic salary per annum, in pounds sterling as stated in the contract at the reference date of HESA's staff count or at the end date of the contract if earlier, excluding any regular payments for additional duties, responsibility allowances or honoraria, regardless of their source. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.

[2] Including principal lecturers.

Source:
The Higher Education Statistics Agency's staff record. Covers staff in HE sector institutions.

Thomas Telford School

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what level of financial sponsorship is provided to Thomas Telford School by *(a)* the Mercers' Company and *(b)* Tarmac plc. [47765]

Jacqui Smith: Thomas Telford School, as a City Technology College, is legally an independent school, and so my Department does not hold details of the financial sponsorship provided to it. However, such information can be obtained from the school's annual accounts, which they are required to publish annually, available from Companies House for a nominal fee.

Vandalism

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of her Department's buildings in the last 12 months. [49507]

Maria Eagle: The following table details the acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of the Department's buildings in the last 12 months.

Site	*Inside*	*Outside*
Darlington	None	None
London	Four blocked toilets. Lift door scratched.	None
Runcorn	None	Two external windows broken. Perimeter fence damaged
Sheffield	None	None

Youth Services

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was available for youth services in *(a)* the constituency of Ruislip-Northwood, *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon, *(c)* Greater London and *(d)* England in each of the last 10 years. [47662]

Maria Eagle: Youth services are funded through the local authority and information about the level of funding is collected by local education authority (LEA) area. This information has only been available separately since 2000. It is not possible to provide

information about Youth Service funding below LEA level in order to show the funding for Ruislip-Northwood.

Youth Service funding levels are as follows:

£

Financial year	England	Greater London	Hillingdon LEA
2000–01	288,026,510	57,569,841	1,446,973
2001–02	306,761,605	64,770,072	1,473,203
2002–03	316,288,138	65,838,535	1,777,011
2003–04	343,364,777	67,393,083	2,132,885
2004–05	364,015,547	65,839,152	2,284,148
2005–06	383,662,949	69,415,404	3,072,659

Notes:
1. The data are drawn from section 52 Budget statements submitted to the Department by all 150 local education authorities.
2. The 2001–02 and 2002–03 figures also include any Local Authority Youth Service provision that contributed to the delivery of the Connexions Service plus any Connexions Service specific funding.
3. 2005–06 data are subject to change by LEAs.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Administration Costs

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total administration costs for his core Department are; and whether these are regarded as *(a)* identifiable and *(b)* non-identifiable for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses. [39844]

Mrs. McGuire: The departmental report for 2005 (Cm 6539) contains administration costs for the years 1999–2000 to 2007–08 along with a breakdown by client group. In addition the most recent Public Expenditure Out-turn White Paper (Cm 6639) contains the provisional 2004–05 departmental administration costs out-turn.

These costs include both identifiable and non-identifiable items for the purposes of public expenditure statistical analyses.

Attendance Allowance

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many care home residents in Scotland lost their entitlement to attendance allowance in each year since 2002 because their personal care costs were met under the free personal care arrangements; and what the financial effect on his Department was of this loss of entitlement. [46146]

Mrs. McGuire: The administration of attendance allowance is a matter for the chief executive of the Disability and Carers Service, Mr. Terry Moran. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Terry Moran:

In response to your recent Parliamentary Question, the Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire MP, promised you a substantive reply from the Chief Executive of the Disabled and Carers Service.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many care home residents in Scotland lost their entitlement to attendance allowance in each year since 2002 because their personal care costs were met under the free personal care arrangements; and what the financial effect on his Department was of this loss of entitlement.

The requested information is not available and could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost. I can however provide some general information about the position.

The rules governing the payment of attendance allowance and the care component of disability living allowance preclude the payment of these benefits to people in care homes who have been receiving help with their care home costs from public funds for more than four weeks. Such help includes the £145 per week payments that local authorities in Scotland make to people aged 65 or over in care homes under the free personal care arrangements introduced by the Scottish Executive in July 2002.

We estimate that since that date, receipt of those payments has resulted in the withdrawal of attendance allowance or the care component of disability living allowance from some 6,400 care home residents in Scotland. At current benefit rates, we estimate that maximum annual cost of continuing to pay the benefits to those residents would be about £20 million.

I hope you find this information of use and I am sorry I cannot be more helpful.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average time taken *(a)* to process a claim for attendance allowance and *(b)* to begin payments once a claim has been approved was in each of the last five years. [48348]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* The administration of attendance allowance is a matter for the chief executive of the Disability and Carers Service, Mr. Terry Moran. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Terry Moran:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average time taken *(a)* to process a claim for attendance allowance and *(b)* to begin payments once a claim has been approved was in each of the last five years.

The Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire MP, promised you a substantive reply from the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service.

The information requested at part *(a)* of your question is in the following table:

Average length of time in days to clear attendance allowance normal rules claims in each of the last five years

	Actual average clearance time (in days)
April 2000-March 2001	30.5
April 2001-March 2002	27.1
April 2002-March 2003	24.2
April 2003-March 2004	20.8
April 2004-March 2005	18.2
April 2005-December 2005[1]	[1]17.9

[1] Year to date information as at December 2005.

The information requested at part *(b)* of your question is not available.

I hope you find this information of use and I am sorry I cannot be more helpful.

Benefit Claimants

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people claimed *(a)* incapacity benefit and *(b)* disability living allowance in Stroud constituency in each year since 1997. [50455]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and disability living allowance (DLA) claimants, and disability living allowance (DLA) claimants, in the Stroud parliamentary constituency.

As at August each year:	IB/SDA	DLA
1997	2,600	1,800
1998	2,600	1,900
1999	2,700	1,900
2000	2,800	2,100
2001	2,900	2,200
2002	2,900	2,600
2003	2,900	2,800
2004	3,000	2,900
2005	3,000	3,000

Notes:
1. For incapacity benefit the parliamentary constituency figures for the years 1997 to 1998 have been produced using the five per cent data and have been rated up proportionally using the Great Britain WPLS 100 per cent. IB/SDA back-cast totals.
2. For disability living allowance benefit the parliamentary constituency figures for the years 1997 to 2001 have been produced using the five percent. data and have been rated up proportionally using the Great Britain WPLS 100 per cent. DLA back-cast totals.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
4. IB/SDA 'Claimant' figures include all incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance, including IB credits only cases.
5. There will be an overlap between each years figures as claimants can receive both IB/SDA and DLA.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate, five percent. Samples and Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 percent. data.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many full-time equivalent staff were employed by the Child Support Agency in March *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003, *(c)* 2004 and *(d)* 2005. [19337]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive, Mr. Stephen Geraghty. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many full-time equivalent staff were employed by the Child Support Agency in *(a)* March 2002 *(b)* March 2003 *(c)* March 2004 and *(d)* March 2005.

The table below contains the number of full/whole time equivalent staff in post in the months requested. The figures include fixed-term appointments and casual staff, but not Northern Ireland staff (who are part of the Northern Ireland Civil Service).

Child Support Agency Staffing Figures at the 31st March year-end and at November 2005 are shown in the Table below.

All of the increase between March and November 2005 is in frontline staff.

	Full-time equivalent staff (Number)
March 2002	10,690.59
March 2003	11,256.42
March 2004	10,819.53
March 2005	9,784.26
November 2005	10,480.01

I hope you find this answer useful.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff were employed by the Child Support Agency at *(a)* 31 December 2004, *(b)* 31 March 2005, *(c)* 30 June 2005, *(d)* 30 September 2005 and *(e)* 31 December 2005; and if he will make a statement. [41399]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the chief executive. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Stephen Geraghty:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many staff were employed by the Child Support Agency at *(a)* 31st December 2004 *(b)* 31st March 2005 *(c)* 30th June 2005 *(d)* 30 September 2005 and *(e)* 31st December 2005; and if he will make a statement.

The information for 31st December 2005 is not yet available. The table below contains the number of full/whole time equivalent staff in post in the months requested. The figures include fixed-term appointments and temporary staff, but not Northern Ireland staff (who are part of the Northern Ireland Civil Service).

Period	Full-time equivalent staff
31 December 2004	9,809.96
31 March 2005	9,784.26
30 June 2005	9,827.08
30 September 2005	10,072.55

I hope you find this information helpful

Community Languages

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether a staff survey has been conducted *(a)* in London and *(b)* in the UK on the number of community languages staff speak at work to assist customers. [48982]

Mrs. McGuire: No such survey has been conducted.

Departmental Assets

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the 10 most valuable *(a)* movable and *(b)* immovable assets owned by his Department. [27376]

Mrs. McGuire: The highest value assets on the fixed asset register for Departmental owned assets are leasehold improvements, which are pooled costs relating to the refurbishment of the Job Centre Plus offices. By the nature of pools, these assets will actually comprise of numerous classes of assets, such as building work, internal decoration and furniture and fittings.

We have listed the 10 most valuable *(a)* movable and *(b)* immovable assets owned by the Department.

(A) List of 10 most valuable movable assets, listed as unique assets on the fixed asset register

Description	*£000*
Hewlett Packard server	105
Hewlett Packard server	105
Hewlett Packard tape library	93
Citroen mobile vehicle	74
Compaq modular cabinet	72

(A) List of 10 most valuable movable assets, listed as unique assets on the fixed asset register

Description	*£000*
Peugeot Boxer mobile unit vehicle	71
Peugeot Boxer mobile unit vehicle	70
Peugeot Boxer mobile unit vehicle	67
Peugeot Boxer mobile unit vehicle	66
Siemens voice mail system	64

(B) List of 10 most valuable immovable assets, listed as unique assets on the fixed asset register

Description	*£000*	*Date capitalised*
Refurbishment work to Jobcentre Plus offices	188,845	October 2003
Refurbishment work to Jobcentre Plus offices	80,645	October 2004
Refurbishment work to Jobcentre Plus offices	41,943	October 2002
Refurbishment work to Jobcentre Plus offices	24,772	October 2002
Refurbishment work to Jobcentre Plus offices	7,452	October 2001
Refurbishment work to Jobcentre Plus offices	5,487	October 2001
Installation and cabling for IT assets	2,999	—
Refurbishment work to Jobcentre Plus offices	2,381	October 2001
Installation and cabling for IT assets	2,189	—
Staff information system software development	1,917	—

Departmental Finance

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the real terms percentage increase in allocated resources for his Department *(a)* was for the period 1997–98 to 2004–05 and *(b)* is estimated to be between 2005–06 and 2007–08 (i) for each period and (ii) for each year. [31033]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the Department of Social Security and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment including the Employment Service and has since undergone significant reorganisation of the Department and Machinery of Government changes. In 1998–99 there was also a change from cash to resource accounting.

Comparable information is only available from 1999–2000 through to 2007–08 from the Public Expenditure Statistical Analysis 2005 (Cm 6521) available in the Library. The percentage increase for each year and for the periods quoted is detailed in the tables as follows. Allocated resources include both Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL) and Annually Managed Expenditure (AME). Please note figures in brackets denote a percentage decrease.

	Percentage increase
Actual	
1999–2000	0
2000–01[1]	0.7
2001–02	5.4
2002–03	1.8
2003–04	1.5
2004–05	4.0
Total for period	14.1
Estimated	
2005–06	0
2006–07	(2.0)
2007–08	2.4
Total for period	0.4

[1] These figures relate to the period before the Department for Work and Pensions was created in June 2001. When the Department was created an exercise was carried out to put historical data from predecessor bodies onto the DWP Treasury Database in an amalgamated form.

Departmental Staff

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average number of staff employed at the Department was in each year from 1997–98 to 2005–06, including equivalent figures for the period before the Department was re-organised into its current form, broken down by *(a)* full-time equivalents and *(b)* overtime and temporary staff; and if he will make a statement. [32431]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 28 November 2005]:* The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the Department of Social Security and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment, including the Employment Service. Information on the average number of staff and overtime and temporary staff in the Department in each year from 2000–01 to 2005–06 can be found in Table 6 of the Department for Work and Pensions Departmental Report 2005.

Information on the average number of staff and overtime and temporary staff in the former Department of Social Security in each year from 1997–98 can be found in Table 10 of the Social Security Departmental Report 2001.

Information on the average number of staff and overtime and temporary staff in the former Employment Service in each year from 1997–98 can be found in annex J of the Department for Education and Skills Departmental Report 2001.

Each of the reports referred to is available in the Library.

Disability Discrimination Act

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* public bodies and *(b)* private companies which are

compliant with the provisions (i) of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and (ii) the provisions of the Act relating to disabled parking facilities. [44124]

Mrs. McGuire: It is too soon to make any estimates of the number of public bodies and private companies which are meeting their duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA 2005), since the first duties under the Act were only recently introduced on 5 December 2005, and others do not come into force until at least 4 December 2006.

As part of the Department for Work and Pensions research programme, the Department expects to undertake research in due course to ascertain how those with duties under the DDA 2005 respond to those duties.

Estimates of the impact of the DDA 2005 and Regulations made under it on public bodies and private organisations have been published as regulatory impact assessments[1] and placed in the Library of this House.

The DDA 2005 makes no provision in respect of disabled parking facilities.

[1] Disability Discrimination Act 2005—regulatory impact assessment (revised following Royal Assent to the Disability Discrimination Bill on 7 April 2005).

Disability Discrimination Act 2005—Regulatory Impact Assessment Disability crimination (Questions and Replies) Order 2005.

Disability Discrimination Act 2005—Regulatory Impact Assessment The draft Disability Discrimination (Private Clubs etc.) Regulations 2005

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many fines have been imposed on *(a)* public and *(b)* private bodies found to be non-compliant with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. [44126]

Mrs. McGuire: In general, any individual act of disability discrimination committed by a public or private body contrary to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA 2005), is a civil wrong which will give rise to a remedy which usually includes damages, rather than the imposition of a fine. The DDA 2005 did introduce one new criminal offence from 5 December 2005 relating to the publication of discriminatory advertisements for which a fine can be imposed. We have no knowledge of any such cases arising where the relevant offence has been committed and a fine imposed.

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures are undertaken to determine compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005; and by whom. [44127]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions regularly undertakes research into the responses of those with duties under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and expects to carry out further research in relation to duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA 2005), which amended the DDA, in due course.

However, whether those with duties under the DDA meet the requirements of the Act not to discriminate against an individual disabled person for a reason related to their disability is a matter to be determined on a case-by-case basis by courts or tribunals, as appropriate.

The Disability Rights Commission has a role in supporting those with duties to meet those duties and also in assisting with enforcement of the Act. It may: support legal cases in certain circumstances; issue non-discrimination notices; enter into agreements in lieu of enforcement action; and conduct Formal Investigations. Later this year it will publish, subject to the approval of Parliament, a revised Code of Practice largely for those provisions of the DDA 2005 which will come into force on 4 December 2006 relating to the duties of service providers in both the public and private sectors.

From 4 December 2006 most executive public bodies will be required to publish a Disability Equality Scheme which sets out how they intend to fulfil the various requirements of the Disability Equality Duty introduced by the DDA 2005. The Duty requires that the Scheme includes monitoring and assessment arrangements to measure the impact of a public body's policies, and that the Scheme is reviewed and revised at least every three years.

Disability Living Allowance

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of lowering the entitlement age for the higher rate of the mobility component of disability living allowance to two years old. [50995]

Mrs. McGuire: In April 2001 we changed the entitlement age limit from five to three years of age because medical advice is that age three is the earliest point at which it can be reasonably determined whether a child's inability, or virtual inability, to walk is the result of physical disability rather than late development. We have no plans to make further changes to the lower age limit for entitlement to the higher rate of the disability living allowance mobility component, therefore no estimate has been made of the costs.

Disabled Parents

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what his estimate is of the number of disabled parents in each region of the UK; [44591]

(2) what organisations that assist disabled parents are funded by his Department; and how much financial support was provided to each in the *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06 financial year; [44593]

(3) what advice is offered by his Department to disabled parents concerning the benefits and support that is available to them. [44592]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* The Department for Work and Pensions is committed to providing accurate information on our benefits, programmes and services.

The Directgov website for disabled people (www.direct.gov.uk/disability) is the central point for all information from Government, providing a single source of information on the full range of services for disabled people, including benefits and other financial support. All Departments contribute to the information

and services for disabled people, which is now written and co-ordinated within the new Office for Disability Issues (ODI). The Directgov website also features sections on Parenting and Education, through which information on benefits and services can also be accessed.

The Disability and Carers Service (DCS) does not specifically target information at disabled parents; however, they have an outreach programme of local, regional and national events involving dedicated officers visiting representatives from external customer organisations and groups.

The purpose of the programme is to ensure that a consistent corporate message is communicated to all customer representative groups and organisations, and to provide accurate information on our benefits and services.

There is no current provision for this Department to provide core funding to external organisations. However, work is under way on a project to research information and advice required by disabled people and review existing cross-Government provision. The ODI will work across Government to develop proposals to improve the provision of information and advice about services to disabled people.

The information is in the following table.

Number of disabled parents, including those with limiting longstanding illnesses, in the UK by region

	Million	*Percentage*
North East	0.07	5
North West and Merseyside	0.19	14
Yorkshire and Number	0.13	9
East Midlands	0.09	7
West Midlands	0.12	9
Eastern	0.12	9
London	0.15	11
South East	0.13	10
South West	0.09	7
Wales	0.09	6
Scotland	0.13	9
Northern Ireland	0.05	4
UK	1.4	100

Note:
Estimates relate to the number of disabled people, including people with limiting, longstanding illnesses, who have at least one dependent child.
Source:
Family Resources Survey, 2003–04. United Kingdom

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many departmental employees have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46770]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions takes seriously its responsibilities for managing attendance. We have an attendance management policy in place which was commended by the NAO as meeting best practice. The policy includes guidance for line managers on when ill-health retirement should be considered. Ill-health retirement (IHR) is considered when a member of staff has a recognised health condition which is likely to be permanent and which prevents them from carrying out their normal duties. The criteria for IHR are set by the Principle Civil Service Pension Scheme and were considerably tightened when the pension scheme arrangements were last reviewed. Although applications for IHR are made by managers or staff, decisions are made by the PCSPS medical adviser.

The Department was created in 2001 and figures on the numbers of employees taking ill-health retirement since then are shown in the following table.

Period (year ending)	*Number of IHR's*	*FTE*[1]
March 2002	276	247.58
March 2003	236	207.45
March 2004	193	172.36
March 2005	210	185.92

[1] Full time equivalent—takes into account part-time working patterns

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what total sum has been received by his Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48485]

Mrs. McGuire: Nil.

The Freedom of Information Act allows for public authorities to determine when the cost of processing a request will exceed the appropriate limit, which for central Government is set at £600 and for the wider public sector £450. In this instance the public authority may decide to approach the applicant to help them refine their request and where possible to bring it under the appropriate limit. Alternatively, public authorities may charge the applicant the cost of processing the request. There is, however, no obligation for departments to provide information if the cost of processing the request exceeds the appropriate limit.

Public authorities may also charge for disbursements when handling requests where it is deemed appropriate. Further information on the FOI fees regime can be found on the DCA website at http://www.foi.gov.uk/feesguide.htm.

Fuel Costs (Pensioners)

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans his Department has to increase the £200 winter heating allowance for pensioners. [50438]

Mr. Timms: We have no plans to do so. The winter fuel payment has risen from £20 in winter 1997–98 to £200 from winter 2000–01 and to £300 for those aged 80 or over from winter 2003–04. It is a significant contribution towards fuel costs.

Gas Prices

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if the Government will increase *(a)* state pensions and *(b)* the winter fuel allowance to take account of increases in gas prices. [50372]

Mr. Timms: The state pension is increased annually to take account of price inflation, including gas and electricity. The winter fuel payment has risen from £20 in winter 1997–98 to £200 from winter 2000–01 and to

£300 for those aged 80 or over from winter 2003–04. We are therefore already providing a significant contribution towards fuel costs. The Chancellor announced in the pre-Budget report that the winter fuel payment will continue at the current rate for the remainder of this Parliament.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were claiming incapacity benefit in each ward in Hartlepool in the last period for which data was available. [42454]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit and severe disability allowance claimants in the parliamentary constituency of Hartlepool, broken down by Ward: May 2005

	Number
Hartlepool total	7,575
Brinkburn	465
Brus	620
Dyke House	695
Elwick	60
Fens	435
Grange	355
Greatham	125
Hart	295
Jackson	605
Owton	570
Park	385
Rift House	305
Rossmere	500
St. Hilda	765
Seaton	320
Stranton	650
Throston	425

Notes:

1. Wards are based on Census Wards—those current as at April 2003.
2. All benefit counts at ward level are rounded to a multiple of five to protect the confidentiality of individual claimants.

Source:

Information Directorate, Department for Work and Pensions Longitudinal Survey 100 per cent. data; May 2005.

Jeremy Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many employees of the ambulance service on long-term sick leave are claiming incapacity benefit. [49987]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available.

Jobseekers

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what action he is taking in conjunction with Jobcentre Plus to tackle recent increases in the claimant count of jobseekers. [45195]

Margaret Hodge: Despite the recent increases, claimant unemployment remains at historically low levels. Jobcentre Plus will continue to ensure that all jobseekers fulfil their responsibilities to seek and be available for work, are offered the assistance they need to find work and receive the benefits to which they are entitled. The Department will continue to monitor movements in the claimant count and identify whether further action is required.

Means-tested Benefits

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department is taking to increase awareness among entitled people of the means-tested benefits for which they are eligible. [49611]

Mr. Timms: We want everybody to claim the benefits to which they are entitled. Information on the range of benefits we administer is widely available.

The Department is currently, with local authorities support, running publicity and marketing take up campaigns this winter, aimed at encouraging people who are entitled to council tax benefit to make a claim.

In addition, the Pension Service has written to every pensioner household informing them about pension credit and there have been a number of campaign initiatives such as the "You're Missing Out" direct mailings and adverts in national newspapers. The Pension Service's local service are also visiting around 23,000 pensioners households each week to offer a full benefit entitlement check.

Since September 2005, existing pension credit customers were contacted and invited to claim council tax benefit and/or housing benefit. From December 2005 customers who contact the pension credit application line to make an application for pension credit have been invited to claim these benefits as well.

Media Monitoring

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department has spent on media monitoring activities in each of the last eight financial years. [35640]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed on 8 June 2001 from parts of the former Department of Social Security, the former Department for Education and Employment and the Employment Service. Information prior to 2001 is not held centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The Department paid for its Media Monitoring Unit service by annual subscription.

	Amount (£)
2003–04	54,317
2004–05	57,575

The Department paid Government News Network for regional cuttings by annual subscription:

	Amount (£)
2003–04	150,000
2004–05	150,000

The Department uses Durrants (formerly Xtreme) to provide national cuttings. The costs for this vary depending on the number and size of the cuttings. The amounts paid for the last two financial years are:

	Amount (£)
2003–04	95,890
2004–05	82,679

The Department's rules only allow for financial records to be kept for three years. (The current year and the last two tax years.) Information for periods before the 2003–04 tax year can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the options available to benefit recipients and pensioners who wish to continue to have their money paid over the counter in cash at a post office branch when the contract to provide the Post Office Card Account ends in 2010. [48731]

Mr. Plaskitt: Customers will still be able to use the Post Office to collect their benefit or pension if they wish by using a bank or building society account there are some 25 different accounts can be accessed at post office branches now, and we hope there could be more in the future.

The table sets out those accounts which can currently be used at post office branches.

The very small minority of people unable to operate any account will be paid by cheque, which may be cashed at the Post Office.

Bank/building society	Current account	Basic account
Abbey	No	Yes
Alliance and Leicester	Yes	Yes
Bank of Ireland	Yes	Yes
Bank of Scotland	No	Yes
Barclays	Yes	Yes
cahoot	Yes	No
Clydesdale Bank	Yes	Yes
Co-operative Bank	Yes	Yes
First Direct (Scotland only)	Yes	No
First Trust	No	Yes
Halifax	No	Yes
HSBC	No	Yes
Lloyds TSB	Yes	Yes
Nationwide (building society)	Yes	Yes
Nat West	No	Yes
Northern Bank	No	Yes
Royal Bank of Scotland	No	Yes
smile	Yes	No
Ulster	No	Yes
Yorkshire Bank	No	Yes

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answers to the hon. Members for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) and for Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey (Danny Alexander) of 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 443–5W, on the Post Office card account, what provision will be made to accommodate the needs of pensioners and other benefit claimants holding Post Office card accounts when the current contract expires; and if he will make a statement. [50351]

Mr. Plaskitt: Government funding for the Post Office card account will end in March 2010 as always planned. By then we expect most card account customers will have moved to having their benefit or pension paid into a bank account.

Customers will still be able to use the Post Office to collect their benefit or pension if they wish by using a bank account, some 25 different bank accounts can be accessed at post office branches now, and we hope there could be more in the future.

We will aim to develop a joint strategy with the Post Office to move customers from the Post Office card account between now and 2010. Our priority will be to ensure that this is a straightforward process for the customers. I understand the Post Office is developing new banking and savings products which may be suitable for some existing Post Office card account customers.

We would like every DWP customer who currently has a Post Office card account to do their banking at the Post Office if that is what they want. There is no reason why the viability of the post offices should be threatened if customers continue to draw cash at the Post Office after moving on from the Post Office card account.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, columns 597–8W, if he will list the 25 different bank accounts referred to; and whether each allows customers to make at least 52 withdrawals each year at post offices without incurring bank charges. [51035]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* Customers who hold basic bank accounts with one of a wide range of high street banks can use any post office branch to make an unlimited number of cash withdrawals free of charge. Such banks are: Abbey; Alliance and Leicester; Bank of Ireland; Bank of Scotland; Barclays; Clydesdale Bank; Co-operative Bank; First Trust; Halifax; HSBC; Lloyds TSB; Nationwide; NatWest; Northern Bank; Royal Bank of Scotland; Ulster Bank and Yorkshire Bank. These accounts and their features are listed in the FSA leaflet "Basic Bank Accounts—your questions answered".

Some banks enable their current account customers to withdraw cash over the counter at post office branches, free of charge and without restriction on the number of withdrawals. Banks which offer this service include: Alliance and Leicester; Bank of Ireland; Barclays; Clydesdale Bank; Co-operative Bank; First Direct (Scotland only), Lloyds TSB, Nationwide Building Society and the internet banks smile and cahoot.

Private Members' Bills

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list those Private Members' Bills introduced under *(a)* Standing Order No. 14(6), *(b)* Standing Order No.23 and *(c)* Standing Order No.57 which were (i) supported and (ii) opposed by his Department in each session since 1997–98. [35984]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed at the start of the 2001–02 parliamentary session. Information from that period to the end of the 2004–05 session is provided.

It is not possible to state whether or not the Department supported Bills that did not complete a Second Reading. Only one of the Bills listed as follows completed its Second Reading. The Department's position in relation to the one Bill that did complete its Second Reading is included next to its entry in the list.

Bills introduced under Standing Order No. 14(6)

Disabled people (Duties of public authorities)—Bridget Prentice;

Older people's commissioners—Ian Lucas;

Council Tax benefit (Entitlement information)—Tony Baldry;

Rights of savers—Sir Malcolm Rifkind—Opposed by the department.

Bills Introduced under Standing Order No.23

Needle stick injury—Laura Moffat;

Older people's rights commissioner—David Taylor;

Pensioner trustees and final payments—Mr. Jim Cunningham;

Health and safety at work (Offences)—Mr. Andrew Love;

Health and safety at work (Amendment)—Lawrie Quinn

Pensions (Clawbacks)—Mr. Kerry Pollard;

Universal funded pensions—Mr. Peter Lilley.

Bills introduced under Standing Order No.57

Health and safety at work (Offences)—Lawrie Quinn;

Pensions (Winding up)—Mr. Frank Field.

Statutory Sick Pay

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many personal capability assessments were conducted pursuant to the Social Security (Incapacity for Work) Miscellaneous Amendments Regulations 1999 in relation to those claiming statutory sick pay in each of the last three years. [49976]

Mrs. McGuire: The personal capability assessment is relevant to people claiming or receiving incapacity benefit, severe disablement allowance, or income support on the basis of incapacity. The personal capability assessment does not apply to statutory sick pay because, in that instance, incapacity for work is judged in relation to the job that the person has been doing under their contract of employment.

Sunset Clauses

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his policy is in respect of the use of sunset clauses in legislation. [33658]

Mr. Timms: The appropriateness of a sunset clause for the whole or part of any proposed legislation is considered on a case by case basis. It is also addressed when a regulatory impact assessment relating to legislation is being prepared.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Airguns

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to reduce the incidence of attacks on animals by use of airguns. [47848]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* We are determined to tackle all aspects of misuse of air weapons and are further tightening controls through provisions in the Violent Crime Reduction Bill which will increase the age limit for owning an air weapon to 18 and introduce a new offence of firing beyond the boundaries of premises. We believe it is important to control the easy availability of air weapons and there are also provisions in the Bill to restrict the sale of air weapons by way of trade or business to registered firearms dealers approved by the police and to require the transfer of the weapon to be on a face to face basis.

Animal Cruelty

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people were convicted of cruelty towards animals *(a)* in Westmorland and Lonsdale and *(b)* England in each year since 1997. [47056]

Fiona Mactaggart: Persons found guilty for various offences connected with animal cruelty are shown in the table for South Lakeland petty sessional area and England, 1997 to 2004. It is not possible to separately identify Westmorland as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2005 will be available in the autumn.

Number of offenders[1] found guilty for offences relating to animal cruelty in England, 1997–2004

	Statute	Number of offenders 1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
108.02	Protection of Animals Act, 191 1 (as amended)	769	797	736	783	708	704	730	734
108.03	Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 Sec 8	5	2	1	4	3	2	—	1
108.04	Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.06	Protection of Animals Act, 1934	4	4	-	1	—	—	1	5
108.08	Docking and Nicking of Horses Act, 1949	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
108.09	Pet Animals Act, 1951	3	6	9	12	8	5	6	2
108.10	Cockfighting Act, 1952	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.11	Protection of Animals (Amendment) Act, 1954	23	20	20	14	11	10	12	16
108.12	Animal Health Act, 1981, Sees 40–42, 46 and 49 and Orders made under Sees 8, 9, 37, 38, 39 and 43	61	72	49	22	22	30	19	32
108.13	Slaughterhouses Act, 1974	—	3	2	—	—	1	1	1
108.14	Abandonment of Animals Act, 1960, Sec 1	18	19	12	13	19	19	14	14
108.16	Animal & Animal Products (Import and Export)Regulations 1988	—	—	—	—	—	4	1	—
108.17	Animals (Cruel Poisons) Act, 1962	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
108.18	Animal Boarding Establishments Act, 1963	1	5	6	4	8	3	2	—
108.19	Riding Establishments Acts, 1964 and 1970	—	1	—	2	1	1	—	—
108.20	Slaughter of Poultry Act, 1967	2	2	2	—	—	—	—	—
108.21	Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1968, Sees 1,2 and 6	7	5	9	9	3	2	2	9

Number of offenders[1] found guilty for offences relating to animal cruelty in England, 1997–2004

	Statute	Number of offenders							
		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
108.22	Protection of Badgers Act, 1992 (except Sec 13)	25	1	8	4	5	5	1	3
108.23	Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 Sec 9	3	—	—	—	2	3	—	1
108.24	Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 Sec 11	—	3	2	—	—	—	—	—
108.25	Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996	3	6	—	4	4	3	5	3
11.07, 111.08	Breeding of Dogs Acts 1973 and 1991	3	2	3	2	1	—	—	1
111.22,111.23	Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
110	Diseases of Animals Act	58	66	49	27	124	54	69	54
190 (all)	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Sees 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 17	52	35	116	71	41	39	140	65
	Total	1,037	1,049	1,024	974	961	885	1,003	941

[1] Principal offence basis.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were convicted of cruelty towards animals in *(a)* Tamworth constituency and *(b)* the West Midlands in each year since 1997. [48646]

Hazel Blears: Persons found guilty for various offences connected with animal cruelty are shown in the tables for Staffordshire and the West Midlands police force areas, 1997 to 2004. It is not possible to separately identify Tamworth constituency as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2005 will be available in the autumn.

Number of offenders[1] found guilty for offences relating to animal cruelty in Staffordshire Police Force Area, 1997 to 2004

Statute	Number of offenders							
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Protection of Animals Act, 1911 (as amended)	28	9	4	[2]—	14	7	5	10
Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 Sec 8	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Protection of Animals Act, 1934	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Docking and Nicking of Horses Act, 1949	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Pet Animals Act, 1951	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Cockfighting Act, 1952	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Protection of Animals (Amendment) Act, 1954	—	2	—	[2]—	—	—	1	—
Animal Health Act, 1981, Sees 40–42, 46 and 49 and Orders made under Sees 8, 9, 37, 38, 39 and 43	1	2	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Slaughterhouses Act, 1974	—	2	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Abandonment of Animals Act, 1960 Sec 1	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Animal and Animal Products (Import and Export) Regulations 1988	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Animals (Cruel Poisons) Act, 1962	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Animal Boarding Establishments Act, 1963	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Riding Establishments Acts, 1964 and 1970	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Slaughter of Poultry Act, 1967	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1968, Secs 1, 2 and 6	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Protection of Badgers Act, 1992 (except Sec 13)	1	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	1
Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 Sec 9	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 Sec 11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996	—	1	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Breeding of Dogs Acts 1973 and 1991	1	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999	—	—	—	[2]—	—	—	—	—
Diseases of Animals Act	13	11	3	[2]—	1	—	2	—
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Secs 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 17	14	12	3	[2]—	1	—	2	—
Total	58	39	10	[2]—	16	7	10	11

[1] Principal offence basis.
[2] Figures for Staffordshire for 2000 are not available. Staffordshire Police Force were only able to supply a small sample of data for magistrates courts proceedings during 2000.

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many anti-social behaviour orders have been issued to citizens living in Tamworth constituency in each month since their introduction; and how many of them were breached in each month. [37834]

Hazel Blears: Data on antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) are not available below local authority area (LAA) level. A table is available on the Crime Reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk giving the number of ASBOs issued in England and Wales where restrictions have been imposed in LAAs.

The Home Office Court Proceedings Database holds breach proceedings only where there has been a conviction. These data are available at Criminal Justice System area level only.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many recipients of an antisocial behaviour order have been reconvicted of a criminal offence within two years. [48578]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not available.

The Home Office's public service agreement (PSA) five specifies re-offending targets in terms of a reduction in the re-offending rate, the start point of which is an offender being discharged from a custodial sentence or starting a community sentence.

Antisocial behaviour orders, which are civil orders not criminal penalties, are not routinely measured. National re-offending rates are published annually to monitor the Home Office's progress against PSA five.

The most recent data are published in 'Adult re-offending: results from the 2002 cohort'. "Home Office Statistical Bulletin 25/05". This is available on the Home Office's website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many anti-social behaviour orders have been issued; [48579]

(2) how many people were jailed for a breach of their anti-social behaviour order in each year since 1999; [48580]

(3) how many anti-social behaviour orders have been breached in each year since 1999; [48581]

Hazel Blears: The number of antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) issued, as reported to the Home Office, up to 30 June 2005 (latest available) is 6,497.

ASBO breach data are currently available from one June 2000 to 31 December 2003 for ASBOs issued since one June 2000. The available information is given in the table.

The number of antisocial behaviour orders breached, as reported to the Home Office, by period and custodial sentence resulting, from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003[1]—England and Wales

	Total breached	Custodial sentence given
Jun 2000 to December 2000	14	4
2001	118	60
2002	240	101
2003	609	297
Jun 2000 to December 2003	793	437

[1] Breaches and custodial sentences are counted In this table on a persons basis, i.e. where the order has been breached or custodial sentence given on more than one occasion within the same period, a person is counted once only within that period.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders were *(a)* issued and *(b)* breached in 2004 by each London borough; [48973]

(2) how many antisocial behaviour orders made during *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005 an individual support order was attached. [48975]

Hazel Blears: A table giving a breakdown by the local government authority area in which prohibitions are imposed within antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) is available on the Crime Reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk. This table gives data by year since ASBOs were introduced up to 30 June 2005 (latest available).

ASBO breach data are currently available from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 for ASBOs issued since 1 June 2000. However, the data are available at Criminal Justice System area level only.

The number of Individual Support Orders (ISOs) issued, as reported to the Home Office, in 2004 is seven. From January to June 2005 16 had been issued.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the reasons for the differences in the number of antisocial behaviour orders issued in each police force; and if he will make a statement. [36398]

Hazel Blears: There are differences in the number of antisocial behaviour orders issued in each criminal justice area (coterminous with police force areas). This is because it is up to local agencies to decide on the most appropriate intervention to tackle antisocial behaviour in their area based on their knowledge of what works best locally. The key issue is whether antisocial behaviour is being reduced on the ground, not which measure is used to achieve this.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to collect data on the number of antisocial behaviour orders that are issued to individuals with *(a)* disabilities and *(b)* mental illnesses. [48974]

Hazel Blears: We have no such plans at present. Information is not collected centrally about the characteristics or circumstances of persons issued with an antisocial behaviour order.

Charity Commission

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent by the Charity Commission on interim *(a)* managers and *(b)* receivers of charities in each of the last five years; and what the (i) average, (ii) upper and (iii) lower decile spending per charity was in each year. [51711]

Paul Goggins: This is a matter for the Charity Commission as the Government Department responsible for the regulation of charities in England and Wales. The Executive Director of Legal and Charity Services at the Charity Commission will write to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Child Curfew Orders

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many child curfew orders have been issued in each local authority area in England and Wales. [49045]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Persons sentenced and given curfew orders by police force area aged 10–17 years, 2004

Police force area	Sentenced	Offenders curfew orders
Avon and Somerset	1,694	73
Bedfordshire	920	77
Cambridgeshire	928	31
Cheshire	1,588	89
City of London	2	0
Cleveland	1,257	72
Cumbria	1,119	50
Derbyshire	1,653	63
Devon and Cornwall	2,197	25
Dorset	763	29
Durham	1,249	71
Essex	2,501	110
Gloucestershire	719	55
Greater Manchester	7,159	409
Hampshire	4,023	146
Hertfordshire	1,403	104
Humberside	2,185	99

Persons sentenced and given curfew orders by police force area aged 10–17 years, 2004

Police force area	Sentenced	Offenders curfew orders
Kent	2,619	72
Lancashire	2,972	145
Leicestershire	1,800	76
Lincolnshire	939	1
Merseyside	3,776	157
Metropolitan Police	11,687	421
Norfolk	984	42
North Yorkshire	1,135	52
Northamptonshire	578	0
Northumbria	4,153	42
Nottinghamshire	2,103	104
South Yorkshire	2,515	130
Staffordshire	1,811	56
Suffolk	1,524	40
Surrey	956	26
Sussex	1,955	91
Thames Valley	1,987	83
Warwickshire	594	23
West Mercia	1,961	62
West Midlands	6,683	282
West Yorkshire	5,126	340
Wiltshire	954	38
Dyfed-Powys	642	4
Gwent	1,266	24
North Wales	1,349	96
South Wales	2,759	140
Total (England and Wales)	96,188	4,050

Source:
RDS-NOMS

Child Protection

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will issue guidance to *(a)* the police and *(b)* the Crown Prosecution Service, on how long an individual may be formally investigated under child protection legislation, before being (i) informed of the issues in question and (ii) charged or the investigation closed; [49570]

(2) what assessment he has made of the safeguards for individuals under investigation under child protection legislation; and if he will make a statement. [49620]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) and the accompanying codes of practice, provide that an arrested person may be detained without charge for the purposes of investigating an offence for up to 24-hours initially, extended up to 36-hours by an officer of superintendent rank or above. The police may apply to a magistrate to authorise detention without charge for up to a maximum period of 96-hours.

The detained person may be issued bail at any time during this process to enable the investigation to continue. There is no limit to the number of times the person may be released subject to bail or be detained for further questioning provided that the total period in custody does not exceed the relevant authorised period of detention. When the officer in charge of the investigation considers that there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction, he must inform the custody officer without delay and a decision taken on whether the detained person should be charged or referred to the prosecutor for charge.

In November 2005 the Department for Education Skills published guidance on dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff, which was developed in co-operation with the Home Office and Crown Prosecution Service. The guidance is intended to provide effective protection for children, but at the same time to support school staff by ensuring that cases are dealt with as fairly and quickly as possible. It includes indicative target timescales for different parts of the process.

The Government plans to extend this approach to cover people who work with children in other settings. Implementation will be overseen by the Local Safeguarding Children Boards, to be set up in all local authority areas by April 2006. The guidance can be found at:

www.dfes.gov.uk/teachernet/childprotection.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women under investigation by the West Yorkshire police force under child protection legislation have not been (i) informed of the issues in question and (ii) charged. [49571]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* The chief constable is responsible for the day-to-day operational management of the force. You may therefore wish to redirect your query to him.

Clive Hayes

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will investigate the circumstances which led to *(a)* the late Clive Hayes being risk-assessed as being suitable for placement in open conditions at Leyhill Prison and *(b)* the decision to release Mr. Hayes while he was serving a life sentence; and if he will make a statement. [51760]

Fiona Mactaggart: There are no plans at this stage to conduct an investigation into the decisions taken in relation to Mr. Hayes' release or his transfer to open conditions. However, I can say that his case is being reviewed by the probation service in line with the processes in place for addressing those cases where an offender has been charged with a serious further offence. This review will take place despite the fact that Mr. Hayes was not charged with a further offence prior to committing suicide.

It would be inappropriate to address the circumstances leading to Mr. Hayes' transfer to open conditions and his release in 1995. However, it is the case that most lifers normally spend some time in open conditions in preparation for possible release. The process for transferring a lifer to open conditions involves the independent Parole Board considering a comprehensive range risk assessments from a range of prison and other staff covering the lifer's offence, risk factors and progress during sentence. The panel's advice is then considered by the Secretary of State who will take the final decision on the matter. That process was followed in 1993 in relation to Mr. Hayes' transfer to Leyhill open prison.

The responsibility for Mr. Hayes' release in 1995 was a matter for the independent Parole Board, not the Secretary of State. The main criterion governing the Parole Board's consideration of his case was whether it was necessary for the protection of the public that he should continue to be confined. The panel that considered his case in 1995 clearly took the view that the level of risk of harm was acceptable and directed his release on life licence.

Closing the Gap Report

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1266W, on the "Closing the Gap" report, whether *(a)* ministers and *(b)* officials provided comment to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary as a result of the briefing on "Closing the Gap" prior to 13 September 2005. [44292]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 20 January 2006]*: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary sought and received comments from various sources as they finalised the "Closing the Gap" report. These were taken into account as appropriate prior to publication on 13 September 2005.

Cocaine

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to reduce imports of cocaine *(a)* from Jamaica by air and *(b)* from South America by ship; and what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of such steps. [44118]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

The UK Government initiated Operation Airbridge in June 2002 with the aim of achieving a significant reduction in cocaine smuggling by couriers by measures such as outward passenger screening. HMRC worked closely with the Jamaican Constabulary Force and the measures taken, together with the introduction of a visa regime have contributed to a substantial reduction in the number of couriers from Jamaica targeting the UK.

The UK Government have supported efforts to improve drug detection in South American states by providing equipment and training—for example in the identification of shipping containers that may be used to conceal cocaine. I cannot give further details as to do so would prejudice law enforcement objectives and international relations. The government's approach has produced some good results, including in the first 10 months of 2005 working with international partners to take out almost 30 tonnes of cocaine destined for the European market.

Community Supervision and Support Centres

Dr. Blackman-Woods: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will announce his decision on the locations of the two proposed new women's Community Supervision and Support Centres announced in 2005. [49216]

Fiona Mactaggart: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary announced in March 2005 that £9.15 million would be devoted over a four year period to establish new initiatives to tackle women's offending in the community. In December 2005, Ministers subsequently approved the Together Women Programme being run via two demonstration projects within the two Regional Offender Manager regions of Yorkshire and Humberside and the North West.

The Regional Offender Managers for the regions have been informed of the decision and a formal announcement will be made once proposals for the two projects have further been developed.

Community Support Officers

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police community support officers have been introduced in *(a)* Uxbridge and *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon; and what assessment he has made of their impact on crime and antisocial behaviour. [48520]

Hazel Blears: At the end of September 2005 the London borough of Hillingdon Operational Command Unit (OCU) had 49 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). Information is only collected at OCU level and is not available for Uxbridge. The deployment of PCSOs within Hillingdon is an operational matter for the Borough Commander (Chief Supt. Mark Toland). Their deployment across London is a matter for the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

"A National Evaluation of Community Support Officers" (Home Office Research Study 297) was published on 25 January. A copy of the report has been placed in the Library. PCSOs have been well received by the public. They are helping to restore respect in local communities by providing reassurance and tackling antisocial behaviour and low level crime.

Convictions

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many convictions were secured by *(a)* the Metropolitan Police Force, *(b)* Greater Manchester Police, *(c)* West Midlands Police, *(d)* Merseyside Police and *(e)* West Yorkshire Police for (i) commercial robbery and (ii) cash in transit crimes in (A) 2003, (B) 2004 and (C) 2005; and how many incidents of each type of crime were recorded by each force in each year. [40969]

Hazel Blears: Information on convictions is not available as the court proceedings database does not break down data for different types of robbery offence.

Data on incidents is not available. The available information relates to the number of recorded offences of robbery of business property and is given in the table. It is not possible to identify cash in transit robberies from the recorded crime data series.

Recorded offences of robbery of business property

Police force area	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
		Number of offences	
Metropolitan police	3,545	3,163	2,226
Greater Manchester	1,233	1,172	1,296
West Midlands	1,020	900	863
Merseyside	463	545	528
West Yorkshire	493	427	298

Correspondence

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood, of 4 October 2005 on behalf of Mohamed Ali Sharif (DoB 20/1/1965), husband of Mariam Mahamoud (Home Office Reference MO598z or M1172937). [49852]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

UKvisas, the department in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with responsibility for entry clearance matters arising overseas, replied to my right hon. Friend on 9 February.

Crime

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to allow local authorities to close telephone boxes at night if they are being used by drug dealers. [50921]

Paul Goggins: There are currently no plans to give local authorities powers to close telephone boxes that may be used by drug dealers. The major telephone companies employ police liaison officers who work closely with individual police forces to deal with problems of criminality associated with the use of public telephone boxes.

Crime Detection Rates

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what crime detection rate for offences of *(a)* violence against the person, *(b)* sexual offences, *(c)* robberies, *(d)* burglaries and *(e)* theft of a vehicle was recorded in (i) Greater London and (ii) Uxbridge constituency in each year since 1995. [48521]

Hazel Blears: The available information relates to the Metropolitan police force area and the basic command unit (BCU) of Hillingdon. Smaller area data are not collected centrally.

Data collection at BCU level began in the financial year 1999–2000 when figures for six key offence groups were collected. Initially total burglary was not included and only became available from 2000–01. Information is given in the following table.

Metropolitan police detection rates (percentage)

	1995	1996	1997
Violence against the person	65	62	70
Sexual Offences	58	54	61
Robbery	18	22	24
Burglary	22	21	23
Theft of a motor vehicle	13	12	12

	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02
Violence against the person	44	31	28	26
Sexual Offences	42	32	31	32
Robbery	16	12	12	11
Burglary	13	10	10	10
Theft of a motor vehicle	10	8	9	9

Note:
Break in series due to expanded offence coverage and revised counting rules which came into effect on 1 April 1998. Figures are therefore not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Violence against the person	24	26	43
Sexual Offences	33	34	35
Robbery	13	12	15
Burglary	13	12	13
Theft of a motor vehicle	9	8	9

Note:
The National Crime Recording Standard was introduced on 1 April 2002. Figures are therefore not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Hillingdon (basic command unit) detection rates (percentage)

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02
Violence against the person	26	23	21
Sexual Offences	35	34	30
Robbery	9	8	8
Burglary	n/a	6	9
Theft of a motor vehicle	7	8	7

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Violence against the person	23	26	50
Sexual Offences	22	31	32
Robbery	10	17	17
Burglary	10	10	11
Theft of a motor vehicle	8	6	6

Note:
The National Crime Recording Standard was introduced on 1 April 2002. Figures are therefore not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Crime Statistics

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the *(a)* number of burglaries and *(b)* percentage annual change in the number of burglaries in (i) England and (ii) each English police force in each year from 1990–91 to 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [45601]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is given in the tables.

Table 1: Recorded offences of burglary in England—1990 to 2001–02

Police force area	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
					Number of offences	
Avon and Somerset	26,388	33,961	43,163	40,655	37,397	34,111
Bedfordshire	10,809	12,873	15,775	15,596	12,864	11,026
Cambridgeshire	8,361	11,897	14,383	15,023	14,099	14,267
Cheshire	13,555	16,537	21,766	22,034	19,248	18,155

Table 1: Recorded offences of burglary in England—1990 to 2001–02

Police force area	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
						Number of offences
Cleveland	16,559	17,178	20,504	18,738	18,428	23,536
Cumbria	7,710	10,826	11,673	10,733	10,066	9,422
Derbyshire	12,527	18,500	22,225	25,612	24,049	19,875
Devon and Cornwall	21,758	25,708	28,728	32,578	30,266	26,400
Dorset	7,625	9,287	9,957	9,625	9,372	12,347
Durham	11,312	13,565	13,486	13,677	12,524	15,463
Essex	19,843	24,980	26,497	27,149	23,639	19,804
Gloucestershire	9,578	12,601	16,405	17,294	15,844	13,872
Greater Manchester	87,855	97,715	103,390	97,850	91,077	85,848
Hampshire	25,531	32,003	34,533	33,066	29,600	24,726
Hertfordshire	8,660	10,890	12,427	13,419	12,100	11,318
Humberside	27,361	32,949	38,954	48,031	43,965	39,113
Kent	19,676	26,535	31,099	30,743	26,871	33,865
Lancashire	21,635	25,045	27,480	29,550	27,151	29,845
Leicestershire	16,057	21,526	23,251	25,210	26,109	25,487
Lincolnshire	8,237	8,991	10,990	13,008	11,221	12,243
London, City of	983	1,070	875	778	675	712
Merseyside	33,822	33,609	34,624	33,688	33,042	34,497
Metropolitan Police	173,247	191,482	191,880	174,770	164,641	171,540
Norfolk	12,524	15,336	17,027	18,178	13,931	13,097
Northamptonshire	9,103	12,148	13,115	15,944	14,521	14,004
Northumbria	54,746	66,101	66,072	63,007	57,207	52,870
North Yorkshire	9,516	12,338	15,610	16,275	16,694	16,641
Nottinghamshire	24,201	30,568	36,374	40,038	34,639	37,932
South Yorkshire	27,107	35,261	41,907	52,396	51,242	45,504
Staffordshire	18,728	23,523	28,830	30,091	26,736	24,838
Suffolk	7,164	7,638	9,004	9,147	7,778	7,114
Surrey	9,858	11,437	12,021	12,815	10,158	9,175
Sussex	22,208	26,474	28,983	26,672	24,271	23,224
Thames Valley	27,130	34,065	37,424	40,345	38,254	38,748
Warwickshire	7,144	10,290	12,741	12,554	11,040	9,302
West Mercia	10,524	14,595	16,926	17,980	16,738	15,075
West Midlands	68,218	84,084	101,111	100,002	90,637	89,941
West Yorkshire	58,249	78,626	90,231	94,294	87,391	90,130
Wiltshire	6,187	8,158	9,223	9,118	8,152	8,092
England	961,696	1,160,370	1,290,664	1,307,683	1,203,637	1,183,159

Police force area	1996	1997	1998–991	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
						Number of offences
Avon and Somerset	35,151	31,220	29,194	27,804	25,805	32,865
Bedfordshire	10,237	8,883	7,129	7,913	6,884	7,671
Cambridgeshire	14,544	12,668	12,759	12,377	10,244	11,161
Cheshire	15,521	13,346	13,125	12,805	12,012	13,680
Cleveland	22,234	16,432	16,526	15,621	15,255	16,966
Cumbria	8,419	6,868	5,812	5,455	4,759	4,942
Derbyshire	18,856	17,302	16,720	15,536	14,997	16,564
Devon and Cornwall	24,841	20,017	17,808	17,307	15,606	15,257
Dorset	9,924	8,437	9,202	8,466	7,803	7,889
Durham	13,084	12,209	10,135	9,083	7,744	8,864
Essex	19,007	16,326	14,997	14,967	14,889	14,472
Gloucestershire	12,928	11,559	10,111	9,308	7,796	8,468
Greater Manchester	83,780	75,834	79,179	75,374	69,361	72,331
Hampshire	23,008	20,431	19,822	18,778	17,968	17,903
Hertfordshire	10,353	9,345	8,353	8,689	9,937	10,677
Humberside	37,834	36,169	34,169	32,230	26,414	26,551
Kent	32,516	25,749	22,978	19,722	19,183	17,474
Lancashire	30,500	27,921	24,226	21,360	21,668	23,920
Leicestershire	24,997	18,753	17,218	15,632	13,377	13,032
Lincolnshire	12,819	10,551	10,257	10,719	9,583	9,592
London, City of	515	402	520	420	545	467
Merseyside	29,437	26,266	26,498	25,638	23,697	25,478
Metropolitan Police	164,926	141,056	123,861	129,145	112,375	116,026
Norfolk	11,751	10,935	10,154	10,243	9,445	9,043
Northamptonshire	12,542	11,385	12,162	11,302	9,541	9,553
Northumbria	42,822	34,584	31,625	26,459	24,741	22,796
North Yorkshire	13,972	11,359	11,237	10,402	9,828	11,656
Nottinghamshire	33,407	29,953	28,792	26,458	25,925	30,263
South Yorkshire	43,276	37,446	34,370	32,412	29,429	32,085

Number of offences

Police force area	1996	1997	1998–991	1999–00	2000–01	2001–02
Staffordshire	24,511	23,518	20,391	19,155	17,085	18,781
Suffolk	6,384	6,094	6,241	6,214	5,738	6,346
Surrey	8,476	7,496	6,922	6,640	8,902	8,317
Sussex	21,534	20,595	20,934	19,437	18,302	16,500
Thames Valley	36,549	31,426	30,735	31,185	27,756	27,798
Warwickshire	9,181	8,302	8,064	7,741	7,197	7,813
West Mercia	16,435	16,334	14,631	14,313	13,384	15,398
West Midlands	88,860	77,412	70,624	68,780	62,597	63,060
West Yorkshire	80,010	67,686	67,633	58,896	60,198	68,818
Wiltshire	7,611	6,361	6,129	5,718	5,027	5,824
England	1,112,752	968,630	911,243	869,704	802,997	846,301

Note:
Figures using the expanded coverage and revised counting rules which came into effect from 1 April 1998.

Table 2: Recorded offences of burglary in England 2002–03 to 2004–05

Number of offences

Police force area	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Avon and Somerset	30,182	24,564	21,496
Bedfordshire	8,336	9,045	7,186
Cambridgeshire	12,775	10,257	8,501
Cheshire	14,194	13,119	10,627
Cleveland	14,856	13,395	9,357
Cumbria	4,895	4,613	4,274
Derbyshire	18,465	16,052	11,667
Devon and Cornwall	15,700	14,024	14,012
Dorset	7,355	7,615	6,330
Durham	7,656	7,083	6,853
Essex	16,909	16,467	14,771
Gloucestershire	8,694	9,072	7,142
Greater Manchester	75,367	66,545	49,372
Hampshire	18,217	18,014	15,552
Hertfordshire	11,713	12,783	11,471
Humberside	27,099	23,761	18,602
Kent	18,371	17,830	16,621
Lancashire	20,487	19,571	16,274
Leicestershire	12,832	12,795	11,687
Lincolnshire	10,831	9,052	7,306
London, City of	444	454	501
Merseyside	25,956	24,871	21,943
Metropolitan Police	113,427	105,361	101,474
Norfolk	9,681	8,169	6,577
Northamptonshire	11,381	12,231	11,120
Northumbria	22,704	20,083	16,822
North Yorkshire	11,511	11,062	7,767
Nottinghamshire	33,190	31,335	25,034
South Yorkshire	34,468	26,553	21,149
Staffordshire	15,172	14,072	11,058
Suffolk	6,248	6,396	5,090
Surrey	9,727	9,700	8,870
Sussex	17,321	16,430	14,607
Thames Valley	29,432	30,076	25,466
Warwickshire	7,437	7,661	6,403
West Mercia	16,375	15,015	12,424
West Midlands	56,531	53,116	40,499
West Yorkshire	69,807	59,799	39,657
Wiltshire	6,242	5,929	5,120
England	851,988	783,970	650,682

Note:
The National Crime Recording Standard was introduced on 1 April 2002. Figures are therefore not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Table 3: Percentage changes in recorded offences of burglary in England—1990 to 2001–02

Percentage change

Police force area	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997–98	1998–99[1]	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02
Avon and Somerset	—	29	27	-6	-8	-9	3	-11	-6	-5	-7	27
Bedfordshire	—	19	23	-1	-18	-14	-7	-13	-20	11	-13	11
Cambridgeshire	—	42	21	4	-6	1	2	-13	1	-3	-17	9
Cheshire	—	22	32	1	-13	-6	-15	-14	-2	-2	-6	14
Cleveland	—	4	19	-9	-2	28	-6	-26	1	-5	-2	11

Table 3: Percentage changes in recorded offences of burglary in England—1990 to 2001–02

Police force area	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997–98	1998–99[1]	1999–2000	Percentage change 2000–01	Percentage change 2001–02
Cumbria	—	40	8	-8	-6	-6	-11	-18	-15	-6	-13	4
Derbyshire	—	48	20	15	-6	-17	-5	-8	-3	-7	-3	10
Devon and Cornwall	—	18	12	13	-7	-13	-6	-19	-11	-3	-10	-2
Dorset	—	22	7	-3	-3	32	-20	-15	9	-8	-8	1
Durham	—	20	-1	1	-8	23	-15	-7	-17	-10	-15	14
Essex	—	26	6	2	-13	-16	-4	-14	-8	0	-1	-3
Gloucestershire	—	32	30	5	-8	-12	-7	-11	-13	-8	-16	9
Greater Manchester	—	11	6	-5	-7	-6	-2	-9	4	-5	-8	4
Hampshire	—	25	8	-4	-10	-16	-7	-11	-3	-5	-4	0
Hertfordshire	—	26	14	8	-10	-6	-9	-10	-11	4	14	7
Humberside	—	20	18	23	-8	-11	-3	-4	-6	-6	-18	1
Kent	—	35	17	-1	-13	26	-4	-21	-11	-14	-3	-9
Lancashire	—	16	10	8	-8	10	2	-8	-13	-12	1	10
Leicestershire	—	34	8	8	4	-2	-2	-25	-8	-9	-14	-3
Lincolnshire	—	9	22	18	-14	9	5	-18	-3	5	-11	0
London, City of	—	9	-18	-11	-13	5	-28	-22	29	-19	30	-14
Merseyside	—	-1	3	-3	-2	4	-15	-11	1	-3	-8	8
Metropolitan Police	—	11	0	-9	-6	4	-4	-14	-12	4	-13	3
Norfolk	—	22	11	7	-23	-6	-10	-7	-7	1	-8	-4
Northamptonshire	—	33	8	22	-9	-4	-10	-9	7	-7	-16	0
Northumbria	—	21	0	-5	-9	-8	-19	-19	-9	-16	-6	-8
North Yorkshire	—	30	27	4	3	0	-16	-19	-1	-7	-6	19
Nottinghamshire	—	26	19	10	-13	10	-12	-10	-4	-8	-2	17
South Yorkshire	—	30	19	25	-2	-11	-5	-13	-8	-6	-9	9
Staffordshire	—	26	23	4	-11	-7	-1	-4	-13	-6	-11	10
Suffolk	—	7	18	2	-15	-9	-10	-5	2	0	-8	11
Surrey	—	16	5	7	-21	-10	-8	-12	-8	-4	34	-7
Sussex	—	19	9	-8	-9	-4	-7	-4	2	-7	-6	-10
Thames Valley	—	26	10	8	-5	1	-6	-14	-2	1	-11	0
Warwickshire	—	44	24	-1	-12	-16	-1	-10	-3	-4	-7	9
West Mercia	—	39	16	6	-7	-10	9	-1	-10	-2	-6	15
West Midlands	—	23	20	-1	-9	-1	-1	-13	-9	-3	-9	1
West Yorkshire	—	35	15	5	-7	3	-11	-15	0	-13	2	14
Wiltshire	—	32	13	-1	-11	-1	-6	-16	-4	-7	-12	16
England	—	21	11	1	-8	-2	-6	-13	-6	-5	-8	5

Note:

Figures using the expanded coverage and revised counting rules which came into effect from 1 April 1998.

Table 4: Percentage changes in recorded offences of burglary in England—2002–03 to 2004–05

Police force area	2002–03	2003–04	Percentage change 2004–05
Avon and Somerset	—	-19	-12
Bedfordshire	—	9	-21
Cambridgeshire	—	-20	-17
Cheshire	—	-8	-19
Cleveland	—	-10	-30
Cumbria	—	-6	-7
Derbyshire	—	-13	-27
Devon and Cornwall	—	-11	0
Dorset	—	4	-17
Durham	—	-7	-3
Essex	—	-3	-10
Gloucestershire	—	4	-21
Greater Manchester	—	-12	-26
Hampshire	—	-1	-14
Hertfordshire	—	9	-10
Humberside	—	-12	-22
Kent	—	-3	-7
Lancashire	—	-4	-17
Leicestershire	—	0	-9
Lincolnshire	—	-16	-19
London, City of	—	2	10
Merseyside	—	-4	-12
Metropolitan Police	—	-7	-4
Norfolk	—	-16	-19
Northamptonshire	—	7	-9
Northumbria	—	-12	-16
North Yorkshire	—	-4	-30
Nottinghamshire	—	-6	-20
South Yorkshire	—	-23	-20
Staffordshire	—	-7	-21
Suffolk	—	2	-20
Surrey	—	0	-9

Table 4: Percentage changes in recorded offences of burglary in England—2002–03 to 2004–05

Police force area	Percentage change 2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
Sussex	—	-5	-11
Thames Valley	—	2	-15
Warwickshire	—	3	-16
West Mercia	—	-8	-17
West Midlands	—	-6	-24
West Yorkshire	—	-14	-34
Wiltshire	—	-5	-14
England	—	-8	-17

Note:
The National Crime Recording Standard was introduced on 1 April 2002. Figures are therefore not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Crimes against Young People

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what were the most common forms of crime committed against young people of school age in *(a)* Uxbridge, *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon, *(c)* Greater London and *(d)* England in the last five years for which figures are available. [48513]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally. Apart from specific sexual offences, it is not possible to identify the age of the victim in the recorded crime statistics.

Criminal Cases Review Commission

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the occasions when the Criminal Cases Review Commission have referred *(a)* convictions and *(b)* sentences imposed by the Crown court to the Court of Appeal in each year since 1996. [47385]

Fiona Mactaggart: The following table shows how many cases in total the Commission has referred each year to the appeal courts. The majority of the 308 cases relate to convictions and sentences imposed by the Crown court and referred to the Court of Appeal. However, the figures also include 13 convictions which have been referred to the Court of Appeal in Northern Ireland and 12 convictions and two sentences imposed by the magistrates courts which have been referred to the Crown court.

	Convictions referred	Sentences referred
1997–98	10	1
1998–99	27	4
1999–2000	33	3
2000–01	41	4
2001–02	36	2
2002–03	32	3
2003–04	26	4
2004–05	35	10
2005–06	29	8
Total	269	39

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes are proposed to the Crown Prosecution Service consequent upon the amalgamation of police forces. [50992]

Mr Mike O'Brien: I have been asked to reply.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is working closely with Home Office and police colleagues in identifying the implications for the CPS of police restructuring.

The CPS is examining various options on how best to respond to the proposed police restructure. The Law Officers and the Director of Public Prosecutions recognise the benefits of co-terminosity of CPS Areas with police forces.

DNA Samples

Grant Shapps: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to request DNA samples from serving police officers on a *(a)* voluntary and *(b)* compulsory basis. [47816]

Hazel Blears: The provision of a DMA sample by police personnel for inclusion on the Police Elimination Database (FED) is voluntary for those who were in employment by the police when the Database was set up in 2000. It is a condition of service for personnel who have joined the police since 1 August 2002. There are no plans to change this.

Dog Theft

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will make a statement on dog theft and the actions being taken to combat it; [33670]

(2) if he will meet relevant associations to discuss the problem of animal theft and the creation of a British pet register. [33870]

Hazel Blears: Theft of property, including dogs, is a crime under the Theft Act 1968 and is punishable by up to seven years in prison.

Where this problem emerges as a pressing local crime issue, it would be for the police, in consultation with the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, to take any necessary action. I do not therefore have any plans to meet with the relevant organisations to discuss this issue.

There are already voluntary databases for missing and found pets and owners can voluntarily undertake to have their pets permanently identified (through micro-chipping and tattooing) and registered.

A compulsory dog licence system has already been tried but was repealed by the Local Government Act 1988 on the grounds that it cost more to administer than the revenue it raised, due in part to irresponsible owners who did not pay for a licence.

Drug Classification

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the evidence base was for determining the original classification system for controlled drugs. [47809]

Paul Goggins: The evidence for establishing the classification system under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 was the system of controls placed on drugs under the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Substances 1961 together with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Drug Dependence.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the standard criteria used by the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs are when considering a drug for classification. [47811]

Paul Goggins: The ACMD cover three domains of harmfulness when considering the classification of drugs, namely:

Physical and mental health

Dependence-producing potential

Social

Consideration of the harmfulness of a substance to physical and mental health includes: the acute harmfulness of a substance (i.e. its potential to cause harm during the immediate period after administration); the chronic harms (those which persist after short-term exposure or which develop as a consequence of repeated use), and the harms posed by those substances administered by intravenous injection.

Drug dependence is different for each substance. It can be related to the duration and amount used, as well as to characteristics of the user.

Social harms include the potential damage to others when individuals are under the influence of the substance.

Drug Treatment Orders

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of drug treatment orders. [43589]

Fiona Mactaggart: The National Probation Directorate routinely monitors Drug Treatment and Testing Order (DTTO) effectiveness through analysis of key performance data. This indicates that 89 per cent. of offenders on DTTOs are being retained in treatment for at least 12 weeks, which is the minimum treatment period reported by the National Treatment Agency as having some impact on drug use and offending.

Completion rates for DTTOs have also improved from 28 per cent. in 2003, as reported by the Public Accounts Committee, to 36 per cent. in 2004–05. An evaluation of DTTO pilots (Hough et al, 2003) found statistically significant reductions in reconviction rates between DTTO completers and non-completers, as well as between all those starting DTTOs and a comparison group. However, it is not known to what extent these results were due to the programme.

The DTTO has gradually been replaced by the Drug Rehabilitation Requirement (DRR) of the community order from April 2005 for offenders aged 18 or over. The DRR is a more flexible order, aimed at a wider target group and treatment is more tailored to individual need.

Emergency Services (Criminal Convictions)

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of those convicted of a criminal offence in the last year for which figures are available were employed by the emergency services at the time of their offence. [49186]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* Data is not held centrally by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform or by the Department of Health on the number of offenders who have been found guilty and who were employed by the emergency services at the time of their offence.

EU Migrants

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many migrants have entered the UK from each accession country since May 2004. [50655]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 14 February 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about how many migrants have entered the UK from each accession country since May 2004. (50655)

The latest available estimates of migrant inflows of residents from each EU accession country are for 2004. They are shown in the attached table 1. The estimates are produced annually from the International Passenger Survey (IPS) where a migrant is defined as a person who, on entry to the UK, states an intention to stay for a year or more. Such intentions may not be realised. On average, just over 70 per cent. of the annual inflows from the accession countries in 2004 occurred in the second half of the year. The estimates are subject to error because they are calculated from a sample survey. For this reason, estimates for some of the smaller migrant inflows from some accession countries have been grouped together.

A special monthly analysis of the number of visitors to the UK from overseas, by nationality, is available from the IPS for the EU accession countries. It is available at the following web address:

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/STATBASE/Productasp?vlnk=12222.

Note that these data cover visits for all purposes, such as holidays and visits by migrants.

International migration, estimates from the International Passenger Survey annual data, 2004
Inflow (immigration to the UK) country of last residence

	United Kingdom (thousand) estimate[1]
European Union A10	51.8
Poland	17.0
Lithuania	10.8

International migration, estimates from the International Passenger Survey annual data, 2004
Inflow (immigration to the UK) country of last residence

	United Kingdom (thousand) estimate [1]
Czech Republic	7.3
Slovakia	5.8
Rest of A10	10.9

[1] Estimate is based on migrant inflows captured from the International Passenger Survey (IPS).
Note:
A10 = grouping of all the accession countries
Source:
Office for National Statistics

European Commission (Anti-crime Measures)

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is on the European Commission's proposals for harmonisation of the methodology used in the compilation of crime statistics. [36322]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 12 December 2005]:* My officials are members of the taskforce set up by EUROSTAT to take forward these proposals which were included as part of the five-year Hague Programme agreed by the European Council in November 2004. So far, no proposals have been put forward by EUROSTAT.

Forensic Science

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the training for scene of crime officers, with particular reference to the involvement of the *(a)* Forensic Science Service and *(b)* Metropolitan Police Forensic Science Laboratory. [49167]

Hazel Blears: The training of scenes of crime officers (SOCOs) is controlled by the Central Police Training and Development Authority (Centrex) at the National Training Centre for Scientific Support to Crime Investigation's (NTC). Initial SOCO training is carried out through two routes. The first is a nine-week residential initial crime-scene investigator training course which covers photography, combined trace evidence theory and practice. The second is a three-week volume crime-scene investigator (VCSI) course covering disciplines required to examine burglary and vehicle crime with the principal focus being on DNA and fingerprint evidence. This course is then followed by the conversion VCSI course which will enhance the existing skills of the VCSI to bring them up to the level of a substantive SOCO. SOCO trainees may then join the development crime-scene investigator course which enhances skills used in specialised areas including the investigation of suspicious fires and also firearms and/or explosives incidents.

On successful completion of this training, SOCOs are usually posted to a police force on a one to two year development programme. Following this on-the-job training period SOCOs may then attend a further two week course, which covers more detailed skills and techniques. The NIC also offer specialist short courses for SOCOs, including fire investigation, forensic archaeology, facial identification techniques and management training. Once fully qualified, SOCOs are usually required to attend a two week NIC refresher course every five years. This aims to review and refresh knowledge and skills, and keep up to date with new developments in scene of crime analysis.

The Forensic Science Service (FSS), which incorporated the Metropolitan Police Forensic Science Laboratory from 1 April 1996, is the main supplier of forensic science services to police forces in England and Wales. The FSS employ SOCOs, but it is expected that all SOCOs will be fully qualified before joining the organisation.

Home Detention Curfew Scheme

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent on the home detention curfew schemes in each of the past five years, broken down by *(a)* equipment development and maintenance and *(b)* personnel. [45869]

Fiona Mactaggart: Since the start of the scheme in 1999 over 120,000 prisoners have been released on home detention curfew (HDC). At any one time there are around 3,200 prisoners on HDC, which represents the capacity of around five or six medium-sized prisons.

Expenditure on the home detention curfew scheme under the electronic monitoring contracts in the last five completed financial years is shown in the table. The amount payable under the contracts for delivering the service is not broken down by equipment and staff costs.

Financial year	*Expenditure on HOC (£)*
2000–01	24,470,992.04
2001–02	24,095,179.86
2002–03	28,407,664.92
2003–04	31,768,270.94
2004–05	31,690,034.23

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many electronic tags used in the Home Detention Curfew Scheme have been *(a)* found to be faulty and *(b)* vandalised and had to be replaced in each of the last five years. [45870]

Fiona Mactaggart: Since new electronic monitoring contracts began on 1 April 2005, the contractors have reported nearly 700 cases of offenders on Home Detention Curfew who had damaged their electronic monitoring equipment. Any offender who is found to have deliberately caused such damage will be in breach of his or her licence conditions and recalled to prison.

Information is not available broken down in the way requested, or for the period before 1 April 2005, and cannot be provided except at a disproportionate cost.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to ensure that those agencies contracted to monitor tagged criminals are properly scrutinised and held to account for their performance. [48686]

Fiona Mactaggart: The two contractors must comply with Home Office requirements for delivering the electronic monitoring service and must meet a range of specified performance levels. The Home Office audits

their performance every month. Any under-performance results in financial deductions from the amount paid to them for delivering the service. In the current financial year, a total of £100,000 has been deducted.

Homosexuality

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) under what powers police may question individuals about their stated views on homosexuality; and what guidance he provides to police forces on this issue; [45044]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effect on free speech of police questioning of individuals about their stated views on homosexuality. [45045]

Hazel Blears: The Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and accompanying codes of practice sets out police powers in respect of the questioning of a person suspected of involvement in an offence. The Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers jointly produced good practice and tactical guidance in March 2005 entitled: "Hate Crime: Delivering a Quality Service". The guidance is available on the ACPO website.

Hunting Act

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* guidance and *(b)* training has been provided to police forces in England and Wales with regard to the Hunting Act 2004. [49456]

Hazel Blears: I understand that the Association of Chief Police Officers has issued guidance and a training package to police forces in England and Wales on the practical aspects of enforcing the Hunting Act.

Immigration Control Staff

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many whole-time equivalent immigration control staff were employed in control and surveillance of ports and airports in each year since 1999–2000. [49752]

Mr. McNulty: Overall, numbers of border control staff have risen. In 2001 the figure for full-time equivalent immigration control staff was 1,830.2, in 2002 the figure was 2,194, in 2003 the figure was 2,322.7, in 2004 the figure was 2,474.7, in 2005 the figure was 2,501.4 and in 2006 the figure is 3,453.6.

IMPACT System

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total budget for the introduction of the IMPACT system is. [48166]

Hazel Blears: A total of £52 million was made available to the IMPACT programme for the financial year 2005–06.

Menezes Report

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects the report of the Independent Police Complaints Commission into *(a)* the death of Mr. Menezes and *(b)* the conduct of the Metropolitan police to be published. [47946]

Hazel Blears: The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) report on the death of Mr. de Menezes, including the conduct of the Metropolitan police, will be published when any relevant legal or disciplinary proceedings have concluded. It is too soon to say when this will be.

Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent guidance has been issued to *(a)* health staff, *(b)* social services staff and *(c)* court personnel on dealing with cases of Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy. [48070]

Maria Eagle: I have been asked to reply.

In 2002, the Department of Health, Home Office, Department for Education and Skills and the Welsh Assembly published "Safeguarding Children in whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced", as supplementary guidance to the Government's child protection guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (1999). It is intended to provide a national framework within which agencies and professionals at local level—individually and jointly—draw up and agree upon their own more detailed ways of working together in cases of fabricated or induced illness. It is addressed to those who work in the health and education services, the police, social services departments, the probation service, and others whose work brings them into contact with children and families.

National Offender Management Service

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 12 October 2005, *Official Report*, columns 488–89W, on the National Offender Management Service, if he will publish the business case for the National Offender Management Service. [24328]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 3 November 2005]:* A response to this question was given on the 12 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1713W.

National Youth and Community Service

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the setting up of the National Youth and Community Service; and when he expects the first young people to participate in this scheme. [36154]

Hazel Blears: The Government are committed to creating the new national framework for youth action and engagement set out in the March 2005 Russell Commission report. Progress in implementing the report's recommendations has been encouraging.

In response to the report's headline recommendation, an independent charitable company has been created to drive forward implementation. This will bring together

young people, the voluntary and community sector, Government and the private sector in a shared purpose to make volunteering a valued part of young people's lives and to engage one million more young people in voluntary activities. Rod Aldridge, executive chairman of Capita Group has been recruited through an open process as the chair and the recruitment of the chief executive officer and board is in the final stages. A key part of creating the framework is securing private sector support and so far £3.5 million has been secured from seven founding partners, T- Mobile, BskyB, Tesco, ITV, MTV, the Hunter Foundation and KPMG.

We expect that the independent charitable company will be publicly launched in April 2006, with the first young people undertaking voluntary and community activities in that month.

Neighbourhood Policing

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what ways neighbourhood policing requires the engagement of non-police partners, with particular reference to *(a)* Government offices, *(b)* regional resilience fora, *(c)* local authorities, *(d)* health authorities, *(e)* fire services and *(f)* ambulance services. [49621]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* We are committed to ensuring that, by 2008, every area in England and Wales will benefit from dedicated, visible, accessible and responsive neighbourhood policing teams.

Neighbourhood policing cannot be delivered in isolation, and teams will work closely with a wide range of non-police partners to tackle shared community safety issues. How neighbourhood policing teams will engage with particular partners will vary form area to area, depending on local issues and priorities.

Neighbourhood Watch

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the leadership offered by the chairman of the National Neighbourhood Watch Association; and what representations he has received on this subject. [50213]

Hazel Blears: The association is an independent charity, which is not currently funded by the Home Office. The appointment of the trustees and office-holders of the NNWA is a matter for the association's membership. The Home Office has received a number of representations from activists within the neighbourhood watch movement concerning the governance of the association. These are matters for the NNWA's trustees to consider and resolve. I understand that the NNWA board of trustees have put in hand a consultation process with a view to reviewing and updating the association's governance arrangements later this year. No assessment has been made by the Home Office of the effectiveness of the chair of the National Neighbourhood Watch Association (NNWA).

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding the Department has allocated to the National Neighbourhood Watch Association in each of the last three years; and what assessment he has made of the use made of the funding. [50214]

Hazel Blears: During the financial year 2003–04 the Home Office provided the National Neighbourhood Watch Association (NNWA) with emergency funding totalling £350,000—paid in two tranches of £150,000 and £200,000—to support the association during the period following the withdrawal of third-party commercial sponsorship. The funding covered the running costs of the association, including staff salaries, while the NNWA sought alternative commercial sponsorship. In 2004–05 the Home Office provided a further £25,000 to the NNWA to support the association pending the start of a new commercial sponsorship deal in April 2005. No further funding was offered to the NNWA during 2005–06.

Offending Crime and Justice Survey

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what definition of assault and other thefts is used in the Offending Crime and Justice Survey. [34146]

Fiona Mactaggart: The definitions of assault and other thefts used in the Offending, Crime and Justice Survey are as follows:

Assault includes assault with injury (had used force or violence on anyone on purpose for example, by scratching, hitting, kicking, or throwing things, which had injured the person in someway) and assault without injury (had used force or violence on anyone on purpose which did not injure them in anyway).

Other thefts include theft from place of work, from school, shoplifting, theft from the person and other thefts. This last category includes any other thefts they have not already mentioned.

Police

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average period has been in each of the last five years between police recruits applying to and starting training in *(a)* Staffordshire police force, *(b)* West Midlands police force, *(c)* Shropshire police force, *(d)* West Mercia police force and *(e)* Warwickshire police force, broken down by (i) sex and (ii) ethnic origin. [42101]

Hazel Blears: This information is not held centrally.

Staffordshire, West Midlands, West Mercia and Warwickshire police forces have informed me that neither the sex nor ethnic origin of candidates have any bearing on the length of time from application to appointment. The West Mercia constabulary includes Shropshire.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of training a new police officer was in the latest period for which figures are available. [47829]

Hazel Blears: There are no centrally collated data available for the cost of training a new police officer. The various stages of initial police training were, until recently, split between the officer's force and the Central Police Training and Development Authority (Centrex).

The Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) moves the whole of initial police training into forces. The rollout of the IPLDP will coincide with the implementation offer training costing plans using the national training cost model (NTCM) which will enable forces to assess their training costs on a consistent basis.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on *(a)* the recruitment of police officers, *(b)* the recruitment of graduates to work as police officers and *(c)* the accelerated promotion scheme for graduate police officers. [49047]

Hazel Blears: Police officers are recruited through an assessment process which is based on nationally agreed competencies for the role and designed to select candidates who best match the requirements of the job.

Of the 5,801 applicants who were successful at the assessment centre between 1 November 2004 and 30 September 2005,1969 (34 per cent.) were graduates.

The accelerated promotion scheme for graduates was replaced by the police High Potential Development Scheme in 2002. The scheme is also open to non graduates. It provides development opportunities tailored to individual needs for those who successfully pass the selection process, to combine real work experience, practical training and academic study in order to move through the ranks to senior leadership positions in the police service.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of police officers have received training in basic interviewing skills. [49128]

Hazel Blears: All police officers in England and Wales currently receive training in relation to the interviewing of victims, witnesses and suspects as part of their initial training. Officers are educated to PEACE (planning and preparation, engage and explain, account, closure, evaluation) tier one. This is a training programme specifically designed to equip officers with the requisite skills to conduct well planned, professional interviews in an ethical and efficient manner. This has been implemented by all police forces in England and Wales, although certain elements of the course can be tailored to meet specific needs within an individual force. PEACE has now been incorporated as a core module of the Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) under which new police officers' competence against national occupational standards is assessed.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on how police performance is assessed. [49130]

Hazel Blears: The performance of each police force in England and Wales is assessed in seven key areas: Reducing Crime, Investigating Crime, Promoting Safety, Providing Assistance, Citizen Focus, Resource Use and Local Policing.

Two assessments are made in each of these seven areas, based on a combination of data from Statutory Performance Indicators and judgement from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (the latter including an assessment with respect to 'tackling level two criminality').

The first assessment is made, typically, by comparing the performance achieved by a force to that achieved by a group of its peers. The second assessment is made by comparing the performance achieved by a force in one year to that achieved by the same force in the previous year. Special rules are used which take account of national policing priorities and data quality.

Mrs. Moon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact of fuel and energy price increases on police service budgets. [49576]

Hazel Blears: The Association of Police Authorities provided estimates of additional cost pressures for next year, including the impact of fuel and energy costs, to inform decisions on the police grant settlement 2006–07. The estimates were taken fully into account in reaching final decisions.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers have been employed in the Vale of Glamorgan division in each of the last five years. [49808]

Hazel Blears: Information on police officer numbers in the Vale of Glamorgan basic command unit is only available from March 2002. The data is shown in the table. Deployment of officers to each of the Basic Command Units in South Wales Police is an operational matter for the Chief Constable (Barbara Wilding). We have been informed by the force that Vale of Glamorgan currently has 220 police officers—the same as in March 2005.

South Wales Police—Vale of Glamorgan Basic Command Unit

As at 31 March:	*Police numbers*	*Community Support Officers* [1]
2002	195	—
2003	220	—
2004	228	—
2005	220	12

[1] Community Support Officer BCD strength collected for first time and is the position on 30 June 2005.

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there are per head of population in *(a)* the Metropolitan Police Service and *(b)* the Thames Valley Police Force. [47639]

Hazel Blears: In March 2005 (the latest available figures) the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) had 433 police officers per 100,000 of the population. Thames Valley Police had 198 police officers per 100,000 of the population. The Metropolitan Police Service's unique capital city functions, such as anti-terrorist, security and protection work and the policing major national events, contribute to the MPS having a higher ratio than other forces.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the 50 fastest improving basic command units in the English police forces, based upon performance against key targets over the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [45594]

Hazel Blears: The Home Office does not currently collect or track targets at Basic Command Unit level as this is an operational matter at the discretion of the local Chief Constable. It is not therefore possible to list the performance of the 50 fastest improving Basic Command Units against these targets.

The Home Office publishes an annual Police Performance Assessment at force level which shows the comparative performance and direction of travel across a number of areas. The publication and all underlying data are available at http://www.police.homeoffice.gov.uk/performance-and-measurement/performance-assessment/assessments-2004–2005/

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will ensure that each *(a)* county council and *(b)* unitary council will continue to be represented by a minimum of one councillor on any new police authority after the merging of forces and authorities; and if he will make a statement; [39599]

(2) how he intends to ensure that local authority representation on new police authorities after force mergers reflects the political composition of the relevant councils; and if he will make a statement. [39605]

Hazel Blears: In order to discharge their functions effectively I believe strategic authorities should in most cases have a maximum of 23 members (in line with that of the Metropolitan Police Authority). I accept, however, that in some parts of the country, police authorities will need to be larger in order to ensure that all upper tier local authorities are represented. This is particularly important given that police authorities will continue to set a policing precept.

Where there are more councillor seats on a strategic police authority than the number of upper tier local authorities, we would expect the additional councillor appointments to reflect, as far as practicable, the political balance of the relevant councils when taken as a whole.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received about the proposed restructuring of police forces in *(a)* Sussex, *(b)* Kent and *(c)* Surrey; and if he will make a statement. [36901]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 23 December 2005]:* My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary received business cases relating to police restructuring from the Sussex, Kent and Surrey police forces and authorities by 23 December 2005. Each business case was submitted jointly by the relevant force and its authority.

In addition to these representations the Home Secretary has received correspondence relating to police restructuring in Sussex, Kent and Surrey from a wide range of stakeholders including MPs representing constituencies within those police force areas, members of the public, and local councillors.

We are now in the process of assessing the submissions for their operational robustness and financial viability. The Home Secretary will be in a position to make an announcement on the options that are operationally viable in February and following this we will work with areas to decide how best to move forward.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Police National Computer is compatible with the Scottish Police Computer. [49750]

Hazel Blears: The data on Police National Computer (PNC) and Scottish Criminal Record Office (SCRO) is compatible. Data is exchanged between the two systems to allow forces in England, Wales and Scotland to access relevant data for their business needs.

As part of current arrangements Scottish conviction records are uploaded automatically to the PNC in England and Wales through the Scottish Criminal History System run by SCRO. Scottish forces use PNC in the same way as English and Welsh forces as there is access to PNC in all Scottish forces.

Mr. Wallace: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment his Department has made of the financial impact on UK police forces of the new police pension scheme for future entrants;[32176]

(2) what the estimated cost to each police force is of the new pension arrangements for the police. [32177]

Hazel Blears: Two major changes are being made to police officer pensions from April 2006: a new pension scheme will apply to new entrants after that date; and the method of financing pension payments to former officers will be changed. The new Police Pension Scheme will still provide high-quality pensions for officers but at reduced cost for forces. The value of the pension benefits accruing to a typical member of the new scheme is estimated to be 7 per cent. of pay less than if they were a member of the old scheme.

Under the new pensions financing arrangements announced on 29 November 2005 forces will from April 2006 no longer pay the pensions of their retired officers out of their operating account but from a separate pensions account funded by employer and employee contributions and topped-up as necessary by central Government. The main pensions costs falling to forces' operating budgets will henceforth be in the form of new employer contributions to meet the cost of the accruing future pension liabilities of serving officers. Forces will pay employer contributions at a single national rate to cover the costs of pensions accruing to serving officers in both the current and the new Police Pension Schemes. The rate of employer contributions will be revised every three years following an actuarial assessment. As the proportion of officers who are members of the new scheme grows over the years, it is expected that the level of the employer contributions can be reduced.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the capital costs of a merger of the Cheshire and Merseyside police forces. [47794]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* No final decisions have been made about the future structure of policing in the North West.

We are currently working to determine the viability of the options for reorganisation. This includes detailed analysis of the financial implications for set up costs and for future costs and benefits. We will use the results to assess the financial implications of mergers.

Prisons

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when *(a)* he and *(b)* his Ministers last visited HMP Wandsworth; what the purpose of their visit was; for how long it lasted; and if he will make a statement; [40049]

(2) when he will reply to correspondence of 10 October from the hon. Member for North West Norfolk about the junior governor at HMP Wandsworth; and what the cause is of the delay in response. [40050]

Fiona Mactaggart: Ministers have made the following visits to Wandsworth prison as part of their programme of such visits: Fiona Mactaggart on 13 September 2005 and Baroness Scotland on1 November 2005.

The hon. Member's office sent me a copy of the letter on 19 December 2005. There is no record of the original letter having been received. I replied to the hon. Member on 5 January 2006.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) on what date *(a)* the Governor at HMP Wandsworth, *(b)* the Prison Service's Director of Operations, *(c)* the Director-General of the Prison Service and *(d)* Ministers became aware of the possession of drugs by a junior governor at HMP Wandsworth in June 2005; and if he will make a statement; [47133]

(2) who decided not to refer the case of the junior governor found in possession of drugs at HMP Wandsworth in June 2005 to the police; on what basis this decision was taken; who was consulted in making that decision; when that decision was taken; and if he will make a statement; [47135]

(3) who conducted the inquiry into the junior governor at HMP Wandsworth found in possession of drugs in June 2005; and if he will make a statement; [47136]

(4) what time elapsed between the junior governor found in possession of drugs in June 2005 being handed the drugs and handing the drugs over prior to being searched; and if he will make a statement; [47137]

(5) for how long the *(a)* investigation into and *(b)* suspension of the junior governor found in possession of drugs at HMP Wandsworth in June 2005 lasted; and if he will make a statement; [47138]

(6) whether the investigation into a junior governor found in possession of drugs at HMP Wandsworth in June 2005 was *(a)* formal and *(b)* informal; what factors were taken into account when deciding the nature of the investigation; who determined the nature of the investigation; and if he will make a statement. [47139]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Governor of Wandsworth was made aware of the incident on 29 June 2005, as was the Area Manager for London. The Director of Operations and Director General became aware in October 2005. Ministers were informed in October 2005.

The investigation was carried out by the Deputy Governor.

The Governor of Wandsworth took the decision not to refer the case to the police after an investigation revealed that the junior governor had been passed the small amount of drugs by a prisoner during the course of his duties and had later handed them in; there were staff and prisoner witnesses. After making his decision the Governor consulted the Area Manager who confirmed his actions.

The drugs were given to the junior governor by a prisoner on 25 June 2005, he handed them in on 29 June 2005.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners in *(a)* Coldingley prison and *(b)* England and Wales had their application for home detention curfew rejected because the victim objected to it being granted, in each of the last 10-years for which figures are available. [47405]

Fiona Mactaggart: In determining whether a prisoner will be granted Home Detention Curfew (HDC) prison governors consider the risk the prisoner poses to the victim or to members of the public, whether the prisoner's pattern of offending behaviour indicates a likelihood of re-offending during the HDC period, whether the prisoner is likely to comply with the conditions of the curfew and whether the proposed released address is suitable. Consideration of victims' concerns is an important part of the HDC suitability assessment process but Governors will not refuse to grant release to a prisoner purely on the basis that the victim objects to the release.

Where a prisoner is otherwise suitable for release on HDC and is subject to supervision, licence conditions can be set which prevent the offender making any contact with the victim or entering the victim's local area.

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what has been the *(a)* highest, *(b)* lowest and *(c)* average inmate population of Woodhill prison in Milton Keynes (i) for each of the last five years and (ii) over the whole five-year period. [47420]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested, as recorded on the Prison Service IT system, is provided in the table.

Woodhill prison population totals over five years

	Average	*Highest*	*Lowest*
2001	655	676	638
2002	743	774	705
2003	767	791	754
2004	770	792	743
2005	762	772	748
Whole period, 2001–05	740	792	638

Note:
That these figures relate to the population at end month.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact of mandatory drug testing on the supply of controlled drugs into the prison estate at each prison establishment; and if he will make a statement. [48418]

Fiona Mactaggart: A comprehensive range of measures is in place to reduce the supply of drugs in each prison of which the mandatory drug testing (MDT) programme is one element. It is not possible to assess precisely the impact of anyone component in isolation. Overall, the positive MDT rate nationally has halved since 1997.

Research has shown that mandatory drug testing does exert a deterrent effect on drug misuse particularly on cannabis misuse.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average number of hours of time out of cell was on *(a)* weekdays and *(b)* weekends in each prison establishment in each of the last five years. [48689]

Fiona Mactaggart: The tables show the average time out of cell hours for each establishment over the last five years on *(a)* weekdays and *(b)* weekends. The 2005–06 figures show time unlocked up to the third quarter of the financial year 2005–06.

Table 1: Average time unlocked at weekdays (hours)

	Financial year				
Establishment name	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*[1]
Acklington	10.0	10.3	10.4	10.4	10.5
Albany	8.9	8.5	9.9	9.5	10.5
Altcourse	n/a	13.0	13.0	13.1	13.1
Ashfield	12.0	11.8	10.0	10.5	10.5
Ashwell	15.0	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5
Askham Grange	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0
Aylesbury	7.7	8.6	8.9	8.5	8.1
Bedford	7.8	7.7	8.0	8.6	8.8
Belmarsh	5.2	7.5	8.6	9.5	10.0
Birmingham	7.5	8.5	7.5	7.3	8.8
Blakenhurst	9.5	9.3	8.1	8.5	9.3
Blantyre House	15.0	15.3	15.3	15.3	17.1
Blundeston	10.0	9.9	10.1	10.2	10.1
Brinsford	15.9	9.0	8.6	8.5	8.6
Bristol	8.0	7.8	8.0	7.9	8.0
Brixton	7.5	5.6	4.3	7.2	8.3
Brockhill	8.3	8.5	8.7	8.6	9.5
Bronzefield	n/a	n/a	n/a	12.0	12.0
Buckley Hall	13.0	13.4	13.4	13.1	13.1
Bullingdon	8.5	8.6	10.4	8.6	8.1
Bullwood Hall	10.3	10.6	11.0	10.6	11.4
Camp Hill	10.0	10.5	10.7	11.0	10.5
Canterbury	7.8	8.2	8.3	7.8	7.9
Cardiff	8.5	8.7	9.1	9.5	9.1
Castington	9.7	10.4	7.8	8.3	8.7
Channings Wood	10.0	10.9	9.8	9.7	9.2
Chelmsford	9.0	9.9	9.8	7.6	8.0
Coldingley	19.0	12.3	12.5	12.0	11.2
Cookham Wood	10.0	9.4	8.0	9.2	9.6
Dartmoor	8.1	8.6	9.4	10.6	10.6
Deerbolt	7.8	8.1	9.0	8.2	9.1
Doncaster	n/a	11.3	11.3	11.5	11.5
Dorchester	9.0	13.2	13.2	7.9	5.7
Dovegate	n/a	12.5	12.5	11.9	11.8
Dover	8.0	12.5	12.0	12.0	11.9
Downview	10.3	10.6	10.6	10.7	11.0
Drake Hall	24.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.5
Durham	6.8	9.0	9.8	9.8	8.3
East Sutton Park	17.0	17.5	17.0	17.0	17.0
Eastwood Park	9.5	10.5	10.6	11.3	12.5
Edmunds Hill	n/a	n/a	9.5	9.5	9.5
Elmley	7.7	8.3	8.6	8.5	8.5
Erlestoke	10.9	11.3	11.0	11.1	11.1
Everthorpe	10.9	11.1	10.5	9.1	9.1
Exeter	8.0	8.5	8.5	8.3	8.2
Featherstone	7.7	8.4	8.2	8.6	8.5
Feltham	15.0	7.4	7.0	7.9	9.4
Ford	13.0	13.3	13.3	13.3	13.3
Forest Bank	11.3	12.4	11.9	10.5	10.5
Foston Hall	10.0	10.7	10.6	10.8	10.4
Frankland	8.8	9.3	9.3	9.3	9.3
Full Sutton	9.0	9.5	9.5	9.4	9.6
Garth	10.0	9.6	10.0	10.0	10.0
Gartree	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Glen Parva	5.2	6.8	7.1	8.9	10.2
Gloucester	7.8	6.8	6.8	6.9	7.0
Grendon	28.0	14.3	14.1	12.8	13.9
Guys Marsh	8.0	8.4	9.2	9.5	8.9
Haslar	10.7	10.2	11.0	11.0	11.2

Table 1: Average time unlocked at weekdays (hours)

Establishment name	*Financial year* 2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06[1]
Haverigg	11.0	11.9	11.9	10.4	10.2
Hewell Grange	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0
High Down	7.9	6.3	6.1	6.4	6.0
Highpoint	17.1	9.8	10.0	10.0	10.0
Hindley	6.6	9.3	9.9	9.9	10.3
Hollesley Bay	11.4	13.1	15.5	15.5	15.5
Holloway	5.6	5.2	7.2	9.0	9.4
Holme House	5.3	5.4	5.5	6.1	7.1
Hull	7.1	5.8	5.7	7.9	9.0
Huntercombe	9.2	9.9	10.0	10.1	10.1
Kingston	11.2	12.4	12.2	11.3	10.8
Kirkham	13.0	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.4
Kirklevington	19.0	19.0	19.0	19.0	19.0
Lancaster	9.8	9.7	10.0	10.0	10.0
Lancaster Farms	22.6	8.0	10.1	10.7	10.2
Latchmere House	19.0	19.0	19.0	19.0	19.0
Leeds	8.1	8.4	8.8	8.9	8.9
Leicester	9.8	8.3	9.5	9.7	9.5
Lewes	8.3	6.5	7.5	7.8	6.9
Leyhill	24.0	24.0	16.0	16.0	16.0
Lincoln	10.0	10.2	6.2	8.9	9.5
Lindholme	12.0	11.0	11.0	10.9	11.9
Littlehey	8.9	9.2	9.2	9.5	9.8
Liverpool	6.3	6.7	7.4	8.4	9.0
Long Lartin	9.0	9.2	9.2	9.0	9.1
Low Newton	10.9	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5
Lowdham Grange	n/a	13.5	12.8	13.0	13.0
Maidstone	9.9	9.7	9.1	10.0	9.7
Manchester	10.0	10.7	10.5	9.4	9.9
Moorland	8.3	9.4	11.4	12.6	12.7
Morton Hall	15.0	15.2	15.0	15.0	15.0
Mount	7.6	7.8	8.6	8.7	9.0
New Hall	9.0	9.9	10.9	11.4	11.7
North Sea Camp	19.3	24.0	19.8	16.7	15.5
Northallerton	7.3	7.0	8.4	8.8	9.0
Norwich	8.0	8.3	8.3	8.8	8.7
Nottingham	8.8	7.5	7.3	7.1	7.7
Onley	16.8	8.3	8.4	8.9	9.0
Pare	9.1	9.5	9.8	10.2	10.3
Parkhurst	9.2	8.3	8.9	9.2	9.3
Pentonville	4.6	5.1	7.6	7.8	7.9
Peterborough	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	12.0
Portland	18.1	8.8	8.2	7.6	7.8
Preston	7.8	8.0	8.4	8.7	8.8
Ranby	13.0	13.5	10.1	10.6	11.0
Reading	8.0	7.1	7.8	8.0	7.3
Risley	10.9	11.0	10.5	10.5	10.5
Rochester	8.8	7.7	6.3	9.0	8.3
Rye Hill	n/a	11.8	11.6	11.4	11.4
Send	13.0	12.8	12.9	12.7	12.7
Shepton Mallet	9.9	10.5	10.4	10.0	9.8
Shrewsbury	9.8	9.8	9.4	9.5	9.5
Stafford	11.1	9.4	9.5	9.5	10.3
Standford Hill	24.0	24.0	12.0	12.0	12.0
Stocken	11.0	10.8	10.8	10.8	10.7
Stoke Heath	10.0	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.4
Styal	11.0	11.6	11.6	11.6	11.8
Sudbury	24.0	19.0	19.0	12.9	12.8
Swaleside	9.0	9.8	10.1	9.9	9.7
Swansea	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.2	7.9
Swinfen Hall	9.6	10.4	10.4	10.4	10.4
Thorn Cross	12.1	12.8	12.5	12.5	12.5
Usk/Prescoed	13.0	13.7	14.4	13.8	13.6
Verne	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0
Wakefield	8.6	8.9	9.0	9.0	8.7
Wandsworth	7.0	6.3	5.9	6.4	5.3
Warren Hill	n/a	n/a	10.3	10.5	10.9
Wayland	9.0	9.5	10.3	11.5	11.6
Wealstun	11.9	12.5	12.0	11.3	11.9
Weare	9.6	9.9	9.8	9.5	9.6
Wellingborough	10.0	10.0	9.8	9.7	9.6
Werrington	9.7	10.4	10.9	10.7	10.6

Table 1: Average time unlocked at weekdays (hours)

Establishment name	Financial year 2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06[1]
	9.4	9.8	10.0	9.8	9.5
Wetherby	12.0	12.6	12.0	13.1	12.0
Whatton	9.5	9.8	9.8	9.7	9.7
Whitemoor	8.0	8.7	8.9	9.4	8.4
Winchester	n/a	11.9	12.6	12.6	12.4
Wolds	9.8	9.2	8.8	8.5	8.5
Woodhill	7.9	7.9	8.0	8.0	7.9
Wormwood Scrubs	10.0	10.0	10.8	11.1	11.0
Wymott					

[1] Up to December 2005

Table 2: Average time unlocked at weekends (hours)

Establishment name	Financial year 2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06[1]
Acklington	8.0	8.9	9.2	9.2	9.4
Albany	7.0	7.0	7.5	7.7	7.7
Altcourse	n/a	13.0	13.0	12.3	12.3
Ashfield	12.0	12.0	9.5	10.5	9.5
Ashwell	15.0	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5
Askham Grange	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0
Aylesbury	5.4	6.1	6.3	6.8	5.0
Bedford	6.1	6.4	5.6	5.9	5.3
Belmarsh	4.0	4.8	5.0	6.0	6.1
Birmingham	7.1	7.4	6.7	6.2	6.8
Blakenhurst	9.0	8.5	7.7	8.3	8.3
Blantyre House	8.8	15.3	15.3	15.3	16.8
Blundeston	7.0	7.9	7.3	7.3	7.4
Brinsford	11.8	7.0	6.2	6.9	7.2
Bristol	6.0	6.2	6.2	6.0	6.0
Brixton	5.8	5.1	3.5	5.4	7.1
Brockhill	6.7	6.3	7.1	7.0	7.5
Bronzefield	n/a	n/a	n/a	10.1	9.9
Buckley Hall	13.0	13.0	13.1	12.8	12.6
Bullingdon	6.6	6.3	7.3	6.3	5.2
Bullwood Hall	8.8	8.8	7.4	7.7	9.2
Camp Hill	10.0	8.5	8.4	8.5	8.5
Canterbury	7.4	7.3	7.8	7.7	7.9
Cardiff	5.5	5.7	5.8	6.0	5.2
Castington	8.8	9.3	6.8	7.6	7.8
Channings Wood	7.0	7.1	6.9	7.0	6.7
Chelmsford	8.4	8.3	6.5	4.1	1.4
Coldingley	15.8	10.2	10.0	9.2	8.3
Cookham Wood	8.0	8.3	7.1	7.5	8.3
Dartmoor	6.0	6.5	7.0	8.4	8.5
Deerbolt	4.9	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4
Doncaster	n/a	11.3	11.3	11.5	11.5
Dorchester	8.8	13.2	12.1	8.7	4.7
Dovegate	n/a	11.0	11.1	10.5	10.5
Dover	7.3	12.3	11.8	11.7	11.7
Downview	10.0	9.4	9.3	8.7	8.7
Drake Hall	24.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.5
Durham	4.5	4.2	4.5	4.0	4.6
East Sutton Park	17.0	17.5	17.0	17.0	17.0
Eastwood Park	8.0	8.8	8.2	8.4	9.1
Edmunds Hill	n/a	n/a	9.5	9.5	7.8
Elmley	7.3	7.8	7.7	7.8	7.7
Erlestoke	10.1	10.0	10.0	9.7	9.5
Everthorpe	7.3	8.7	8.4	7.8	7.1
Exeter	7.0	7.5	7.5	7.4	7.2
Featherstone	9.8	10.1	10.1	10.1	10.1
Feltham	14.6	6.1	7.6	7.2	7.1
Ford	13.0	13.3	13.3	13.3	13.3
Forest Bank	10.8	9.9	8.4	9.6	8.5
Foston Hall	8.3	9.3	9.1	9.5	9.2
Frankland	7.2	7.0	7.0	7.0	6.0
Full Sutton	7.0	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5
Garth	7.0	7.9	7.5	7.5	7.5
Gartree	7.0	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3
Glen Parva	3.0	3.5	3.5	5.7	7.4
Gloucester	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.2	5.8
Grendon	25.8	12.2	11.8	8.8	11.4

Table 2: Average time unlocked at weekends (hours)

Establishment name	Financial year 2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06[1]
Guys Marsh	7.0	7.4	7.4	7.5	8.4
Haslar	10.7	10.1	10.3	10.3	10.3
Haverigg	11.0	11.9	11.9	9.7	7.7
Hewell Grange	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0
High Down	5.4	4.6	4.4	5.0	4.1
Highpoint	16.3	8.4	7.5	7.5	7.5
Hindley	4.0	6.6	8.9	9.9	10.5
Hollesley Bay	8.7	12.2	15.5	15.5	15.5
Holloway	5.7	5.1	6.4	7.1	7.5
Holme House	4.1	4.9	5.0	5.2	6.4
Hull	5.2	5.6	5.4	7.3	7.7
Huntercombe	7.7	8.5	8.7	8.7	8.7
Kingston	7.0	7.7	7.7	7.9	8.0
Kirkham	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	12.9
Kirklevington	19.0	19.0	19.0	19.0	19.0
Lancaster	6.8	8.0	7.5	7.5	7.5
Lancaster Farms	17.1	6.6	8.8	9.7	10.0
Latchmere House	19.0	19.0	19.0	19.0	19.0
Leeds	7.1	7.8	7.9	8.1	8.1
Leicester	6.9	7.4	6.8	7.1	7.6
Lewes	6.8	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5
Leyhill	24.0	24.0	16.0	16.0	16.0
Lincoln	9.0	8.8	2.5	6.8	7.5
Lindholme	8.7	7.8	7.8	8.4	11.4
Littlehey	7.9	8.4	8.5	7.9	8.1
Liverpool	4.0	4.2	6.2	8.5	8.1
Long Lartin	9.0	9.2	9.2	7.9	7.7
Low Newton	10.1	8.0	8.4	8.5	8.5
Lowdham Grange	n/a	13.5	12.8	11.9	11.3
Maidstone	7.3	7.4	7.0	7.7	7.3
Manchester	8.0	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5
Moorland	5.3	5.7	5.2	5.7	5.7
Morton Hall	15.5	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0
Mount	6.2	6.5	6.8	6.9	6.6
New Hall	7.8	8.1	9.5	11.0	11.1
North Sea Camp	19.3	24.0	19.9	16.7	15.5
Northallerton	5.4	5.5	6.5	6.5	6.8
Norwich	7.0	6.8	6.6	7.3	7.0
Nottingham	5.0	5.0	5.0	3.7	4.1
Onley	13.3	7.2	7.8	7.7	7.6
Pare	9.4	9.9	10.0	10.1	10.3
Parkhurst	8.4	7.0	6.9	6.7	6.8
Pentonville	3.4	4.9	7.1	7.1	7.3
Peterborough	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10.0
Portland	13.2	6.1	5.4	5.0	4.5
Preston	4.7	4.9	6.7	7.5	7.5
Ranby	12.0	13.1	9.3	9.7	9.7
Reading	6.8	6.6	6.6	6.6	3.6
Risley	10.1	10.3	10.1	10.0	10.0
Rochester	7.3	7.7	6.1	6.0	4.0
Rye Hill	n/a	11.5	11.7	11.7	11.7
Send	13.4	12.8	12.9	12.6	13.0
Shepton Mallet	9.1	9.0	8.9	8.1	8.0
Shrewsbury	10.1	16.8	17.1	13.7	7.0
Stafford	10.8	4.9	4.9	5.4	6.0
Standford Hill	24.0	24.0	12.0	12.0	12.0
Stocken	11.0	8.1	7.0	7.2	7.2
Stoke Heath	9.8	10.1	10.1	10.2	10.2
Styal	11.0	11.5	11.5	11.6	11.4
Sudbury	24.0	19.0	19.0	12.9	12.8
Swaleside	7.0	7.5	7.3	7.2	7.2
Swansea	7.9	8.5	8.6	8.5	n/a
Swinfen Hall	6.3	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8
Thorn Cross	12.1	12.5	14.6	12.5	12.5
Usk/Prescoed	11.0	11.7	13.7	12.9	12.1
Verne	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0
Wakefield	6.3	6.6	6.5	6.6	6.5
Wandsworth	7.4	4.7	4.0	4.2	3.7
Warren Hill	n/a	n/a	9.0	10.0	10.6
Wayland	8.0	7.9	8.8	10.1	10.3
Wealstun	11.8	12.5	11.9	11.1	10.7
Weare	9.0	8.4	8.9	8.4	8.2

Table 2: Average time unlocked at weekends (hours)

Establishment name	Financial year 2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06[1]
Wellingborough	7.0	7.8	8.0	7.7	7.7
Werrington	9.7	10.1	9.5	8.0	7.7
Wetherby	5.0	5.5	6.2	6.5	6.5
Whatton	11.8	9.9	9.2	10.8	9.1
Whitemoor	7.0	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5
Winchester	6.1	6.0	6.7	7.1	5.7
Wolds	n/a	11.5	10.4	10.6	10.4
Woodhill	8.2	8.5	7.2	6.3	6.3
Wormwood Scrubs	6.8	5.9	5.9	5.1	5.0
Wymott	10.0	10.0	10.1	10.0	10.1

[1] Up to December 2005

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners in *(a)* England and *(b)* London who had completed education training and employment upon release (i) gained employment for over 12 months, (ii) experienced long-term unemployment and (iii) returned to prison in the last five years. [48704]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office does not routinely record the post-release outcomes of prisoners.

While the Home Office does record the numbers of prisoners returning to prison within two years of release (39 per cent. of adult males and 32 per cent. of adult females released in 2001), this is not broken down by whether they completed an Education Training and Employment (ETE) programme in prison.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of prisoners was in each category on 31 March in each of the last five years. [48792]

Fiona Mactaggart: The percentage of prisoners by category (A, B, C, D, "Other") on 31 March 2005 and the previous two years is shown in the following table. The information is not held prior to 2003.

Category of prisoners

	31 March 2003	31 March 2004	Percentage 31 March 2005
Cat As	1	1	1
Cat Bs	12	11	11
Cat Cs	43	44	45
Cat Ds	7	7	7
Other population	38	37	36
Total population	100	100	100

Probation Service

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he plans to introduce legislation to abolish probation boards and replace them with trusts. [48192]

Fiona Mactaggart: We intend to bring forward legislation to restructure probation services as soon as the parliamentary timetable allows.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff were employed in information technology by the National Probation Service in England and Wales at the end of the past five financial years. [48450]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information is not available for the full period requested. Data collected prior to 1 April 2003 is unreliable, and is not directly comparable with the more accurate figures collected since that time. The figures presented show staff in post, expressed in full time equivalent value, at the close of each quarter from 1 April 2003 to 30 September 2005.

Work force information is not collected in sufficient detail to allow reporting of only those staff working specifically in information technology. The following table shows the number of staff in post in the closest equivalent grouping which includes research, information, and information technology staff.

	FTE in post
2003–04	
Quarter 1	447.50
Quarter 2	445.45
Quarter 3	455.46
Quarter 4	449.63
2004–05	
Quarter 1	441.89
Quarter 2	438.34
Quarter 3	474.01
Quarter 4	466.25
2005–06	
Quarter 1	467.08
Quarter 2	476.07

Prostitution

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of illegal brothels operating in *(a)* Romford and *(b)* England and Wales. [50029]

Fiona Mactaggart: No estimate is made centrally of the numbers of brothels in particular localities. As part of the recently published prostitution strategy this will be a first task for local partnerships in areas where prostitution is a problem.

Rape Crisis Organisations

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many rape crisis organisations received funding from his Department in each of the last five years; and how much each organisation received. [51346]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office funded the Rape Crisis Federation, an umbrella body for local rape crisis groups, from April 2001 until its closure in November 2003.

Funding in the financial years between 2001 and 2004 was as follows:

		Amount (£)
(a)	2001–02	406,000
(b)	2002–03	432,000
(c)	2003–04	209,800

In 2004, £4 million was placed in the victims fund to support the development of services for victims of sexual offending, over two financial years. The following table sets out the grant awards for the rape crisis organisations that have been successful in securing funding from the victims fund.

£

Organisation	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Barnsley Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Helpline	—	40,000
Cornwell Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre	8,120	36,000
Coventry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre	4,910	—
Colchester Rape Crisis Line	35,450	35,000
Croydon Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre	27,080	40,000
Doncaster Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre	3,066	36,150
Guildford Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre	—	40,000
Grimsby and Scunthorpe Rape Crisis	6,102	24,405
Merseyside Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre	12,672	22,500
New Pathways	16,500	25,00
Nottingham Rape Crisis	—	26,515
Rape-Crisis Co-ordination Group	18,200	30,800
South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC)	31,520	30,000
Southampton Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Service	3,700	35,000
West Cumbria Rape Crisis	—	35,000
Worchester Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre	23,439	24,142
Total	190,759	431,370

Regulatory Reform Orders

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many regulatory reform orders his Department has laid before Parliament in each of the last five calendar years. [46805]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office laid one regulatory reform order before Parliament in 2004, which was the Regulatory Reform (Prison Officers) (Industrial Action) Order 2005. It was first laid in draft on 18 October 2004, made on 21 March 2005 and came into force on 22 March 2005. No other regulatory reform order has been laid during the specified period.

Reoffending

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people who had been placed in custody have re-offended in *(a)* Uxbridge constituency, *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon, *(c)* Greater London and *(d)* England in each year since 1997. [48522]

Fiona Mactaggart: Re-offending rates are not currently available on a sub-national basis.

The most recent re-offending data for adults were published in 'Re- offending of adults: results from the 2002 cohort' which is available through the Home Office's website (http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/index.htm). The report shows the proportion of offenders who re-offended within two years and were subsequently convicted, and separately identifies offenders given custodial and community sentences. The report shows the re-offending rate of offenders released from prison for 2002 and 2000.

Reconviction data for 1997 through 2000 were published in 'Prison statistics England and Wales 2002' and data for 2001 were published in 'Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2003'. Both of these are publications are available on the Home Office website.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the recidivism rate was among prisoners in the Cambridgeshire Probation Service area within two years of release in each year since 1997. [48666]

Fiona Mactaggart: Re-offending rates are not currently available on a sub-national basis.

National re-offending rates are published annually. The most recent data are published in 'Adult re-offending: results from the 2002 cohort'. "Home Office Statistical Bulletin 25/05". This is available on the Home Office's website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html. The report shows the re-offending rate of offenders released from prison for 2002 and 2000.

Reconviction data for 1997 through 2000 were published in 'Prison statistics England and Wales 2002' and data for 2001 were published in 'Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2003'. Both of these are publications are available on the Home Office website.

Respect

Mrs. Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to announce the pilot local authorities for the intensive family support projects outlined in the Respect action plan. [49952]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* The Respect Action Plan sets out the Government's plans to establish a national network of family support projects in the areas where they are needed. The Respect Task Force is currently discussing this with local authorities. A further announcement on the projects will be made shortly.

Safer Neighbourhood Teams

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many hours a week on average the Safer Neighbourhood Teams in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham worked in the last period for which figures are available, broken down by ward. [44293]

Hazel Blears: The following table shows the number of hours per week, on average, that the Safer Neighbourhood Teams worked in the borough of

Hammersmith and Fulham in November and December 2005. The figures for December are affected by public holidays and annual leave.

Average hours at work per week

Ward	*Hours*
November 2005	
Addison	210
Askew	254
College Park and Old Oak	269
Fulham Town	327
Hammersmith Broadway	249
North End	279
Parsons Green and Waltham	231
Ravenscourt Park	41
Sands End	249
Shepherds Bush Green	317
Wormholt and White City	259
December 2005	
Addison	189
Askew	252
College Park and Old Oak	172
Fulham Town	258
Hammersmith Broadway	238
North End	189
Parsons Green and Waltham	223
Ravenscourt Park	87
Sands End	191
Shepherds Bush Green	230
Wormholt and White City	124

Scottish Intelligence Database

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the potential for the Scottish Intelligence Database to satisfy the recommendations of the Bichard Report. [49205]

Hazel Blears: The police service requirement, as articulated in the first progress report on the implementation of the Bichard Inquiry Recommendations, is for an information sharing, as well as intelligence sharing, capability. In developing the business case for the programme, we are looking at a number of options including whether an intelligence database might contribute to the requirement. In that context we have been taking into account the functionality offered by the Scottish Intelligence Database.

Secure Training Centres

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he will take following the Commission for Social Care Inspection report on Oakhill Secure Training Centre; and if he will make a statement. [40416]

Fiona Mactaggart: Following the Commission's annual inspection of Oakhill in May 2005, the centre's operator drew up an action plan to achieve improvements, which it agreed with the Youth Justice Board. Progress against the plan is reviewed regularly. At the board's request, the Commission's inspectors made a further, unannounced, visit to Oakhill at the end of November, during which they assessed progress against the action plan as well as the overall effectiveness of the centre. Following the visit, the Commission wrote to the board confirming that Oakhill is a safe and secure environment for the children placed there. The operator is reviewing the action plan, in consultation with the board, in order to achieve further improvements; and the board is continuing to monitor the centre's performance closely.

Service Personnel (Criminal Convictions)

Jeremy Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of those convicted of a criminal offence in the last year for which figures are available were serving in the armed forces at the time of their offence. [49472]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* It is not possible to identify cases where those convicted of a criminal offence were serving in the armed forces, as this information is not held centrally by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform or by the Defence Analytical Services Agency (DASA).

Sex Offenders

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will introduce proposals to increase the obligations on convicted sex offenders relating to their ongoing contact with the police. [51793]

Paul Goggins: The notification requirements—which are commonly known as the sex offenders register—originally came into force on 1 September 1997. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 repealed and re-enacted those requirements with considerable amendments.

An offender who becomes subject to the notification requirements must, within three days of conviction or caution, notify the police, in person and at a prescribed police station: of his name, address, date of birth and national insurance number; of any change to their name or their address; if they spend seven days or more (whether consecutively or within a 12 month period) at an address they have not already notified to the police; and of any overseas travel for a period of three days or more.

All offenders must ensure that they re-confirm their notified details at least once every 12 months. If an offender fails to comply with these notification requirements then he commits a criminal offence with a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment.

We continue to monitor closely the effectiveness of the notification requirements and we will act if further obligations are shown to be necessary and proportionate.

Sex Shops

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers local authorities have to refuse to license new sex shops in their areas. [51079]

Paul Goggins: The main powers for local authorities to control sex shops are contained in the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1982. It is adoptive legislation and it is for a local authority to

decide whether to apply it to their area. Schedule three provides for the control and licensing of sex establishments. The powers to refuse to grant or renew licences are contained in paragraph 12. The grounds for refusal include: consideration of the suitability of the applicant and of the locality of the premises to be licensed. It is for local authorities to determine how many licences to grant in a locality and they may decide that nil is an appropriate number.

Stronger Safer Communities Fund

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was allocated to Swindon from the stronger safer communities fund in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06; and how much is planned to be allocated in 2006–07. [49412]

Hazel Blears: The Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF), which merges some central Government funding streams, is to be rolled out to all areas in England on 1 April 2006. The Home Office contribution to SSCF includes the building safer communities fund. The Swindon Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) was allocated a total of £217,179 from the building safer communities fund in 2004–05. This included a £25,000 grant towards the cost of an antisocial behaviour co-ordinator. The same amount was allocated in 2005–06.

No SSCF funding has been given to Swindon from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in either of those financial years.

Details of funding for 2006–07 have yet to be announced.

Under-age Drinking

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions have taken place for underage drinking in Uxbridge in each year since 1990. [48519]

Hazel Blears: There is no specific offence of under-age drinking.

However, the available information from the Court Proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform, gives the number of defendants aged 10–17 years who were proceeded against in Uxbridge PSA, for offences of being drunk, drunk at a designated sports event and drunk and disorderly together with defendants proceeded against for the offence of: "Selling etc., intoxicating liquor to persons under 18 for consumption on the premises", 1990–2004. Please see following table.

Statistics for 2005 will be available in the autumn.

Number of defendants proceeded against in Uxbridge PSA for alcohol related offences involving under 18-year-olds, 1990 to 2004[1]

	Offence description	*Principal statute*	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*
	Defendants aged 10–17 years								
14001	Drunk in a highway or other public place whether a building or not, or on licensed premises	Licensing Act 1872 s.12	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
14362	Drunk in, or when entering, a designated sports event	Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol etc.) Act 1985 s.2(2)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
14101	Being guilty, while drunk, of disorderly behaviour	Criminal Justice Act 1967 s.91	2	6	—	—	4	3	—
	All defendants								
14203	Selling etc. intoxicating liquor to person under 18 for consumption on the premises	Licensing Act 1964 s.169A and B as added by Licensing (Young Persons) Act 2000 s.1	—	4	—	2	—	1	—

	Offence description	*Principal statute*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
	Defendants aged 10–17 years									
14001	Drunk in a highway or other public place whether a building or not, or on licensed premises	Licensing Act 1872 s.12	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
14362	Drunk in, or when entering, a designated sports event	Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol etc.) Act 1985 s.2(2)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
14101	Being guilty, while drunk, of disorderly behaviour	Criminal Justice Act 1967 s.91	—	4	2	6	7	9	5	8
	All defendants									
14203	Selling etc. intoxicating liquor to person under 18 for consumption on the premises	Licensing Act 1964 s.169A and B as added by Licensing (Young Persons) Act 2000 s.1	—	1	2	—	—	—	13	8

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis

Visas

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications made in the United Kingdom for a visa submitted prior to the introduction of the new charging policy on 1 August 2003 remain to be dealt with; and when he expects that all such applicants will have heard the result of their applications. [43334]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The date of the introduction of the new charging policy, 1 August 2003, precedes accurate data from the current casework database, and statistics are therefore not entirely reliable. Provisional management information suggests around 500 general group leave to remain cases submitted prior to 1 August 2003 are undecided. Consideration of these cases is ongoing and applicants will be notified as soon as a decision in their case has been made.

Work Permits

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many teachers working in the United Kingdom have been issued *(a)* visas and *(b)* work permits to work in the UK. [48605]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply

UKvisas does not hold statistics on the numbers of applicants who apply for and are granted visas at our overseas missions to work as teachers in the UK.

In terms of work permit applications, the figures for permissions to teach in schools and colleges in the UK that were granted to foreign nationals in the last four years is as follows:

	Permissions
2002	8,353
2003	6,463
2004	5,084
2005	4,349

Young Offenders

Mr. Hurd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people of school age have been placed in custody in *(a)* Ruislip-Northwood constituency, *(b)* the London borough of Hillingdon, *(c)* Greater London and *(d)* England in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [40715]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested for Greater London and England is provided in the table. No people of school age were received into custody in the Ruislip-Northwood constituency or the London borough of Hillingdon.

Information for prison establishments is as recorded on the Prison Service IT system.

Information for Secure Training Centres and Local Authority Secure Children's Homes has been supplied by the Youth Justice Board.

Number of people of school age (15 and under) received into custody between 2000 and 2004

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
England					
Prison	1,672	1,695	1,752	1,518	1,696
LASCHS and STCs	1,015	1,407	2,161	2,459	2,765
Greater London					
Prison	326	175	277	239	254
LASCHS and STCs	34	30	25	35	50

HEALTH

Alcohol Consumption

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent estimate she has made of the proportion of *(a)* men and *(b)* women who drink more than the recommended weekly amounts of alcohol; and what assessment she has made of trends in alcohol consumption since 1979. [49533]

Caroline Flint: The Department can provide estimates of the percentage of men and women exceeding the recommended weekly alcohol consumption limit in England from 1992 to 2002 which is shown in table 1. Earlier data are not readily available for England only. We are also able to give estimates of the percentage of men and women exceeding the recommended daily alcohol limit in England from 1998 to 2004 which is shown in table 2. The assessment of alcohol consumption is that the figures have remained constant during the periods covered.

Table 1: Percentage of adults aged 16 and over exceeding the recommended weekly alcohol benchmark (21 units for men, 14 units for women) by gender, England 1992 to 2002

	Unweighted				*Weighted*			
Alcohol consumption level (units per week)	*1992*	*1994*	*1996*	*1998*	*1998*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Men								
22 units and over	26	27	27	27	28	28	27	27
Women								
15 units and over	12	13	14	15	15	17	15	17
Weighted bases (thousand)								
Men	—	—	—	—	16,541	17,594	17,192	16,781

Table 1: Percentage of adults aged 16 and over exceeding the recommended weekly alcohol benchmark (21 units for men, 14 units for women) by gender, England 1992 to 2002

	Unweighted				Weighted			
Alcohol consumption level (units per week)	*1992*	*1994*	*1996*	*1998*	*1998*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Women	—	—	—	—	18,518	18,912	18,847	19,160
Unweighted bases								
Men	7,265	6,603	6,145	5,621	5,621	5,704	6,124	5,906
Women	8,364	7,832	7,227	6,661	6,661	6,442	7,157	6,889

Notes:
1. In 2000 the decision was made to weight the data to compensate for under representation of people in some groups.
2. This table shows weighted and unweighted date for 1998 to give an indication of the effect of weighting. Caution should be exercises when comparing weighted date with unweighted data.

Source:
Office for National Statistics General Household Survey 2002.

Table 2: Percentage of adults aged 16 and over exceeding the daily recommended alcohol benchmark (4 units for men, 3 units for women) on at least one day in the last week by gender, England 1998 to 2004

	Men weighted bases		*Women weighted bases*	
	Percentage	*Thousand*	*Percentage*	*Thousand*
1998	39	16,527	21	18,512
2000	38	17,604	22	18,955
2001	39	17,207	22	18,851
2002	37	16,780	22	19,150
2003	40	16,676	22	18,616
2004	39	16,818	22	19,097

Source:
Office for National Statistics General Household Survey 2004

Ambulance Service

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the likely effect on the performance of combined emergency services control rooms of mergers of ambulance services. [47798]

Mr. Byrne: The Department is currently consulting on proposals for reconfiguration of ambulance trusts within England, and if established, it would be a matter for the proposed ambulance trusts to decide, following consultation, whether be appropriate locally.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will issue guidance to ambulance trusts to ensure that first responders are not used as a substitute for fully equipped ambulances in life-threatening situations. [47837]

Mr. Byrne: Guidance is set out in the statistical bulletin, "Ambulance services, England: 2004–05" which states that an emergency response may be by:

an emergency ambulance: or

a rapid response vehicle equipped with a defibrillator to provide treatment at the scene; or

an approved first responder equipped with a defibrillator, despatched by and accountable to the ambulance service.

Although the initial emergency response may be to send a rapid response vehicle or approved first responder, a fully equipped Ambulance vehicle able to transport the patient in a clinically safe manner is still required to attend the incident within 14 minutes of the initial call in urban areas and within 19 minutes in rural areas.

Both these standards are exceeded nationally, with in 2004–05, 76.2 percent, of category A calls receiving an initial response within eight minutes and 96 percent, of category A calls attended by a fully equipped ambulance within the 14 and 19 minute standards.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the use by ambulance trusts of first responders; and what effect the use of first responders has had on ambulance response figures since they were introduced. [47838]

Mr. Byrne: Clinical evidence proves conclusively that early defibrillation and resuscitation saves more lives. The use of first responders, particularly in rural areas, can help to ensure that patients receive advanced life support as soon as possible and therefore improve outcomes.

The national defibrillation programme has funded community defibrillation officer posts in ambulance trusts. One of the roles of the community defibrillation officers is to monitor the impact of first responder schemes and this work is currently underway.

No national assessment has been made of the effect of the use of first responders on ambulance trust response times.

Asbestosis

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what procedures are in place to enable claims for compensation by those who have contracted asbestosis in the course of their work in the NHS. [50162]

Jane Kennedy: The ownership of buildings, previously used or currently used by the national health service may relate to strategic health authorities, NHS trusts, foundation trusts and primary care trusts. These are independent bodies and hence there is no standard procedure regarding the handling of claims for compensation by those who have contracted asbestosis in the course of their work in the NHS.

Assisted Suicide

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will make a statement on the Government's policy on assisted suicide; [34290]

(2) if she will make it her policy to oppose the Assisted Dying for the Terminally Ill Bill [Lords]; and if she will make a statement. [34572]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Assisted suicide is an offence under the Suicide Act. We have no plans to change the legislation in this area. The issues raised by Lord Joffe's Bill have always been dealt with as a matter of conscience and it is appropriate that Parliament should lead on debates of this nature and provide the forum where all shades of opinion can be heard.

Audiology Services

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average pay for *(a)* qualified audiologists and *(b)* audiology assistants in London hospitals was in the last year for which figures are available. [49207]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not hold the information in the format requested. However, the table shows the estimated average annual salary and earnings of consultant specialists in audiology and qualified and unqualified non-medical staff working in audiology employed by the national health service in the London Government office region as at August 2004.

Estimated average annual salary and earnings of consultant specialists in audiology and qualified and unqualified non medical staff working in audiology employed by the NHS in the London Government office region as at August 2004

London Government office region as at August 2004	*Estimated average annual salary (£)*	*Estimated average annual earnings (£)*
Medical		
Consultant Specialists in Audiological Medicine	75,500	82,700
Non-medical		
Qualified Clinical Scientist (Grade A and B) Audiology	30,000	33,600
Qualified MTO/ Technician Audiology	24,800	27,500
Assistant Audiologists (unqualified)	13,900	16,500

Notes:
1. The Earnings Survey is based on a sample of approximately 50 per cent. of NHS trusts. Figures are from SPS payroll data from all trusts in the survey for the month of August 2004.
2. Earnings figures are based on monthly payments in August, multiplied by 12 to give annual equivalent amounts.
3. Earnings figures are rounded to the nearest hundred pounds.
4. The sample used in the survey is not necessarily geographically or structurally representative of all trusts in London Government office region.
5. The sample size of both staff groups is small and hence estimated average annual salary and earnings of individuals within these groups maybe subject to some variability.

Sources:
Health and Social Care Information Centre 2004 NHS Staff Earnings Survey.
Health and Social Care Information Centre 2004 Medical and Dental Workforce Census
Health and Social Care Information Centre 2004 Non Medical Workforce Census

Avian Influenza

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 November 2005, *Official Report*, columns 664W, on avian influenza, what representations she has received about the adequacy of the escalation plans. [35412]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is important to be clear about the differences between seasonal influenza, avian influenza and pandemic influenza. Avian influenza is a disease which mainly affects birds, Seasonal influenza refers to the virus that circulates in the human population and causes widespread illness each winter. Pandemic influenza will only occur after an avian virus has mutated into a novel strain which can spread easily between humans and to which they do not have immunity.

We are working with the Intensive Care Society and other operational organisations in order to develop revised guidance against which local national health service emergency planners can assess their critical care plans for any outbreak of pandemic influenza.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans are in place in the UK to tackle an H5N1 influenza pandemic; and if she will make a statement. [43156]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is important to be clear about the differences between seasonal influenza, avian influenza and pandemic influenza. Avian influenza is a disease which mainly affects birds. Seasonal influenza refers to the virus that circulates in the human population and causes widespread illness each winter. Pandemic influenza will only occur after an avian virus has mutated into a novel strain which can spread easily between humans and to which they do not have immunity.

The United Kingdom has had a national influenza pandemic plan since 1997 and was one of the first countries to publish a pandemic plan. This plan has been updated and the Government published the revised, "UK Influenza Pandemic Contingency Plan" on 19 October 2005. The revised plan outlines the actions that Government and other authorities are taking to prepare for a possible pandemic, and the actions that different organisations would take in the event of a pandemic to slow down the spread of infection and minimise disruption. The plan can be accessed on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/pandemicflu.

Bexley Primary Healthcare Trust

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations she has received on the funding of Bexley Primary Healthcare Trust. [48899]

Jane Kennedy: There has been one letter received by the Department on the subject of general practitioner funding in Bexley care trust.

Capsticks Solicitors

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the charge per hour is for legal advice provided by Capsticks solicitors to the NHS in connection with defending clinical negligence claims. [51179]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The agreed charge per hour for legal advice provided by all NHS Litigation Authority panel solicitors to the national health service in connection with defending clinical negligence claims is shown in the table. This rate is also the agreed rate for all panel firms who have approved offices in London.

Defence fee per hour (Capsticks)	£
Nominated partner	185
Other partners and/or 10 years post qualification experience	175
Solicitors under 10 years post qualification experience	155
Legal executives	95

Community Hospitals

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many community hospitals there are in England. [46818]

Mr. Byrne: The newly published White Paper "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services" is available in the Library and on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/74/59/04127459.pdf.

Paragraph 6.41 of this publication states that:

> 'It is estimated that there are 350 community hospitals in England, if we use the definition of a community hospital as 'a service which offers integrated health and social care and is supported by community-based professionals'.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the number of community hospitals which may close as a result of primary care trust deficits. [46819]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has carried out no such assessment.

However, the newly published White Paper, "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services" makes clear that community facilities should not be closed in response to short-term budgetary pressures that are not related to the viability of the community facility itself.

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government has taken to support the continued operation of community hospitals before the publication of the White Paper on Health and Social Care in the Community. [46820]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has been working with the Community Hospitals Association, which led to the launch of an online toolkit in October 2005. The toolkit is available on the Care Services Improvement Partnership's website at www.developingcommunityhospitals.org.uk and provides support to those people involved with the development of community hospitals.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her oral statement of 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 21–38W, (1) on health and social care services, whether Bicester will be the location of one of the new generation of community hospitals with intermediate beds; [48886]

(2) how many new community hospitals she expects will be built as part of the new generation of community hospitals; how many of these she expects will have intermediate beds; and what new money will be provided for the *(a)* construction and *(b)* running of new community hospitals. [48887]

Mr. Byrne: As confirmed in the recent White Paper 'Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services', the Government fully intends to fulfil their manifesto commitment to develop a new generation of modern national health service community hospitals over the next five years. To make this possible an initial capital investment of £100 million to build, rebuild, or refurbish at least 50 community hospitals has been identified.

However, configuration of local service provision facilities remains a matter for primary care trusts. Paragraph 6.44 of the white paper explains that the Department will be inviting:

> "interested primary care trusts, where appropriate working with local authority partners, to bid for capital support for reinvestment in the new generation of community hospitals and smaller facilities offering local, integrated health and social care services. This will provide the opportunity to create many new community hospitals, as we have done with LIFT projects, and to expand services on existing community hospital sites if more appropriate. The details of the timing and the tender process will be published in a separate document in mid-2006."

Dentistry

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 665W, on dentistry, if she will give details of the recommendations made by the Joint Implementation Group to the board of Higher Education Funding Council for England. [43057]

Ms Rosie Winterton: On 26 January, my hon. Friend, the Minister of State for Higher Education and Lifelong Learning (Bill Rammell) made a Ministerial Statement to Parliament, *Official Report*, column 65WS, to announce that the board of the Higher Education Funding Council for England had accepted bids from the Universities of Exeter and Plymouth for a new Peninsula Dental school with places for 62 students; the Universities of Liverpool and Central Lancashire for the development of 32 outreach training places for dental students in Lancashire and Cumbria; and the University of Leeds for six new places to develop outreach training for dental students in Hull.

These decisions were made in accordance with the recommendations of the joint implementation group.

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate her Department has made of the number of people not registered with an NHS dentist; and of those how many are estimated to be using emergency dental facilities. [45413]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As at 30 September 2005, the number of people registered with a national health service dentist, with a general dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS) contract, in England was 24,203,150. We estimate this figure to be 48 percent., of the total population in England.

The number of patients treated in the emergency dental services in the year ending March 2005 was 235,506.

Notes:

Registrations data includes GDS and PDS registrations/PDS patients seen (counts patients seen in the past 15 months for some PDS schemes).

Source:

Dental Practice Board

Mr. Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dental practices there are in each strategic health authority; and how many of them are *(a)* not registering new NHS patients, *(b)* not registering new charge paying adult NHS patients and *(c)* accepting all new patient registrations. [45422]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of national health service dental practices that are registering new patients is not collected centrally.

The number of general dental services and personal dental services dental surgery addresses in England, as at 31 December 2005, broken down by strategic health authority (SHA) is shown in the table.

SHA	*Number of dental surgery addresses*
England	8,963
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	350
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	333
Essex	250
North West London	416
North Central London	288
North East London	245
South East London	255
South West London	282
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	224
County Durham and Tees Valley	170
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	275
West Yorkshire	343
Cumbria and Lancashire	340
Greater Manchester	459
Cheshire and Merseyside	436
Thames Valley	440
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	332
Kent and Medway	266
Surrey and Sussex	590
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	404
South West Peninsula	291
Dorset and Somerset	240
South Yorkshire	209
Trent	389
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	240
Shropshire and Staffordshire	243
Birmingham and The Black Country	400
West Midland South	253

Source:

Dental Practice Board

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether she intends the new contracts negotiated between dentists and primary care trusts under the new General Dental Services contract to be of one year's length. [45515]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A new general dental services contract will not have any fixed duration.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many self-employed dentists have been contracted to the NHS in each of the past 30 years. [45571]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Most general dental practitioners are self-employed contractors working in general dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS). The number of GDS and PDS dentists in England and Wales as at 30 September-each year is shown in the table.

	Number of dentists
1976	12,360
1977	12,517
1978	12,758
1979	13,039
1980	13,473
1981	13,936
1982	14,374
1983	14,780
1984	15,076
1985	15,076
1986	15,256
1987	15,545
1988	15,868
1989	16,178
1990	16,234
1991	16,263
1992	16,221
1993	16,608
1994	16,725
1995	16,818
1996	17,220
1997	17,633
1998	18,265
1999	18,826
2000	19,218
2001	19,736
2002	19,969
2003	20,292
2004	20,751
2005	21,755

Notes:

PDS dentistry began in 1998 and therefore, the figures for 1975–1997 are GDS only dentists.

Source:

Dental Practice Board

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if she will make a statement on the provision of children's NHS dental services in Gloucestershire; [48372]

(2) what assessment she has made of the provision of NHS dentistry in each of the six constituencies in Gloucestershire; and if she will make a statement. [48373]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* It is for primary care trusts to make decisions about the provision of local dental services.

However, according to figures held by the Department, between November 2004 and November 2005 there has been an increase in the Gloucestershire area, of 1.2 per cent. in the total number of general dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS) registrations, and 1.5 per cent. increase in child GDS and PDS registrations.

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists there are in each primary care trust area; and what net change in the number of dentists in each primary care trust area the Government expects as a result of the implementation of the new NHS dental contract. [44813]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the number of dentists in each primary care trust(PCT) has been placed in the Library.

The Department has not made a specific assessment of any changes arising from the new dental contract. From April 2006, PCTs will have devolved responsibility for the commissioning of primary dental services. This means that they will be responsible for commissioning dental services to reflect the needs of their local areas. All dentists currently practising in the general dental services and personal dental services are legally entitled to new contracts. If any dentists choose not to take up the new contract, PCTs will use the funding in their devolved budgets to re-commission services from other dentists.

Finished Consultant Episodes (Costs)

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will give the average cost per finished consultant episode, broken down by specialty, for each health authority in England in the last year for which records are available. [47391]

Mr. Byrne: The table shows the reference cost index score for health authorities (HA) in 2002–03, the latest year for which data is available. The reference cost index score compares the cost incurred by national health service providers with the expected cost for the providers level of activity, were they providers to be operating at national average costs. A score of 100 indicates operational at national average costs, above 100 indicates operational at above national average costs and below 100 below national average costs.

HA name	*HA index adjusted for market forces factor*
Hillingdon	102
Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster	106
Redbridge and Waltham Forest	102
Bedfordshire	95
Berkshire	96
Buckinghamshire	99
Croydon	102
West Kent	103
Kingston and Richmond	99
Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham	104
Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth	108
East Surrey	105
West Surrey	98
East Sussex, Brighton and Hove	104
West Sussex	102
Barking and Havering	103
Brent and Harrow	100
Camden and Islington	101
Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow	94
East London and the City	99
North Essex	103
South Essex	92
South Lancashire	103
Liverpool	108
Manchester	117
Morecambe Bay	101
St. Helens and Knowsley	97
Salford and Trafford	96
Sefton	93
Stockport	100
West Pennine	97
Northamptonshire	91
Oxfordshire	111
Suffolk	89
Barnsley	102
North Derbyshire	94
Southern Derbyshire	94
Doncaster	91
Leicestershire	100
Lincolnshire	102
North Nottinghamshire	97
Nottingham	84
Rotherham	98
Sheffield	102
Bury and Rochdale	100
North Cheshire	104
South Cheshire	94
East Lancashire	91
North-west Lancashire	97
North and mid Hampshire	99
Southampton and South-west Hampshire	97
Somerset	100
South and West Devon	98
Wiltshire	100
Avon	113
Birmingham	108
Wigan and Bolton	87
Wirral	100
Bradford	107
County Durham and Darlington	96
East Riding and Hull ha	101
Gateshead and South Tyneside	98
Leeds	112
Newcastle and North Tyneside	96
North Cumbria	109
South Humber	102
Northumberland	92
Sunderland	97
Tees	92
Wakefield	99
North Yorkshire	91
Calderdale and Kirklees	99
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	94
Dorset	90
North and East Devon	91
Gloucestershire	98
Coventry	102
Dudley	108
Herefordshire	105
Sandwell	108
Shropshire	98
Solihull	no providers hosted
North Staffordshire	102
South Staffordshire	101
Walsall	100
Warwickshire	87
Wolverhampton	94
Worcestershire	111
Cambridgeshire	98
Norfolk	88
Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and South-east Hampshire	97
Barnet, Enfield and Haringey	108
Hertfordshire	95
Bexley, Bromley and Greenwich	104

Source:
NHS reference costs

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will give the average cost per finished consultant episode, broken down by specialty, for each strategic health authority in England in each year for which records are available. [47393]

Mr. Byrne: The table shows the reference cost index score for strategic health authorities (SHAs) in 2003–04. This is the first year SHAs were fully operational and is the latest year for which data are publicly available. The reference cost index score compares the cost incurred by national health service providers with the expected cost for the providers level of activity, were they providers to be operating at national average costs. A score of 100 indicates operational at national average costs, above 100 indicates operational at above national average costs and below 100 below national average costs.

Organisation name	*SHA index adjusted for market forces factor*
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Health Authority	95
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Health Authority	101
Essex Health Authority	96
North West London Health Authority	98
North East London Health Authority	99
South East London Health Authority	104
South West London Health Authority	102
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Health Authority	99
County Durham and Tees Valley Health Authority	103
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire Health Authority	101
West Yorkshire Health Authority	106
Cumbria and Lancashire Health Authority	99
Greater Manchester Health Authority	101
Cheshire and Merseyside Health Authority	101
Thames Valley Health Authority	96
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Health Authority	97
Kent and Medway Health Authority	101
Surrey and Sussex Health Authority	98
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Health Authority	99
South West Peninsula Health Authority	101
Somerset and Dorset Health Authority	92
South Yorkshire Health Authority	105
Trent Health Authority	103
Leicester, Northampton and Rutland Health Authority	98
Shropshire and Staffordshire Health Authority	100
Birmingham and The Black Country Health Authority	102
West Midlands South Health Authority	99

Source:
NHS reference costs

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what total sum has been received by her Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation.[48468]

Mr. Byrne: The Department has not received any money for provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, either in the form of fees where the cost of processing a request would have exceeded the appropriate limit or in payment for disbursements.

The Freedom of Information Act allows for public authorities to determine when the cost of processing a request will exceed the appropriate limit, which for central Government are set at £600 and for the wider public sector £450. In this instance the public authority may decide to either approach the applicant to help them refine their request and where possible to bring it under the appropriate limit. Alternatively, public authorities may charge the applicant the cost of processing the request. There is, however, no obligation for Departments to provide information if the cost of processing the request exceeds the appropriate limit.

Public authorities may also charge for disbursements when handling requests where it is deemed appropriate. Further information on the FOI fees regime can be found on the Department for Constitutional Affairs' website at www.foi.gov.uk/feesguide.htm.

Health Service Finance

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many acute trusts which are in deficit have an operational private finance initiative (PFI) scheme; and in how many such trusts the annual PFI charge is more than a quarter of the deficit. [50836]

Jane Kennedy: I refer the hon. Member for Great Grimsby to the reply I gave on 3 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1347W. All nine national health service trusts reported as having an operational private finance initiative (PFI) scheme have annual unitary charges that are more than a quarter of the deficit.

Unitary payments on a PFI scheme—paid for from a trust's general revenue allocations—include elements for hard and soft facilities management services, financing costs as well as ensuring the availability of the facility.

Health White Paper

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she plans to initiate the review of personal medical services funding described in paragraph 3.31, of the White Paper, "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say"; in which financial year she expects the findings of the review to be implemented; and if she will make a statement. [49519]

Mr. Byrne: We plan to commence initial work on the review in the spring. Findings of the review, including any proposals for implementation, are due to be completed by early 2007.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she plans to publish the review of General Medical Services funding described in paragraph 3.30, of the "White Paper, Our Health, Our Care, Our Say"; who is conducting the review; and if she will make a statement. [49520]

Mr. Byrne: The group undertaking this review is chaired by NHS Employers and includes membership drawn from each of the four United Kingdom health departments, the general practitioner committee of the British Medical Association, the national health service as well as commissioned academic and technical support.

It is anticipated that the group will report on its findings and recommendations during 2006–07.

Hip Replacements

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to her opinion piece in The Independent on 19 January, what the evidential basis is for her statement that hip replacements are 20 percent. lower among lower social groups despite a 30 percent. higher need. [45478]

Mr. Byrne: The evidential basis was from a study published in the British Journal of General Practice, 1995 Mar;45(392); 127–31. "From the surgery to the surgeon: does deprivation influence consultation and operation rates?"

Hospital Beds (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many beds were available in *(a)* general and *(b)* acute wards in each hospital in Coventry South on the latest date for which figures are available. [44554]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire National Health Service Trust

	Average daily number of available general and acute beds, 2004–05
Acute	1,205
General	—

Notes:
1. General beds are defined as geriatric beds.
2. The Department does not collect data at hospital level. The data shown is on a provider rather than commissioner basis.

Source:
Department of Health form KH03

Hospital Trusts (South-east London)

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations she has received on the funding of hospital trusts in South East London. [48900]

Jane Kennedy: There have been three parliamentary questions asked by Members of Parliament. There has been one letter from a Member of Parliament and there has been one meeting with a group of Members of Parliament from Lewisham.

Hospitals (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many meetings have taken place in the last 12 months between the Coventry strategic health authority and *(a)* chief executives of trusts and *(b)* non-executive directors of trusts to discuss possible changes to hospital services in Coventry; and what the date was of each meeting. [44556]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* The information requested is not held centrally. It can be obtained direct from the West Midlands South strategic health authority.

Independent Sector Elective Treatment

Frank Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health why locally procured independent sector elective treatment is not separately identified in the annual financial returns of NHS *(a)* trusts, *(b)* primary care trusts and *(c)* health authorities. [46087]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* As a result of changes to the collection of data from the national health service to reduce bureaucracy we no longer collect such data.

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what her Department did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46759]

Mr. Byrne: The Department did not hold specific events in 2005 to celebrate either of these festivals.

Kettering General Hospital Trust

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what recent discussions she has had with Kettering general hospital trust about its capacity to meet the six-month maximum waiting time for in-patient treatment; [49653]

(2) if she will allocate dedicated funds to Kettering general hospital trust to ensure it meets the six-month maximum waiting time for in-patient treatment. [49654]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* There have been no recent discussions between the ministerial team at the Department and the Kettering general hospital national health service trust about this issue.

Funds are not allocated directly to NHS trusts. Funds are allocated directly to primary care trusts (PCTs) who are responsible for commissioning services to meet the needs of their respective communities. £267.3 million was allocated to the Northamptonshire Heartlands PCT in 2005–06, a cash increase of 9.5 per cent. on the previous year.

At the end of December 2005, there were no patients waiting for six months for in-patient treatment at the Kettering general hospital NHS trust.

Late Payment

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice she has issued to hospital trusts and primary care trusts about late payment of bills. [48083]

Mr. Byrne: Over a number of years, The Department have issued guidance to the national health service that emphasises the importance placed on prompt payment of bills, and the need to comply with the Confederation of British Industry's better payment practice code.

All NHS trusts, primary care trusts and strategic health authorities are required to meet a better payment practice code target of paying 95 per cent. of bills within contract terms or 30 days where no terms were agreed.

Litigation (Devon)

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of litigation against *(a)* Torbay hospital, *(b)* Royal Devon and Exeter and *(c)* Derriford hospital there have been in each of the past five years; and how many cases for each hospital remain outstanding. [50134]

Caroline Flint: The number of clinical negligence claims made against Torbay hospital, Royal Devon and Exeter and Derriford hospital in each of the past five years; and the number of outstanding cases for each hospital are in the table. Information on the number of non-clinical litigation cases by each hospital is not collected centrally. This information was supplied by the NHS Litigation Authority.

All clinical negligence claims received

Derriford hospital NHSLA notification year	Clinical negligence scheme for trusts	Existing liabilities scheme	Total	Number of claims still open
2000–01	22	10	32	4
2001–02	52	1	53	6
2002–03	88	5	93	5
2003–04	91	6	97	29
2004–05	56	—	56	23
Total	—	—	—	67
Royal Devon and Exeter (Heavitree)				
2000–01	8	12	20	1
2001–02	17	4	21	2
2002–03	13	1	14	3
2003–04	16	1	17	4
2004–05	6	—	6	1
Total	—	—	—	11
Royal Devon and Exeter (Wonford)				
2000–01	3	3	6	0
2001–02	14	—	14	0
2002–03	19	3	22	1
2003–04	10	1	11	4
2004–05	8	—	8	4
Total	—	—	—	9
Torbay District General Hospital				
2000–01	13	12	25	1
2001–02	54	9	63	7
2002–03	38	4	42	3
2003–04	32	1	33	6
2004–05	19	—	19	7
Total	—	—	—	24

Management Consultancy Services

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent on management consultancy services in the NHS in each year since 1997. [48836]

Mr. Byrne: Information relating to expenditure on management consultancy services by national health service bodies is not held centrally.

Medical Provision (Aylesbury Vale)

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions she has had with the Deputy Prime Minister about the number of extra *(a)* hospital beds and *(b)* GP surgeries that will be required in Aylesbury Vale as a result of the planned expansion of housing. [44164]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Responsibility for the provision of local services rests with local national health service organisations in conjunction with other key stakeholders. However it must be stressed that different models of care may mean that services are delivered differently in line with improving NHS services.

Medicinal Products

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what role her Department plays in promoting innovation in and development of new medicinal products; and what support it gives to small and medium sized enterprises for such purposes. [49845]

Jane Kennedy: Through the pharmaceutical price regulation scheme (PPRS), the Department seeks to achieve a balance between reasonable prices for the national health service and a fair return for the industry to enable it to research, develop and market new and improved medicines. The 2005 scheme provides significant support for research and development (R and D) and innovation through improved allowances to a maximum of 28 percent., of NHS sales including greater incentives for innovative medicines and those for children. The scheme allows for flexibility with regard to the circumstances of individual small companies. The scheme also allows freedom of pricing for new innovative medicines at their United Kingdom launch and allows a return on capital of almost 30 percent., before profits have to be repaid or prices reduced.

The Department provides the NHS with the support and infrastructure it needs to conduct research for the benefit of patients and the wider public, including clinical trials to evaluate the safety and efficacy of potential new medicinal products. This infrastructure is open to our partners, including industry. Implementation of the Department's new strategy for research in the NHS published last month, "Best Research for Best Health", will establish the UK as a world class environment for medical research, development and innovation, through a programme of investment and reforms to enable medicines to be developed more quickly and more cheaply.

The Department has asked the UK Clinical Research Collaboration, which brings together the public, private and voluntary sector, to hold a futures forum to advise Ministers on priority areas for innovation in healthcare. The aim of this is to foster a better common

understanding between policy makers and those developing new therapies on the priority areas for future innovation.

Mental Health

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on average per mental health patient by each local health authority area for the past 30 years in real terms in descending order. [45566]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available in the requested format. However, information on mental health expenditure per head of mental health weighted population in each primary care trust is available from the national programme budget project for 2003–04 and 2004–05. This information has been placed in the Library.

Mesothelioma Research Group

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will ensure the continued operation of the Mesothelioma Research Group based at St Bartholomew's and the London hospitals; and if she will make a statement. [48364]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* The improving cancer care programme led by the Barts and the London national health service trust, in collaboration with a range of NHS and academic partners, has received £8 million of NHS research and development support funding in 2005–06.

The trust is free to use this funding to achieve the best return on its investment in the broad spectrum of cancer research covered by the programme, and is not obliged to support work on specific types of the disease. The priority given to mesothelioma research within the trust has therefore been a matter for local decision and will remain so next year. In the future, in line with our new research strategy, Best Research for Best Health, these researchers will be able to apply for National Institute for Health Research project or programme grants.

Morning-after Pill

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the reasons for the divergence in the prescription cost and the over-the-counter price of the morning-after pill; and if she will make a statement. [49040]

Jane Kennedy: None. The national health service prescription charge is a flat-rate charge and is not directly related to the cost of the item prescribed. All NHS prescribed contraception, including emergency contraception, is dispensed free-of-charge.

Medication purchased direct from a pharmacy, is a private transaction and is not controlled by the Government. Prices are set competitively by retailers and include value added tax and a margin for the pharmacist.

NHS Financial Management

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 594W, on NHS financial management, if she will set out examples from case studies presented by the foundation trust network demonstrating new ways of working; and how she has evaluated whether the freedoms conferred by foundation status have allowed NHS foundation trusts to introduce new approaches to patient care more quickly and efficiently than NHS trusts. [49248]

Mr. Byrne: As a membership organisation, the Foundation Trust Network (FTN) is open to authorised and aspirant national health service foundation trust (NHSFTs). Case studies presented by the FTN are available at www.foundationtrustnetwork.org.

These and other independent case studies are demonstrating how the freedoms available to NHSFTs are allowing them to improve services for their communities, and in some cases innovate new approaches to patient care more quickly than as a national health service trust.

Nurse Advisers

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to introduce new regulations on the status and influence of nurse advisers. [50815]

Jane Kennedy: In the national health service, the nomenclature 'nurse adviser' covers a range of nursing roles and titles, including nurse specialists. What such nurses have in common is that they are employed to address specific issues identified by their employers. There is no national definition or job description of the role, therefore no regulations governing them. The Nursing and Midwifery Council are responsible for the professional regulation of nurses.

Nurses

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* neonatal and *(b)* paediatric nurses there have been in England in each year since 1997; how many are nearing retirement; and what steps are being taken to tackle possible shortages. [49862]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 8 February 2006]:* The table shows qualified paediatric nurses and maternity services nurses in England as at 30 September 2004. We cannot specify neo-natal nursing staff, however we have included maternity services nursing staff for your information.

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Paediatric Nursing	15,341	16,266	16,689	16,922	17,640	18,014	18,437	18,917
Maternity Services Nurses	28,409	29,174	29,258	29,304	29,177	29,524	30,776	32,056
of which:								
Midwives	22,385	22,841	22,799	22,572	23,075	23,249	23,941	24,844

There are 2,216 paediatric nurses over the age of 50 and 6,162 maternity services nurses over the age of 50. However, human resource policies are in place to make it an attractive option for staff to work full time or part time up to and past retirement age, including: flexible national health service pensions scheme, flexible working hours and change of roles to include mentoring, coaching and clinical research.

We have increased substantially the number of nurse training places, held national and international recruitment campaigns and developed return to practice schemes. We have also improved retention by increasing pay and continuing to make the NHS a better employer.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will answer question 31790 tabled by the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South on 24 November 2005. [47526]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A reply was given on 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 970W.

Prescription Charges

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department has issued guidance to trusts on advising patients on whether to obtain their prescriptions outside hospital pharmacies. [49676]

Jane Kennedy: The Department has not issued specific guidance to trusts on patients obtaining prescriptions outside hospital pharmacies. However, guidance has been issued on the responsibility for prescribing between hospitals and general practitioners (GPs), in the form of an Executive Letter in 1991, EL (91)127. This advised that hospital consultants have responsibility for all medicines prescribed for in-patients, as well as for ensuring that patients are discharged with sufficient medication to allow their GP, to whose care they are transferred, to be advised of the diagnosis and therapy so that continuity of care can be maintained.

For out-patients the guidance says that only patients in immediate need of treatment should be prescribed medication as a result of the out-patient consultation. All other patients should be referred to their GP, with the results and recommendations from the consultation, to receive appropriate treatment.

A copy of EL (91)127 will be placed in the Library.

Private Finance Initiative Scheme

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress has been made in signing the contract for the private finance initiative scheme at Broomfield hospital, Chelmsford; and if she will make a statement. [47176]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* The full business case (FBC) for this scheme has been prepared and submitted to Essex strategic health authority (SHA) for approval. Following publication of "The NHS in England: the operating framework for 2006–07" on 26 January, the SHA will now need to revalidate the approval parameters for the scheme by responding to a range of questions from the Department concerning factors such as long-term affordability, assumptions on efficiency gains and income growth, liquidity, activity shift and reference cost. The SHA will then need to have its conclusions ratified by the Department before proceeding.

Private Healthcare Sector (NHS Funded Operations)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS-funded operations have been commissioned from the private healthcare sector for patients in *(a)* Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth primary care trust and *(b)* Staffordshire strategic health authority in each of the last five-years, broken down by specialty. [48644]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available in the format requested. However, during 2004–05, 530 procedures were commissioned in the Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic health authority from a one-year national procurement for additional general surgery and orthopaedic procedures.

Rule of Rescue Principle

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the acceptable incremental level of cost per quality years of life above the norm which the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence considers a drug treatment value for money when administered under the rule of rescue; and if she will make a statement. [49592]

Jane Kennedy: I have made no such estimate.

Smoking

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people her Department estimates died from smoking-related illnesses in the last year for which figures are available. [51002]

Caroline Flint: "The smoking epidemic in England", published by the Health Development Agency in November 2004, estimated that, in England, 86,500 deaths a year were attributed to smoking.

A copy is available in the Library.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research into the effects of second-hand smoke from tobacco products her Department has *(a)* evaluated and *(b)* commissioned. [51003]

Caroline Flint: The Governments 1998 White Paper "Smoking Kills" sets out in Chapter 1 some of the major fatal diseases and conditions caused by smoking and passive smoking. For each disease and cause of death quoted there is a reference to relevant studies and/or source documents.

The 1998 Report of the Scientific Committee on Tobacco and Health (SCOTH) provided fuller information on fatal and other disease caused by smoking and second hand smoke. The 2004 Report by SCOTH, "Secondhand Smoke: Review of Evidence since 1998", states that new evidence reinforces and strengthens the conclusion in the 1998 report that second hand smoke is a substantial public health hazard.

Copies of these documents are available in the Library.

Staff Contracts

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of the relevant staff group has not yet agreed a contract of employment under *(a)* the new consultants' contract, *(b)* the new General Medical Services contract and *(c)* Agenda for Change. [48840]

Mr. Byrne: There are around 86 per cent. of all consultants now working to the new contract. The new contract is still available to all and new appointees, after October 2003, are automatically made to the new contract. Therefore, this percentage will continue to increase.

The new general medical services (GMS) contract is not a contract of employment but a contract for primary medical care services based on a collective provider model of responsibility. General practitioners traditionally fill the role of contractors for provision, however, increasingly non-general practitioners are taking up such roles. Around 60 per cent. of all practitioners operate under GMS contract.

There are about 5 per cent. of staff who have not been assimilated and therefore are not yet in receipt of agenda for change payment. We cannot ascertain, however, how many of these have not yet agreed a contract of appointment. This figure excludes national health service foundation trusts and special health authorities.

Statutory Instruments

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will list the statutory instruments introduced by her Department since 6 May 2005. [46209]

Mr. Byrne: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Tuberculosis

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research she has evaluated on the relative *(a)* clinical and *(b)* cost-effectiveness of (i) the Heaf skin test, (ii) the Mantoux skin test and (iii) interferon-gamma blood test for the identification of (A) latent and (B) active TB infection. [33297]

Jane Kennedy: The sole supplier of United Kingdom licensed purified protein derivative (PPD) has ceased production of tuberculin PPD for heaf testing. Mantoux testing has now replaced the heaf test as the standard method of tuberculin skin testing.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) extensively reviewed this area as part of the development of new guidelines on the clinical management of tuberculosis, including interferon gamma blood test for the identification of latent and active tuberculosis infection. This work has been published in draft form as part of an open public consultation. NICE clinical guidelines on the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of tuberculosis are due out in March.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) which hospital trusts have indicated to her that they will not be able to meet the six-month maximum waiting time for in-patient treatment during 2006; [49656]

(2) what assessment she has made of the changes in waiting times for operations since the Government stated that no patient would have to wait more than six months for an NHS in-patient operation. [51037]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 7 February 2006]:* No trusts have indicated they will not be able to meet the maximum wait standard.

The six month standard came into place as at 31 December 2005. The first statistics measuring performance against this target show that 48 patients were waiting longer than six months for inpatient admission at the end of December 2005. Detailed figures by trust are available on the Department's website at: www.performance.doh.gov.uk/waitingtimes/2005/q3/qf01_y00.html.

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time was for an NHS in-patient operation in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002, *(c)* 2003, *(d)* 2004 and *(e)* 2005 in (i) England and (ii) each NHS hospital trust; and what the figures are to date in 2006. [51036]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* Data on average waiting times for the number of patients waiting for in-patient admission as at 31 December in each year has been placed in the Library.

Wynne Lieberthal

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether Wynne Lieberthal has been employed as a doctor within the NHS; and if she will make a statement. [49702]

Mr. Byrne *[holding answer 8 February 2006]:* Information about individual doctors working in the national health service is not held centrally.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 15 February 2006

PRIME MINISTER

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister how many staff in his Office are paid on a performance-related basis. [50488]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) on Monday 13 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1543W.

Engagements

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Prime Minister if he will visit Shrewsbury to meet leading charity organisations, councillors and the mayor. [50091]

The Prime Minister: I have no current plans to do so.

Peter Law: To ask the Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the memorandum prepared by Sir David Manning on matters discussed and decisions taken at his meeting with President Bush at the White House on 31 January 2003. [50241]

Adam Price: To ask the Prime Minister whether an official minute was made of his meeting with President Bush and his advisers on 31 January 2003. [51447]

The Prime Minister: Information relating to internal meetings, discussion and advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Fair Trade

Andrew George: To ask the Prime Minister (1) what his policy is on the procurement of fair trade produce for consumption in his Office; [49978]

(2) how much and what proportion of his Office's catering budget was spent on fair trade produce in the last period for which figures are available. [49979]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my Office forms part of the Cabinet Office and I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the then Minister for the Cabinet Office (Douglas Alexander) to the hon. Member for Buckingham (Mr. Bercow) on 11 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 574W.

Governmental Structure (Parliamentary Approval)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make it his policy to seek parliamentary approval for major changes to the structure and responsibilities of Government departments; and if he will make a statement. [50138]

The Prime Minister: I continue to discharge my responsibilities as set out in the ministerial code.

Iraq

Mr. Harper: To ask the Prime Minister on which dates he has visited British soldiers injured in Iraq; and what locations were visited. [50367]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the afternoon press briefing given by my official spokesman on 1 February 2006, a copy of which is available on the No. 10 website.

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Prime Minister how many parliamentary questions tabled in the last 12 months for answer by him on a named day *(a)* were transferred and *(b)* received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named. [49878]

The Prime Minister: My office aims to answer all ordinary written parliamentary questions within five working days, and named day written parliamentary questions on the day named.

In the period from January 2005 to January 2006, 181 named day parliamentary questions were tabled to my office. Of these, 135 received a substantive answer on the day named, five received a substantive answer after the day named, and 41 were transferred to another Government Department for reply.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Prime Minister how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by him in the last 12 months have been answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* between 14 and 28 days, *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if he will make a statement. [49898]

The Prime Minister: My office aims to answer all ordinary written parliamentary questions within five working days, and named day written parliamentary questions on the day named.

In the period from January 2005 to January 2006, 331 ordinary written parliamentary questions received an answer within five working days. 41 questions were answered after five working days.

Prerogative Powers

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister how many decisions were taken by Ministers using prerogative powers in the last year for which figures are available. [50856]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr. Carmichael) on 25 June 2002, *Official Report*, column 802W.

Telephone Interceptions

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister when he expects to make an announcement on whether the ban on intercepting hon. and right hon. Members' telephone communications is to be lifted. [51834]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to my written ministerial statement, 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 173WS and my answers at Prime Minister's Questions on 18 and 25 January.

Torture

David Howarth: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 852W, on torture, whether he understood the US Secretary of State's statement to represent a change in US policy. [50552]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to the answer I gave the hon. Member on 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 852W.

David Howarth: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 852W, on torture, what assessment he has made of whether the US's interpretations of its obligations under the convention against torture differ from internationally accepted interpretations of those obligations. [50553]

The Prime Minister: Secretary of State Rice confirmed in her statement on 5 December 2005 that it is US policy to comply with the UN convention against torture. On ratifying the convention, the US entered a reservation stating that it

> "considers itself bound by the obligation under Article 16 to prevent" cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" only insofar as the term "cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" means the "cruel, unusual and inhumane treatment or punishment prohibited by the Fifth, Eighth, and/or Fourteenth Amendments to the constitution of the United States".

The US also entered a number of formal understandings of its convention obligations. Other states have also made reservations and interpretative declarations in respect of their obligations under the convention.

Wars (Parliamentary Approval)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make it his policy to seek parliamentary approval, whenever practicable, before the UK goes to war; and if he will make a statement. [50137]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Ilford South (Mike Gapes) during my evidence to the Liaison Committee on Tuesday 7 February.

WALES

Crime Figures

8. **Mrs. Moon:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on recent crime figures in Wales. [50383]

Mr. Hain: I am very pleased that during 2004–05 recorded crime in Wales fell by 7 per cent.

Police Reorganisation

10. **Paul Flynn:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many representations he has received from Gwent *(a)* in favour and *(b)* against the proposed police reorganisation. [50385]

Mr. Hain: In addition to meeting a wide range of stakeholders from across Wales, I have received seven letters from correspondents in Gwent—including from my hon. Friend. They are not easy to catalogue in the way requested. I can, however, inform the hon. Member that on 6 February the chief constable of Gwent said

> "We have more chance to give the public a policing service it desires by looking at the efficiencies of merging the four forces than we have as four forces standing alone."

Wind Farms

11. **Mr. David Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has had with the National Assembly for Wales Government on the development of onshore wind farms in Wales; and if he will make a statement. [50386]

Mr. Hain: I have regular discussions. In particular my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry is considering the application for Gwynt y Mor under the set procedures.

I personally recognise the benefit to Wales of the project, which is capable of powering 500,000 homes.

Rail Links

12. **Peter Law:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the National Assembly for Wales Government Minister for Economic Development and Transport on improving rail links from the South Wales Valleys to Cardiff. [50387]

Nick Ainger: My right hon. Friend and I regularly discuss transport matters with Welsh Assembly Government colleagues.

The Assembly Government are providing almost £28 million for the Ebbw Valley railway project to accommodate passenger services between Ebbw Vale, Cardiff and Newport.

Disability Discrimination Act

13. **Mrs. Betty Williams:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the likely impact of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 in Wales. [50388]

Nick Ainger: My right hon. Friend and I have regular discussions with ministerial colleagues on a variety of topics. My hon. Friend the Minister for Disabled People (Mrs. McGuire) recently met Jane Hutt, the Assembly Equalities Minister, to discuss specific disability matters.

From 4 December 2006 there will be a general duty on public sector bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people.

Young Offenders

14. **Mrs. James:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on Government support to voluntary groups who help rehabilitate young offenders in Wales. [50389]

Nick Ainger: The Welsh Assembly Government currently provides assistance to the Nacro Cymru to support their work in rehabilitating young offenders in Wales.

Pathways to Work Pilot

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on the Pathways to Work pilot in Wales. [50384]

Nick Ainger: My right hon. Friend and I have regular discussions with ministerial colleagues on a range of issues, including measures aimed at tackling economic inactivity, such as Pathways to Work.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

ACP Sugar Production

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of African, Caribbean and Pacific country sugar production was produced by Mauritius in the last period for which figures are available. [49631]

Mr. Bradshaw: Total production in the ACP Sugar Protocol countries in 2004 was 4,391,190 tonnes. Production in Mauritius accounted for 13.8 per cent. of the total[1].

Preferential imports from ACP countries into the EU are planned to total 1,297,264 tonnes in the 2005–06 marketing year. Imports from Mauritius are planned to be 37.9 per cent. of that total.

[1] *Source:*
ISO Sugar Year Book 2004

Biofuels

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many gallons of biofuel she estimates will have been sold in Shropshire by *(a)* 2009 and *(b)* 2015. [50104]

Mr. Morley: In November 2005, the Government announced that a Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation will be introduced. This will require 5 per cent. of all UK fuel to come from a renewable source by 2010. Target levels for 2008–09 and 2009–10 will be announced in Budget 2006.

Information on fuel sales is not collected on a regional basis so it is not possible to give estimates for Shropshire. Provisional figures for 2005 for the whole of the UK give annual biodiesel and bioethanol sales of nearly 26 million gallons. To meet a 5 per cent. target at current usage would require around 540 million gallons.

Biomass Crop

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what EU funding is available for farmers to grow biomass crop. [50972]

Mr. Morley: DEFRA's energy crops scheme provides grants to establish short rotation coppice and miscanthus for use in heat and electricity generation, and to set up short rotation coppice producer groups. Part of the funding for this scheme comes from the European agricultural guidance and guarantee fund. Under the Common Agricultural Policy, farmers can also receive the single payment when these energy crops are grown on set-aside land. They can be grown on single payment land if the EU's €45 per hectare energy aid payment is also claimed. Oilseed rape and wheat can be grown on set-aside land under contract for processing into transport biofuels. These crops can also be grown on single payment land and are then eligible for the energy aid payment.

Bovine Tuberculosis

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what compensation was paid by her Department to farmers in Shrewsbury and Atcham constituency for cattle affected by bovine tuberculosis in *(a)* 2002 and *(b)* 2005; [50761]

(2) how many cases of bovine tuberculosis were registered in Shrewsbury and Atcham constituency in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2005. [50766]

Mr. Bradshaw: Disaggregated data on compensation paid to farmers for cattle affected by bovine tuberculosis (TB) are not held centrally.

Data on cases of bovine TB are not available at the level requested. Figures for the county of Shropshire are tabulated as follows.

	Total new herd incidents	*Confirmed new herd incidents*
2002[1]	69	42
2003	86	51
2005	116	80

[1] in 2001, the TB testing and control programme was largely suspended due to the foot and mouth disease (FMD) outbreak. When testing resumed in 2002, resources were concentrated on herds with overdue TB tests which would have had a longer period in which to contract the disease. Also the proportion of high risk herds tested immediately after the FMD outbreak was greater than that prior to the outbreak. As a result, data for 2002 is not comparable with other years.

Note:
2005 data downloaded from the State Veterinary Service database on 16 January 2006. 2002 and 2003 data downloaded on 19 May 2005. All data are provisional and subject to change as more data become available.

British Summertime

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the merits of introducing Double British Summertime as a means of improving the UK's record on climate change; and if she will make a statement. [51201]

Mr. Morley: A study by the Building Research Establishment commissioned by Defra for the purposes of the current review of the UK Climate Change Programme has concluded that, while a switch to Double British Summertime would reduce energy use for domestic lighting and non-domestic cooling, these savings would be more than offset by increased demand for non-domestic heating and lighting. The study

therefore concluded that a switch to Double British Summertime was unlikely to lead to a reduction in the UK's carbon dioxide emissions.

Carbon Capture

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with other Departments on *(a)* the regulatory framework for carbon capture and storage in the UK and *(b)* tax incentives for large scale capture and storage demonstration projects; and if she will make a statement. [50602]

Mr. Morley: The UK is working with other parties to clarify the legal basis for carbon dioxide capture and storage (CCS) under the marine treaties, as the treaties were not drafted to take CCS into account. A meeting of the contracting parties to the London convention in October 2006 will consider how best to facilitate and/or regulate carbon sequestration in the sub-seabed.

Following interdepartmental consultation, which included with DEFRA, the Crown Estates and the Department of Trade and Industry, the DTI is setting up a task force to consider and develop if necessary the appropriate regulation to enable CCS activities in the UK. In addition, DEFRA is considering how marine planning aspects of CCS should be included in the Marine Bill.

Tax issues are a matter for the Treasury and will be considered by the Chancellor as part of the Budget process. The 2005 Pre-Budget Report announced that the Government will consult further on the barriers to wide-scale commercial deployment of CCS in the UK, and the potential for economic incentives in addressing those barriers.

Carbon Trust Grants

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of Carbon Trust grants have been allocated to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); and what guidance she has issued to the Trust on making grants to SMEs. [50285]

Mr. Morley: The Carbon Trust is a private company grant funded by DEFRA and the devolved administrations to lead on energy efficiency support for the business and public sector in the UK, and support the development of low carbon technology. Since the Trust is a private company DEFRA does not provide detailed guidance on its approach to its own work, however we are content that the Trust takes account of the needs of SMEs in developing its activities.

The Carbon Trust inform me that in 2004–05 they provided over £18.1 million of direct support for SME's which accounts for just under a third of DEFRA Grant funding received.

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding has been given by her Department to the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology in each of the last five years. [48176]

Mr. Morley: DEFRA has given the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology the following funding in each of the last five years.

	£ million
2000–01	4.11
2001–02	3.23
2002–03	4.18
2003–04	4.11
2004–05	3.32

Commercial Developments (Energy Efficiency Standards)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the change in the amount of carbon dioxide emissions from commercial buildings in England in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [49538]

Mr. Morley: Estimates of carbon emissions from commercial buildings in England since 1997 are presented in the table.

	Carbon emissions in million tonnes of carbon (MtC)	*Change in carbon emission compared to previous year (MtC)*
1997	10.5	
1998	10.6	0.1
1999	10.0	-0.5
2000	10.9	0.9
2001	11.8	0.9
2002	10.9	-0.9
2003	11.5	0.6
2004	11.7	0.3

These estimates are based on energy consumption data from the Digest of UK Statistics (DUKES) for the commercial and miscellaneous sectors. The data take account of emissions incurred by providing electricity and other forms of delivered energy for use in the buildings. Emissions for England have been estimated by scaling on the basis of the ratio of total carbon emissions from England for 2003 to that of the UK. The DUKES allocation between commercial and public sector may mean that this data underestimates emissions from the commercial sector. Much of the variation observed is attributable to annual changes in the emissions from electricity generation.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of UK carbon dioxide emissions come from buildings other than household dwellings; and if she will make a statement. [49540]

Mr. Morley: In 2003, 13 per cent. of total UK carbon emissions arise from energy use in buildings in the service sector. This is based on delivered energy consumption data for the public, commercial and miscellaneous sectors published in DUKES 2005 (the service sector) and delivered energy emission factors for fuels used in buildings.

In addition to energy used in the service sector a proportion of energy used by industry will be used to provide building services. Assuming 20 per cent. of

carbon emissions for industry is for building services, non-domestic buildings would account for 18 per cent. of the UK carbon emissions in 2003.

Departmental Staff

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans her Department has to change the London allowance of its staff; and if she will make a statement. [50002]

Jim Knight: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs does not pay an allowance to staff working in London.

Instead it operates and maintains two separate sets of pay ranges for staff working in the London and national pay areas. The effect of this, is that for staff employed in the London pay area, they receive a pay lead over those staff employed in the national pay area.

There are no immediate plans to consider changes to the existing differential pay arrangements that exist between the London and national pay areas. However, the Department will continue to monitor and evaluate the relative pay position of staff employed in the London pay area, with a particular focus on recruitment and retention issues.

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the potential impact on the environment if each household *(a)* had one energy-efficient lightbulb fitted and *(b)* ceased to leave televisions on standby overnight. [51323]

Mr. Morley: Studies carried out by the Energy Saving Trust and Defra via the Market Transformation Programme estimate that:

(a) if each UK household replaced a traditional light bulb with an equivalent compact fluorescent light they would save on average 33KWh of electricity per annum—around 840GWh per annum across the UK;

(b) if all of the 63 million televisions in use in the UK were not left on standby the UK would save around 1,000 GWh per annum.

English Nature

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what role English Nature plays in *(a)* advising on and *(b)* approving regional spatial strategies of regional chambers. [51105]

Jim Knight: English Nature plays an important role in the planning process, as a statutory consultee, and in providing proactive guidance to regional and local authority planners on their regional spatial strategies (RSS). The agency contributes by responding to formal consultations, having strong involvement with RSS working groups, and advising on sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment. The advice given by English Nature makes sure that biodiversity and geological conservation interests are taken fully into account during the decision making process.

In particular, the Government's Planning Policy Statement 9 (published in August 2005) sets out policies on protection of biodiversity and geological conservation through the planning system. These policies need to be taken into account by regional planning bodies in the preparation of regional spatial strategies, and regional planning bodies should liaise closely with regional biodiversity fora or equivalent bodies, English Nature or its successors.

Environmental Policy

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the environmental implications of replacing glass bottles and glasses with plastic versions in pubs, clubs and bars. [50819]

Mr. Morley: The Department has not carried out such an assessment.

Farm Subsidies

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment her Department has made of the impact on hill farming of the timescale for implementing a replacement scheme for the hill farming allowance in *(a)* Westmorland and Lonsdale and *(b)* England. [50789]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The Hill Farm Allowance will end this year, when the current rural development programming period finishes. We are looking at the best ways to support upland communities using rural development funding from 2007 onwards. We will consult on the options shortly.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much in EU subsidies farmers in the UK received in each year between 1997 and 2005. [50978]

Mr. Bradshaw: Farmers in the United Kingdom receive a variety of payments which are recorded in the income account of the economic accounts for agriculture prepared by DEFRA annually. A summary is show in the following table.

£ million

	Calendar years								
	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*[1]	*2005*[1]
Coupled payments (less levies)									
Crop subsidies									
Arable area payments (excluding setaside)	1114	1051	1056	933	827	875	925	900	—
Other crop subsidies	19	16	14	11	3	2	3	12	11
Livestock subsidies									
Beef producers	1116	923	902	899	831	980	960	1040	201
Sheep producers	354	479	410	337	184	275	286	318	—

£ million

	Calendar years								
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004[1]	2005[1]
Dairy producers	—	—	—	22	79	—	—	108	—
Less levies:									
Milk superlevy	-14	-32	-9	-15	—	—	—	-8	-1
Total coupled payments	2588	2436	2373	2187	1923	2132	2174	2369	212
Decoupled and other payments									
Single Payment Scheme	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2375
Arable Area Payments on set-aside	90	88	170	127	180	143	177	129	—
Animal disease compensation	15	14	20	29	23	54	61	49	55
Less favoured areas support schemes	—	—	—	—	165	165	163	153	144
Agri-environment schemes:	83	108	129	140	168	196	222	253	257
Weather Aid	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—
Total decoupled and other payments	189	210	318	297	536	562	622	585	2831
Total payments less levies	2777	2646	2692	2484	2459	2694	2796	2955	3043

[1] Provisonal
Source:
Defra Statistics

Fisheries

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her estimate is of the total weight of discards to date under the Common Fisheries Policy. [50529]

Mr. Bradshaw: Discarding at sea is carried out not only as a result of quota limitations under the CFP, but also in reaction to the particular economics of the industry at the time, for example the prevailing prices of respective species. No systematic recording of this process is undertaken at community level to produce an accurate estimate of the total tonnage of all species discarded.

Flooding

Mr. Scott: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment has been made by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the Environment Agency of the causes of the River Roding flood on 30 October 2000; and what (i) schemes are in place and (ii) plans have been made to prevent a future flood. [50609]

Mr. Morley: Defra has policy responsibility for management of flood risk in England, funds most of the Environment Agency's flood risk activities and provides grant aid on a project by project basis to the other flood risk management operating authorities to support their investment in improvement works. The Agency has powers to undertake works on designated "main rivers" while the London borough of Redbridge (LBR) has similar powers for "ordinary watercourses". Defra has funded three studies carried out by LBR since 2000 on the non-main river aspects of flood risk.

The Agency believes the flooding was primarily caused by the surface water drainage system backing up and being unable to discharge into the river. This affected properties and roads in the Chigwell Road area of Woodford Green.

Since 2000, the Agency has carried out repairs to a low spot in the flood defences behind the Broadmead Baptist Church and selective de-silting and reed removal upstream and downstream of Chigwell Road to maintain channel flow capacity. Thames Water and LBR have repaired missing or broken flap valves to the outfalls in the river. This will prevent river water backing up into the drainage system at times of high flow but a risk of flooding remains because surface water drainage will not be able to discharge into the river during periods of high flows.

The Agency is to complete a flood risk management strategy for the Roding Catchment early this summer. A flood storage area in the upper catchment of the Roding is considered to be the most sustainable solution, economically and environmentally. The Agency patrols for debris every other month, carries out annual tree/hedge/bankside vegetation management during winter months, ad-hoc blockage/obstruction removal and regular inspections and monitoring of flood defence assets.

Genetically Modified Organisms

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to enable post-release monitoring of the potential health and environmental effects of a genetically modified organism to take place as required by EU Directive 2001/18. [50533]

Mr. Morley: The UK has fully implemented directive 2001/18/EC. This directive requires that a company which submits an individual GMO for approval provides a plan setting out the post-market monitoring that they will carry out. This plan is then considered as part of the application, revised if necessary to the satisfaction of scientific experts, and its implementation is then made a condition of any consent issued.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the public consultations on co-existence between genetically modified (GM) and non-GM crops is expected to begin. [50535]

Mr. Morley: We expect to issue a consultation paper this spring.

Gloucestershire Old Spot Pigs

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to secure from the EU traditional speciality guaranteed status for pork and bacon from pedigree Gloucestershire Old Spot pigs. [50306]

Mr. Bradshaw: Officials have worked closely with the applicant group seeking to register the name, Gloucestershire Old Spots Pigmeat, as a traditional speciality guaranteed product (TSG) under the EU Protected Food Name Scheme. The application was forwarded to the Commission for their consideration in 2004. The Commission has six months within which to consider such applications although this period can be extended if the Commission raise questions about the application.

We are still waiting to hear from the Commission whether it has got any queries about the application and share the concern of the applicant group about the long delay. That is why we have been in regular contact with the Commission over the last 18 months to chase up progress on this application. Until we hear from the Commission it is difficult to give an indication as to when the application process will be completed. Officials last contacted the Commission on 23 January 2006 and understand that a response is imminent.

GM Food

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the UK Government's position is on the European Commission's policy of imposing fines on the French government in relation to the adoption of EU legislation on the handling of genetically modified organisms, with particular reference to the need to introduce safety standards. [49587]

Mrs. McGuire: I have been asked to reply.

Under the Treaty of Rome, it is properly the function of the European Commission to pursue action against member states that fail to implement EC Directives. The UK Governments' policy is to implement EU directives; Directive 90/219/EEC as amended by 98/81/EC on the contained use of genetically modified micro-organisms has been fully transposed into UK law.

Milk

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will visit Shrewsbury constituency to discuss milk prices with Shropshire dairy farmers. [49065]

Mr. Bradshaw: Provided competition law is respected, the Government does not get involved in discussions about price. However, issues around the state of the industry are regularly discussed in the Dairy Supply Chain Forum, which is chaired by my noble Friend, Lord Bach. Ministers also make regular dairy-related visits, for example my noble Friend, Lord Bach visited a dairy farm on 27 January.

Monks Wood National Nature Reserve

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what discussions she has had with English Nature about the likely impact on Monks Wood National Nature Reserve of the proposed closure of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology Research Establishment; [49181]

(2) what assessment she has made of the likely impact on the management of Monks Wood National Nature Reserve of the proposed closure of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology Research Establishment. [49182]

Mr. Morley: The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) is currently consulting widely with stakeholders on proposals on how best the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology can contribute on a sustainable basis to maintaining the quality of environmental science in the UK. DEFRA will be responding to this consultation.

English Nature undertakes the management of the Monks Wood National Nature Reserve, and will also have the opportunity to respond to the consultation. NERC will need to consider all the evidence and views on the potential impact of the proposals, including any representations a bout the Monks Wood National Nature Reserve.

Organic Farming

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of farmland in each EU country is allocated to organic production. [49983]

Mr. Bradshaw: The figures requested are given in the following table. In 2002 Austria had the highest proportion with 8.7 per cent. of farmland being dedicated to organic farming, Ireland and Greece were lowest with only 0.7 per cent. being dedicated organic land. As a whole. 3.8 per cent. of utilised agricultural area in EU-15 countries was dedicated to organic farming in 2002, up from 1.8 per cent. in 1998. Currently, 2002 are the most up to date figures available with these only being available for EU-15 countries.

Percentage of farmland allocated to organic production 2002

Country	*Percentage of farmland organic*
Belgium	2.1
Denmark	6.1
Germany	4.1
Greece	0.7
Spain	2.6
France	1.7
Ireland	0.7
Italy	7.5
Luxembourg	2.2
Netherlands	2.2
Austria	8.7
Portugal	2.3
Finland	7.1
Sweden	7.0
United Kingdom	4.8

Source:
Eurostat

Pedigree Cattle

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimates she has made of the value of pedigree *(a)* Hereford, *(b)* Charolais and *(c)* Dexter cattle aged (i) under six months, (ii) over three years, (iii) over five years, (iv) over 10 years and (v) over 12 years. [49095]

Mr. Bradshaw: No such estimates have been made. However, to inform the development of the cattle compensation arrangements introduced on 1 February the Department has, for 14 months, been receiving cattle sales data from a wide range of sources across GB.

Compensation for pedigree cattle, which is calculated on a monthly basis, is the average price obtained (for same category animals) at reported sales over the preceding 6 months. To inform this process data received through 2005 has been analysed to identify the degree of variability within each of the 47 cattle categories now used to help determine compensation. This review, which will be repeated on annual basis, provides the Department with intelligence on the amount of supporting data needed (in each category) to support table valuations.

Sea Bass

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) when she will publish *(a)* the outcome of the consultation on measures to increase the number and size of bass available to commercial and recreational fishermen and *(b)* the Government's response to the consultation; and if she will make a statement; [51445]

(2) what assessment she has made of the likely impact of the requirement to increase the minimum size of bass landed off England and Wales. [51444]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra's Consultation on measures to increase the number and size of bass available to commercial and recreational fishermen closed on 8 February 2006. The partial Regulatory Impact Assessment issued as part of the Consultation set out our understanding of the costs and benefits of the proposed measures.

There have been a large number of responses from stakeholders to the consultation and there will now need to be a careful analysis of the responses and the information contained in them. Once this has been completed I will make an announcement on next steps.

The Welsh Assembly Government is conducting a consultation on similar measures for Welsh Territorial waters, which closes on 14 February 2006.

Sewage Treatment Plants

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what powers local authorities have to act in respect of nuisance smells from sewage treatment plants. [51455]

Mr. Bradshaw: Odour from the great majority of sewage treatment works can be dealt with under the statutory nuisance provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to check their areas periodically for existing and potential statutory nuisances, and to take reasonably practicable steps to investigate complaints made within their areas.

It is for the appropriate local authority to determine whether a smell amounts to a statutory nuisance. Factors to be taken into account include the character of the locality, the duration of the smell and the frequency of its occurrence.

Once satisfied that a statutory nuisance does or may occur, the local authority must serve an abatement notice requiring that the nuisance be ceased or abated within a specified time scale.

It is an offence to breach or fail to comply with an abatement notice, with a maximum fine on conviction of £20,000 for industrial, trade or business premises.

Defra is about to issue a Code of Practice on Odour Nuisance from Sewage Treatment Works to provide high level guidance on the handling and resolution of complaints.

A few sewage treatment works are controlled under the Integrated Pollution and Control regime monitored by the Environment Agency. Local authorities cannot take action against these plants to abate odour under the statutory nuisance regime unless my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, gives consent, to avoid 'double jeopardy'.

Single Farm Payments

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the minimum amount of single farm payment is. [50672]

Jim Knight: The minimum total area that can be claimed by a farmer under the single payment scheme is O.3ha. If this area was situated in the moorland region the minimum payment for 2005, based on current estimations of the regional average, would be less than one pound.

This calculation assumes that the applicant had no subsidy claims in the reference period of 2000–02, and therefore would only receive the area flat rate.

Sugar

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much sugar was imported into the UK in *(a)* 1977, *(b)* 1997 and *(c)* 2005. [50108]

Mr. Bradshaw: In 1977 the UK imported 1,870,000 tonnes of sugar, by 1997 this had dropped to 1,358,000 tonnes and this dropped further in 2003 to 1,218,000 tonnes. These figures include imports of white, beet and cane sugar whether refined or not. They do not include high sugar content products such as honey, syrups and confectionery. All figures quoted are to the nearest thousand tonnes.

Timber

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what legal advice her Department received regarding the exclusion of social criteria in legislation relating to illegal timber imports and exports. [50839]

Mr. Morley: I am not aware of any legislation related to the import and export of timber that specifically prohibits social considerations from being considered in such commercial activity. This question is closely related to a request made by WWF UK to see the legal advice on which the Government's timber procurement policy was based and I shall explain why that request was declined.

The European Treaty and European public procurement directives set principles and rules that govern the manner in which public contracting authorities specify their requirement, select potential bidders and award contracts. The UK Government's interpretation of these principles and rules has led it to conclude that it is not permissible for public sector contracting authorities to specify requirements that are not directly related to the subject matter of the contract in question and that criteria aimed at protecting or improving the economic and social well being of forest dependent people are generally not directly related to the subject matter of public sector contracts for works, goods and services.

The advice that the Department received on this matter was a combination of guidance published by the European Commission, guidance published by the Office of Government Commerce and communications between Government officials. The published guidance documents were: the Commission's Interpretative Communication on the possibilities of integrating social issues into public procurement under Community law-see http://simap.eu.int/EN/pub/src/welcome.htm and Chapter 9 of the "Joint Note on Environmental Issues in Purchasing"-published by The Office of Government Commerce and Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in October 2003. The Office of Government Commerce have very recently published a Note on Social Issues in Purchasing to further clarify the position-see http://www.ogc.gov.uk/index.asp?docid = 1004561

The Government will not provide the information requested because we consider the public interest is best served by not disclosing the internal legal advice held by DEFRA. Decisions by Government must be taken in a fully informed legal context, which includes assessing the perceived weakness of its position. It follows that the disclosure of internal communications between Government officials could prejudice the government's ability to defend its legal interests-both directly by unfairly exposing its legal position to challenge and indirectly by diminishing the reliance it can place on the advice having been fully considered and presented without fear or favour.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many times action has been taken to stop illegal timber imports into the UK in the last 12 months; and what plans she has to improve her Department's performance in this area. [50852]

Mr. Morley: The UK is the world's fourth largest importer of wood products. However, it is not possible for action to be taken specifically to stop illegal timber imports into the UK in the last 12 months, as timber is not currently identified as legal or illegal at ports of entry. UK Customs have made seizures of wood and wood products under separate CITES legislation but legality of their sourcing is not material.

Once the recently adopted EU Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Regulation comes into force it will enable member states to prohibit the entry into the EU of illegal timber products from countries that enter into Partnership Agreements with the European Union.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government are taking to extend the requirement to consult the Central Point of Expertise on Timber to more public bodies. [51059]

Mr. Morley: The Government have not set a requirement for any public body to consult the Central Point of Expertise on Timber (CPET). Central Government departments are required to seek to purchase legal and sustainable timber and are aware that CPET has a help line facility should they experience difficulty in obtaining such timber but they are free to choose not to seek help from CPET.

CPET is a free service that is available to all public sector bodies and their suppliers should they have need of it. The Government are raising awareness of the CPET facility at conferences and training workshops and through press articles and direct mailing. A number of public bodies outside of central Government have sought advice from CPET and we expect the numbers of enquiries to increase as word spreads.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if the Government will set a target for all Departments and other Government bodies to purchase only sustainable timber within five years. [51060]

Mr. Morley: The Environmental Audit Committee's Second Report of Session 2004–2005 on Sustainable Timber, paragraph number 91, concluded that it is

> "vital for DEFRA to set a clear timetable for implementing a requirement for all departments and other government bodies, local and national, to purchase only sustainable timber. In our view five years would be a realistic deadline."

I consider that it would be inappropriate for me to answer your question, which addresses exactly the same point made by the Committee, before the Government have formally responded to the Committee's Report.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions the Government have had with the Austrian Government on taking forward Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade; and if she will make a statement. [51065]

Mr. Morley: As part of the EU Presidency Troika we continue to be supportive of efforts to take forward the development of the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan and have been in regular contact with Austria.

Work is now focused on implementing the FLEGT regulation and exploring additional options. Following a stakeholder consultation on additional options held in Brussels in January, the European Commission is now considering all the options raised. We expect the delayed report on this to be published by early summer 2006.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects EU Ministers to discuss Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade and the EU Commission's report on relevant legislative options. [51066]

Mr. Morley: The next opportunity for EU Ministers to discuss Forest Law Enforcement Governance & Trade will be once the European Commission tables the Additional Options report later this year.

Following the adoption of the FLEGT Action Plan by Council Conclusions in October 2003, (which committed the EU to exploring options to tackle the trade in illegally logged timber additional to the proposed FLEGT regulation), the UK Government has been frustrated at the time it has taken the Commission to produce this additional report.

Officials attended a European stakeholder consultation meeting in Brussels on 31 January 2006. This was held by the European Commission and the UK's Chatham House (the Royal Institute of International Affairs). The European Commission will consider all the options and issues raised at the stakeholder consultation meeting and produce the delayed report on additional options by early summer 2006.

UN Environment Programme

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which Ministers represented the United Kingdom at the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) ninth special session of its governing council on 7th to 9th February in Dubai; what papers were circulated *(a)* by the United Kingdom delegation and *(b)* relevant to United Kingdom policies; and if she will place copies in the Library. [50232]

Mr. Morley: I led the UK delegation at the 9.SS of the UNEP GC/GMEF. He also attended the International Conference on Chemicals Management (3–6 February, Dubai). The Secretary of State attended the GMEF as a key note speaker on Energy and the Environment.

The UK did not circulate any documents at the meeting.

Working documents for the session, all of which are relevant to UK policy, can be found at:
http://www.unep.org/GC/GCSS-IX/workingdocs.asp

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representation the United Kingdom had at the United Nations Environment Programme's Seventh Global Civil Society (GCE) forum in Dubai on 5–6 February; what decisions were taken which affected United Kingdom policies; and if she will place in the Library a copy of the GCE statement. [50233]

Mr. Morley: The United Kingdom was represented at official level at the 7th GCE. No decisions were taken. The GCE statement will be placed in the Library.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Aid Distribution

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions his Department has had with non-governmental organisations, charities and civil society organisations on formulating policy on aid distribution. [51360]

Mr. Thomas: DFID officials and Ministers frequently have both formal and informal discussions with civil society organisations both in the UK and overseas on a wide variety of policy issues, including aid distribution. For example in the last year, NGOs have had input to the Commission for Africa report, the formulation of a new humanitarian policy and currently the preparation of DFID's new White Paper.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many staff in his Department are paid on a performance-related basis. [50491]

Mr. Thomas: Within DFID, pay and performance management for staff in the Senior Civil Service (SCS) is fully compliant with the framework set by the Cabinet Office.

All staff in grades below the SCS require a satisfactory performance rating to progress through the pay scales.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding is being made available by *(a)* the UK Government and *(b)* the EU to the new Government in the South of Sudan. [51848]

Hilary Benn: The UK Government are committed to a contribution of £23.5 million over three years to the World Bank Multi Donor Trust Fund for the South (conditional on fund effectiveness). We have established a Basic Services Fund for the sponsorship of non-governmental organisations working in South Sudan on the delivery of basic health, education and water and sanitation. We are also assisting the Government of South Sudan with the setting up of basic institutional structures; the establishment of a functioning police force, and the development of basic legal systems. In addition, the UK Government are also providing early and significant contributions to the UN 2006 Work Plan for all of Sudan, from which the UN Humanitarian Coordinator has allocated some US$40 million for the South.

The European Commission Country Strategy for Sudan (2005–07) allocates a total of €108 million, with the central focus on Food Security and Education. Other areas of focus include assistance with demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration of soldiers; human rights; good governance, rule of law, direct support to the peace process and peace building initiatives, and the strengthening of civil society and health. The Strategy is national in scope and does not allocate specific activities or funds for South Sudan.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what financial help his Department plans to make available to the representative assembly to be created in Juba, South Sudan; and what financial help his Department has provided to *(a)* the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and *(b)* non-SPLM parties. [51849]

Hilary Benn: The UK Government are focusing directly on assisting the Government of South Sudan with the formation of basic institutional structures. We are also a significant contributor to the World Bank Multi Donor Trust Fund for the South (£23.5 million over three years) which includes government capacity building as one of its key objectives. We do not, for the time being, have plans to directly support the representative assembly to be created in Juba, South Sudan. The UK Government provide assistance to the Government of South Sudan as a single entity and does not differentiate between different political parties.

UN Fund for Women

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funds the UK has contributed to the UN Fund for Women in each year since 1997. [51408]

Mr. Thomas: The Department for International Development is the largest donor to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). Total DFID funding to UNIFEM since 1997 is as follows:

	Total funding (£000)
1997–98	1,150
1998–99	150
1999–2000	2,000
2000–01	2,122
2001–02	4,900
2002–03	1,950
2003–04	4,695
2004–05	4,999

Note:
Overall figures are not yet available for 2005–06. From 2003–04 onwards, the above figures include £3 million per annum in support of UNIFEM's core budget.

TRANSPORT

A27

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on enquiries and consultation exercises relating to improvements on the A27 around Worthing in each of the last 12 years. [51674]

Dr. Ladyman: A number of studies relating to transport in the South East have included consideration of improvements to the A27 around Worthing but the costs cannot be disaggregated in the way requested.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the purpose has been of each of the enquiries and consultation exercises relating to improvements on the A27 around Worthing in each of the last 12 years. [51675]

Dr. Ladyman: Various enquiries and consultations have addressed transport needs in the South East as well as seeking solutions to traffic congestion both on the A27 and more generally in the town of Worthing. They have included assessment of the contribution which local transport measures can make to the reduction of congestion, as well as road improvements.

Commercial Flights (Hornsey and Wood Green)

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many commercial flights have overflown Hornsey and Wood Green constituency in each of the past five years; and if he will make a statement. [51923]

Ms Buck: This information is not held by my Department. If the hon. Member writes to the Chief Executive of National Air Traffic Services Ltd., they will provide the information requested.

Driving (Bio-optical Spectacles)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the use of bio-optical spectacles to facilitate driving for people with imperfect eyesight; and if he will make a statement. [51651]

Dr. Ladyman: The minimum standards of medical fitness to drive are laid down in the second EC directive on driving licences (Directive 91/439/EEC).

The use of bioptic devices has been considered by a Medical Expert Working Group established by the EC Driving Licence Committee to consider conditions affecting vision and their impact on driving. The Working Group acknowledged that bioptic devices might help individual drivers but recognised that, to do so, visual acuity standards would have to be lowered and that this might be at the expense of an adequate field of vision. The general opinion of the Working Group expert members is that on European roads, lowering the acuity standard in this way would be difficult to justify. Further research evidence and technological development of the bioptic devices will be needed.

Greater Manchester (Smartcards)

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions his Department has had with Greater Manchester bus, rail and tram operators and the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive on the introduction of smartcard technology for pre-travel payment on public transport in the county. [51142]

Dr. Ladyman: There was correspondence in December 2003 between the Department and Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority about the planned introduction of smartcards in Greater Manchester. This correspondence related to the ITSO specification for an interoperable ticketing interface for smartcards in travel.

Officials have had informal discussions with Greater Manchester PTE on a number of occasions about the proposed Readycard smartcard scheme, also in the context of the ITSO standard. Officials also attended a GMPTE ITSO workshop last year.

Light Rail/Tram Schemes

Mark Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his plans are for the future funding of light rail and tram schemes; and if he will make a statement. [52487]

Derek Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 9 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 511W.

M60

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made in *(a)* ascertaining responsibility for and *(b)* rectifying the flooding problem on the M60 between Denton and Hollinwood, Oldham; and whether enforcement action will be taken to ensure its rectification without the requirement for further public funding. [51742]

Dr. Ladyman: There is no requirement to ascertain responsibility nor seek enforcement against third parties as the need for modification of the carriageway surface to alleviate spray (flooding) arose from reasons other than negligent performance by the scheme contractors.

An initial works pilot to re-profile a section of the affected carriageway to improve surface drainage has now been planned for spring 2006, with the remainder of the work likely to be undertaken in 2007.

Mobile Speed Cameras

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether notice is required to be given of the siting of a mobile speed camera. [52079]

Dr. Ladyman: Safety Camera Partnerships within the National Safety Camera Programme are asked to inform the public about the location of camera sites and the type of camera used. The partnerships are not required to give notice of when enforcement will take place at a camera site but all sites must be signed and visible in accordance with the Handbook of Rules and Guidance for the National Safety Camera Programme for England and Wales.

The police may also enforce speed limits using mobile enforcement equipment at any location without giving prior notification.

Network Rail

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what arrangements have been made for the Government to guarantee Network Rail's debt; [40912]

(2) what ceiling the Government has placed on its guarantees of Network Rail's debts. [40922]

Derek Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to the statements made by the Secretary of State and parliamentary minutes laid on 27 June 2002, *Official Report*, columns 971–989. 4 February 2004 and 15 September 2004 *Official Report*, column 152WS.

The credit support arrangements described in these minutes were initially provided by the Strategic Rail Authority, but were transferred to the Secretary of State for Transport on 26 June 2005 by a transfer scheme made under powers in the Railways Act 2005.

Night Flights

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will publish the results of the Government's night flights consultation. [51298]

Ms Buck: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 17 January 2006, given to the hon. Member for Windsor (Adam Afriyie), *Official Report*, column 1190W.

Red Routes

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions his Department has had with *(a)* metropolitan local authorities and *(b)* passenger transport executives on the introduction of red route measures to principal transport corridors in cities and conurbations. [51744]

Ms Buck: The only PTE to develop and implement proposals for red routes is Centro, in the West Midlands. Centro are currently implementing a package of measures in Birmingham, Solihull, Wolverhampton and Sandwell as part of a major scheme bid that was given full approval in 2004 by the Department at a cost of £28 million. This scheme is the first of five packages proposed to introduce a total of 130 km of red routes, bus relocations, side road entry treatments, new signs and junction improvements.

The traffic signs required to implement a red route scheme are not prescribed and as such need special authorisation by the Secretary of State. It is not unusual for local authorities contemplating the use of non prescribed signs to contact the Department, but we do not keep records of informal inquiries.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many speed cameras have been vandalised in each police authority in each of the last five years. [51876]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not hold this information nor are partnerships required to provide information about vandalism at speed camera sites to the Department. This information may be available directly from partnerships.

Vandalism

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of his Department's buildings in the last 12 months. [49497]

Ms Buck: There were five recorded acts of vandalism perpetrated inside the Department for Transport during the calendar year 2005. There were three at the Driving Standards Agency regional premises and two at the Driving Vehicle Licensing Agency premises. These incidents included damage to internal doors, cabinets, the discharging of a fire extinguisher, damage to a vending machine and an interview room counter screen.

There were 55 acts of vandalism perpetrated outside the Department for Transport (at regional agency premises) during the calendar year 2005. These incidents

included damaged windows, damage occurring during break-ins, and a few instances of minor arson and damage to vehicles and heating vents.

In addition there have been other minor acts of vandalism known to have occurred outside of agency regional premises for which full details are not available.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Academies

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the impact of academies upon the academic performance of children from the lowest socio-economic background. [47760]

Jacqui Smith: Academies are established in some of the most deprived and disadvantaged communities in our country, and admit a high proportion of children from the most disadvantaged socio-economic background. The majority of academies have a significantly higher proportion of children with eligibility for free school meals (FSM) relative to both local authority and national averages. Indeed the average FSM eligibility at academies is 34 per cent., compared to a national average of 14 per cent.

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) are undertaking a full independent evaluation of the academies programme over five years and a comprehensive assessment of the impact of academies upon academic performance will form a vital part of this evaluation.

Improvements in GCSE results are already in evidence, despite many pupils only having attended their academy for a few terms. Of the 14 academies open at the time of the last round of GCSE examinations, all but two showed an increase in the proportion of students achieving five grades A* to C relative to their predecessor schools, and the average increase between 2004 and 2005 in the number of students gaining five grades A* to C across all academies was 7.8 percentage points; some three times the national average.

Several academies have shown remarkable improvements in their GCSE results since opening. The City Academy in Bristol, for example, has shown an increase of 25 percentage points in the number of pupils achieving five grades A* to C in just two years. Four other academies have shown increases of greater than 20 percentage points since opening.

After-school Activities

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she has taken to encourage young people in Swindon to get involved in *(a)* after-school activities and *(b)* sports programmes. [50613]

Maria Eagle: We have set out a core offer of extended services and activities that we want all children to be able to access through schools by 2010. This includes a varied menu of study support activities, including sport—at least two hours a week beyond the school day for those who want it. It is for individual local authorities (LAs) and schools to determine what provision best meets the needs of the young people in their area.

Funding for study support is available to all schools and LAs through their base budgets, and also via the School Development Grant which, for Swindon, amounts to £1,366,981 in 2005–06. Funding (approximately £100,000 pa) is also provided for the well established "Playing for Success" Centre at Swindon Town FC, which benefits more than 350 pupils each year.

We have also committed considerable additional funding to support schools in setting up and embedding extended services and activities. A total of £2,050,321 has been allocated to Swindon over three years from 2005–06.

Bicton Church of England School

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* budget for and *(b)* expenditure on the building of the new Bicton Church of England School in Bicton was. [50089]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested for Bicton Church of England School for the 2004–05 financial year is:

(a) Total planned budget share (including any grants devolved to the school) was £255,875.

(b) Total gross expenditure (including any capital expenditure from revenue) was £271,647.

Notes:

1. Data are drawn from Shropshire local authority's 2004–05 Section 52 Budget and Outturn Statements as at 8 February 2006.

2. The 2004–05 budget information is the combination of the school's total budget share plus any School Standards Grant, Devolved Standards Fund and Excellence in Cities Grant allocated to the school (Threshold and Performance Pay Grant is included in 2005–06).

3. School expenditure does not include any income.

4. In 2004–05 the total resources available to Bicton Church of England School was £296,262. This is the sum of the following:

Balance brought forward

Delegated funds

SEN and minority ethnic pupils

Standards fund residue

Other Government grants

Income generated by schools

5. Shropshire local authority also reported a surplus total revenue balance of just under £25,000 was held by Bicton Church of England School at the end of the 2004–05 financial year.

Bullying

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what training teachers receive to deal with bullying in schools; and how much funding her Department has allocated for training teachers to deal with bullying in schools in *(a)* West Lancashire and *(b)* England in the last five years. [51116]

Jacqui Smith: Training has been provided in each Government Office region through the Make The Difference conferences and through training events run by the Anti-Bullying Alliance and direct work by the Alliance with individual schools. Training is also being provided through dissemination events linked to forthcoming advice on countering prejudice driven bullying.

Through the national strategies the Department makes high-quality staff training materials on managing behaviour, including bullying, available to all schools. In addition each local authority is also supported by at least one expert behaviour and attendance consultant in each local authority.

Through the National Programme for Specialist Leaders of Behaviour and Attendance (NPSL-BA), the Department has developed a programme for training specialist staff who have leadership roles in relation to behaviour and attendance, including anti-bullying.

In addition our resources such as the Anti-Bullying Charter and 'Don't Suffer in Silence' offer further support and advice to teachers in this area.

As anti-bullying training funding is not disaggregated or devolved directly, it is not possible to identify national funds or funds for West Lancashire.

Child Care Provision

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many child care places *(a)* for under fives and *(b)* in total there were in each year since 1980, broken down by type. [50798]

Beverley Hughes: This information was not collected for the period prior to 1989–90.

Details of the number of child care places available in England for each year between 1990 and 2005 are given in the table.

(a) Figures from Day Care Facilities Surveys (DCFS), 1990–97

	Total number of child care places (a + b + c)	*Childminders (a)*	*Full Daycare (b)*	*Out of School/ Holiday Clubs (c)*	*Sessional care (d)*
1989–90	303,100	205,600	97,500	No figures	416,400
1990–91	339,400	233,300	106,100	No figures	428,400
1991–92	390,900	254,300	116,800	19,800	414,500
1992–93	469,533	300,700	133,800	35,033	396,900
1993–94	549,300	357,500	147,600	44,200	411,300
1994–95	614,000	373,600	161,500	78,900	410,600
1995–96	646,467	376,200	178,300	91,967	397,700
1996–97	654,900	365,200	193,800	95,900	383,700

(b) Using data from

i. 1997–2003: "Ofsted registered" equivalent statistics generated by DfES from local authority returns; and,

ii. 2003-present: Ofsted registrations

	Total child care places (a + b + c)	*Childminders (a)*	*Full Daycare (b)*	*Out of School/ Holiday Clubs (c)*	*Sessional care (d)*
1996–97	637,730	309,973	283,975	43,782	—
1997–98	643,736	309,918	283,823	48,995	—
1998–99	688,412	309,423	299,078	79,911	—
1999–00	746,719	304,926	316,021	125,772	—
2000–01	821,537	300,263	337,004	184,270	—
2001–02	892,726	307,485	358,371	226,870	—
2002–03	967,821	300,883	381,550	285,388	280,779
2003–04	1,102,686	319,689	456,298	326,699	274,135
2004–05	1,175,275	316,089	517,975	341,211	249,647

We do not have a breakdown of age groups for childminder, out of school or sessional places. The overwhelming majority of Full Daycare places are for children under the age of 5.

Child Employment

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment she has made of the recommendations of the Better Regulation Task Force on employment law relating to children; and if she will make a statement; [51662]

(2) what plans she has to implement the recommendations of the Better Regulation Task Force on employment law relating to children; [51663]

(3) what discussions she has held with the Department for Trade and Industry on *(a)* regulations for the time at which children can start work in the morning and *(b)* the impact of earlier school day starts; [51664]

(4) if she will seek to amend legislation to enable children to start work at 6.30 a.m. in response to the earlier start of the school day in some areas. [51670]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* The Government believe that suitable work opportunities, based on individual choice, can be beneficial for young people. Nevertheless, children's entitlement to education is paramount. The existing limits on children's working hours are framed to ensure that neither their readiness to learn when they arrive at school, nor their capacity to do school homework, nor their opportunity for necessary rest and leisure, is

compromised by the demands of employment. There are no plans to change this, and no discussions with DTI on the issue have been held.

Guidance has been given to local authorities that Directors of Children's Services should have functions relating to child employment as part of their remit, as recommended by the Task Force. No final decisions have been taken on whether and how the Task Force's other specific proposals will be implemented. They will only be implemented to the extent that they can demonstrate a clear contribution to the key outcomes which we want to see for all children, described in our Green Paper "Every Child Matters".

Class Sizes

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average class size is in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools in (i) England, (ii) the Tees Valley and (iii) Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland. [49436]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is given in the following table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1]: average class size[2,3]—as at January 2005

	Primary			Secondary		
	Number of classes	*Number of pupils in classes*	*Average class size*	*Number of classes*	*Number of pupils in classes*	*Average class size*
England	146,860	3,851,810	26.2	143,500	3,108,020	21.7
Tees Valley[4]	2,270	56,680	25.0	1,820	40,330	22.2
Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland	330	7,640	23.4	160	3,600	23.1

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] One teacher classes.
[3] Classes as taught during one selected period on the day of the census in January.
[4] Includes Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton-on-Tees and Darlington local authorities.

Note:
Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
Annual Schools Census

Connexions

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what evidence she has received of fraudulent use being made of the Connexions Card. [50036]

Maria Eagle: The Department has no evidence of Connexions Card holders attempting to claim rewards and discounts available under the scheme fraudulently. However, there is evidence of 17 young people attempting to use the Connexions Card to obtain age related services they were not entitled to. These incidences took place between 2004 and 2006 and were brought to our attention through the action of the police and licensees.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the Connexions Agency will assist 16-year-olds to apply for benefits to which they are entitled. [50123]

Maria Eagle: The role of Connexions includes ensuring that young people up to the age of 19 years are aware of and able to obtain the benefits to which they are entitled.

The most recent guidance to Connexions services states:

> "The Connexions Service is required to provide young people with general information about Young Persons Bridging Allowance, Jobseekers Allowance, extended Child Benefit and other social security benefits. This includes giving details about how these allowances/benefits can be claimed and the rights and responsibilities associated with them.
>
> Connexions Services must have agreed arrangements in place to register young people for work or learning, and be able to confirm a young person's registration with Jobcentre Plus where required."

Curriculum Online

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the percentage of teachers using Curriculum Online; and what the trends of such usage have been since its introduction. [50964]

Phil Hope: Curriculum Online is a successful way of helping teachers to find appropriate resources to meet the educational needs of individual learners. In 2002, the DfES commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and Bristol university to conduct a four year evaluation of Curriculum Online to examine educational impacts, operational effectiveness and impact on the suppliers of educational digital materials.

The evaluation of educational impacts is being conducted by NatCen and comprises a series of three surveys of teachers (winter 2002, autumn 2004 and the final report in March 2006) and two qualitative studies (the first was published in autumn 2004 and the second in winter 2005). The findings of the qualitative studies are that almost three fifths (58 per cent.) of school respondents in primary schools and 78 per cent. in secondary schools said that they used the Curriculum Online website as a source of information when selecting software.

The latest statistics (September 2005) show that the website attracts around 100 thousand users per month, these figures represent a 300 per cent. increase over September 2004.

Departmental Catering Budget

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her Department's policy is on the procurement of fair trade produce for consumption on its premises. [49926]

Maria Eagle: The Department encourages the sale of FairTrade and ethical products through our restaurant services that are provided by an external partner and has a range of products available for purchase consisting of coffee, tea, chocolate bars and fruit juices.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the savings made in the last two financial years as a consequence of *(a)* streamlined data collection and *(b)* reduced reporting and monitoring requirements for schools. [50122]

Jacqui Smith: No quantitative assessment has been made, partly because this would itself place significant burdens on schools. Informal feedback suggests that new data collection arrangements are working effectively, with schools and authorities reporting that processes are more efficient and less resource-intensive, while the data that is made available to them is of greater help for their own management. Six pre-existing surveys have been incorporated into the Schools Census, lowering the overall burdens of collecting from schools.

The Implementation Review Unit (IRU) is an independent panel of serving senior school practitioners which reviews the implementation of existing and new policy initiatives. The IRU has encouraged the Department to introduce a system of impact assessment for all initiatives that have workload implications in schools, including data collection and reporting and monitoring requirements. The 2004–05 IRU annual report welcomed the reduction in the number of new initiatives in 2005, down by 56 per cent. on 2004.

Education Finance

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how Government grants for education will be affected by the White Paper proposals; [50456]

(2) what changes are expected under the White Paper proposals with respect to councils' allocated education budget; and what assessment she has made of the possible effects on levels of council tax. [50457]

Jacqui Smith: One of the main changes arising from the White Paper will be a greater emphasis on Personalised Learning, with its stronger focus on English and mathematics, and on those children who have a particular gift or talent. We see this greater focus as being key to driving up standards and to tackling the persistent achievement gaps between social and ethnic groups.

As I stated in the Schools Funding announcement on 7 December 2005, funds within the new Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) have been specifically earmarked for Personalised Learning. Primary schools will receive an additional £230 million by 2007–08, while £335 million will be available for secondary schools to deliver personalised learning for 11 to 14-year-olds.

Those schools with the highest number of children who have fallen behind in English and maths will receive a further targeted £60 million grant in each of 2006–07 and 2007–08, shared equally across the primary and secondary sectors, to provide more effective one-to-one and small group tuition.

In making arrangements for the DSG and its distribution, we have allowed for the White Paper policies of more independent schools entering the maintained sector, and for more schools becoming academies. We do not otherwise expect that the White Paper will affect the Schools Budgets of authorities.

In so far as White Paper policies cause increased costs to affect the LEA Budgets of authorities, we will provide extra funding under the New Burdens rules. We do not therefore expect there to be an impact on council tax.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what factors determined the funding allocation for Hertfordshire Local Education Authority's dedicated schools grant per pupil for 2006–07. [50776]

Jacqui Smith: I refer the hon. Member to my statement of 7 December, which set out the factors used to determine the allocations of Dedicated Schools Grant for all authorities. That statement and more detailed information may be found on the Teachernet website at:

www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/schoolfunding/2006-07_funding_arrangements/

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her Department's estimate is of the total cost to public funds of putting a child through state schooling from the age of 5 to 16 years. [51007]

Jacqui Smith: The estimated average cost of educating a pupil from the age of 5 to 16 years is £45,000.

Notes:

1. The figure quoted is an estimate and has been rounded to the nearest £5,000.

2. The cost of educating from age 5 to 16 has been calculated as follows. The per pupil funding figure for 5–10 year-olds in England in 2005–06 is multiplied by 6 (for the 6 years of funding a child would receive between the age of 5 and 10) and the per pupil figure for 11–15 year olds is multiplied by 5. The two figures are then added.

3. Figures in 2005–06 prices.

4. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to pupils aged 5–15 and exclude Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) and grants not allocated at LEA level.

5. The pupil numbers used to convert £ million figures to £ per pupil are those underlying the EFS settlement calculations.

Education Funding

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what extra funds are available for schools with outstanding results. [50169]

Jacqui Smith: We do not provide additional funding to schools for the achievement of outstanding results, but we are actively harnessing the strengths of our most effective schools for the benefit of the system as a whole. Where schools are playing a wider role in support of the education system we make funding available to support that commitment. We have offered the opportunity for specialist schools that meet performance criteria at specialist re-designation, to take on a leading role. In 2005, high performing schools had the opportunity to

take on a second specialism, a vocational second specialism, training school status, or participate in a raising achievement programme. Schools receive a minimum of £60,000 per annum to work in partnership with other schools to raise standards and improve pupil outcomes across the partnership.

At primary level around 1,800 of our most successful Head teachers are working as Primary Strategy Consultant Leaders (PSCLs) to help the leadership teams in underperforming schools in their local authority to develop and improve teaching and learning across their schools. Each PSCL receives £8,000 to cover the time spent out of their school. We have also funded Primary National Strategy Learning Networks which enable groups of primary schools to work together to raise standards in English and mathematics. Lead schools in the networks, which are usually successful or high performing schools, receive £17,000 in total to support the network activity.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the allocation of funding for schools in rural areas in 2006–07. [50219]

Jacqui Smith: The formula used to calculate Schools Formula Spending Share for 2005–06 and previous years took account of the extra spending needed by sparsely populated rural authorities, mainly to keep larger numbers of small primary schools open; the additional costs for secondary schools are mainly from home to school transport, funding for which was delivered through the LEA FSS for 2005–06, and which continues to be part of the local government finance settlement. Since the formula for Dedicated Schools Grant starts from local authorities' spending on schools for 2005–06, which in two thirds of cases was above Schools FSS, so that will also take account of the extra spending needed by rural authorities. In distributing their Schools Budget, most local authority formulae take account of the need to provide extra funding for smaller schools, to allow them to meet the extra costs they face, that a purely pupil led formula would not deliver.

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills why funding for colleges with students taking more than four AS levels is being reduced in the 2006/07 funding allocation. [51095]

Bill Rammell: The funding colleges receive for students taking larger programmes of study is reduced on the principle that colleges derive economies of scale as pupils take more intensive programmes, as costs do not rise in proportion to the size of the programme. It will continue to be the case that no funding is paid for parts of programmes larger than the equivalent of 6 AS/A2 levels. The current arrangements allow for the equivalent of 5AS/A2 levels to be fully funded with the sixth being funded at half the standard rate.

On 21 October as part of the announcements of our funding strategy for post 16 education and skills in 2006/07 and 2007/08 we set out our plans to revise the maximum qualification funding for both school sixth forms and FE colleges. The revised arrangement for colleges will allow full funding for the equivalent of 4.25 AS/A2 levels with the next 1.75 AS/A2 levels being funded at two thirds the standard rate. The revised maximum level of funding has been set to reflect the aim to encourage breadth at AS with more specialisation at A2.

The maximum qualification funding does not include the additional per pupil funding available for key skills, tuition support and enrichment activities. It is possible to make use of this funding to fund courses of enrichment activities rather than seek funding for such courses as separate qualifications. We need to ensure an equitable share of resources between schools and across a range of pupils with different needs. The LSC's funding system recognises both the additional costs of larger programmes while maintaining a proper level of funding for those pupils unable to study a larger number of AS/A2 levels.

Education Procurement Centre of Excellence

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the *(a)* changes in performance and *(b)* savings made as a consequence of the establishment of the Education Procurement Centre of Excellence. [50127]

Bill Rammell: Since the Department for Education and Skills established the Centre for Procurement Performance (CPP) in April 2005, the team has been working pro-actively with the schools sector, children services, Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) to embed the principles of the Gershon Review and secure commitment from the front line. Working with and through key stakeholders in these sectors, CPP has engaged with procurement experts in the sectors, working in partnership on projects and pilots that will help deliver efficiency gains.

This has resulted in nine projects currently underway and a further 14 projects due to commence shortly. At this stage it is too early to assess changes in procurement performance as a result.

The validated procurement efficiency gains to date have amounted to £87 million.

Education Professionals

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she has taken to enable frontline professionals in *(a)* schools, *(b)* colleges and *(c)* higher education institutions to use their time more productively; and what assessment she has made of the efficiency gains made as a consequence. [50113]

Jacqui Smith: My Department has developed a wide range of initiatives to enable frontline professionals to use their time more productively. These focus on greater use of ICT; reducing bureaucracy; and workforce reorganisation and training.

We are promoting the use of ICT in schools to enable easier and quicker assessment of students' progress and simpler, more timely, and more personalised remedial action to be taken. It will also enable easier and quicker access to online resources, make lesson planning easier and save time for teachers; and lead to better quality lessons and an enriched classroom environment which improve standards for our children.

We have better embedded ICT in the further education sector through the development of a self assessment tool for institutions, better provision of on-line e-learning materials and through development of e-learning training provision for leaders.

To minimise any unnecessary bureaucracy burdens on frontline staff and thereby help them to function more productively we have established gateway groups in each sector to look at the level of bureaucracy being imposed on the frontline and to challenge existing ways of working with the frontline and between agencies. In, for example, the Higher Education sector we have established the Higher Education Regulation Review Group as an independent group of practitioners working in the HE sector and asked them to help identify new and additional ways to reduce existing burdens, as well as reviewing all new Government policies to try and ensure they do not create unnecessary bureaucracy.

The workforce reforms we have introduced have also helped professionals to make better use of their time. In January 2003, the Government, employers and majority of the school workforce unions signed a National Agreement on Raising Standards and Tackling Workload that led to a series of changes to teachers' contracts. Teachers have been freed to teach and a wide range of support staff have been deployed to work with teachers in improving standards of teaching and learning.

Each of these initiatives contributes to our Gershon target of realising £4.3 billion efficiency gains by 2007–08. Productive time savings are expected to be the biggest slice of those gains.

My Department reported progress towards our Gershon Review target in the Department's Autumn Performance Report. It will report further progress in the Departmental Annual Report which we expect to publish in April.

Efficiency Gains

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the of the efficiency gains that have been achieved in the last two years as a consequence of improvements in school-level financial management. [50125]

Jacqui Smith: Because of the relatively recent inception of policies to assist schools in their financial management, it is too early to evaluate of their success, especially when success is measured in terms of improved pupil attainment. Policies that have been launched include: the Financial Benchmarking Website (November 2003), the Financial Management Standard and Toolkit (May 2004) and focussed financial management training for finance officers, head teachers and bursars/school business managers in schools and local authorities.

Our measurement techniques have been designed to ensure that we can monitor and report efficiency gains throughout the Gershon review period, which starts in the current financial year, 2005–06. Because of the timing of our data collections from schools we shall be able to report the first of these measures towards the end of the current calendar year.

We do, however, collect very detailed financial benchmarking website user statistics, so we are able to track accurately how many schools and local authorities are using the tools, which provides an indication of the gains we may expect to see in subsequent years. Case study information is also gathered, providing information about the kind of gains schools make through using the website. An example of such a gain was a school which reported gains of £6,000 a year on water rates as a result of action taken after using the benchmarking website.

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what savings have been obtained in *(a)* schools, *(b)* colleges and *(c)* higher education institutions in the last two financial years as a consequence of (i) investment in information communication technology, (ii) reducing administrative burdens and (iii) work force reform. [50126]

Phil Hope: My Department does not keep detailed management information on spending decisions by individual schools, colleges and higher education institutions. However, we have put in place methods to measure efficiency gains accruing through a range of specific initiatives which contribute to our Gershon efficiency target. These are set out in our Efficiency Technical Note. In most cases the gains are recyclable at the frontline into other activities rather than being clawed back by the Department.

My Department reports progress towards our efficiency target through existing departmental reporting processes. We reported progress towards our target in the Department's autumn performance report and will report further progress in the departmental annual report which we expect to publish in April.

Family and Friends Placements

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what strategies her Department is pursuing to assist local authorities further to develop and support family and friends placements for care of children; and if she will make a statement. [50336]

Maria Eagle: We are committed to helping local authorities to improve the use and support of family and friends carers, both for children who are looked after by local authorities and those who remain the legal responsibility of their families.

Information has already been included on the Every Child Matters website about the legal arrangements for caring for a child by family and friends, which cover issues such as parental responsibility, the availability of universal services and benefits, together with details of support that may be provided by local authorities. Practitioners may find this useful when providing advice to carers and potential carers.

Work is being taken forward to ensure that children who cannot live with their birth parents are instead enabled to live in the most appropriate alternative placement for them.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she next plans to review the operation of the Common Assessment Framework with regard to children in family and friends placements. [50337]

Maria Eagle: The Common Assessment Framework aims to help identify children's additional needs at an early stage, taking a holistic view of their circumstances, including a specific focus on the involvement of parents or carers. When needs have been identified, the Framework will help relevant practitioners to communicate and agree timely and co-ordinated support.

Practitioners will be able to use the Framework to assess the additional needs of children who are cared for by family or friends, where that would add value. However in many cases such children will already have assessments, and there is no intention to duplicate processes.

The Framework is currently being reviewed through trials in a number of local areas across England, with a view to national implementation over 2006–08. The University of East Anglia, on behalf of my Department, is currently evaluating the trials to inform revisions to the relevant forms, processes, guidance and training materials, which the Government intends to issue by April 2006. The Government's intention is that the Framework will continue to include a specific focus on assessing a child's needs for parenting and care, and that it will be relevant for use with children in families and friends placements where appropriate.

Framework Contracts

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the effects on costs have been in the last two financial years as a consequence of nationally-brokered framework contracts for the acquisition of *(a)* computers and *(b)* interactive whiteboards for schools. [50970]

Phil Hope: The British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta) is making significant progress in delivering improved value for money for schools. The approach of national frameworks linked to regional aggregation of demands, coupled with local choice, provides a range of benefits for schools which otherwise would not be realised. The overall effect has been to reduce costs significantly. The total saving from these initiatives so far is £75.8 million.

Savings achieved through the laptop framework agreement are £17.6 million in 2003–04; £9 million in 2004–05; and £4.5 million from April 2005 to December 2005. Savings achieved through the interactive whiteboard framework agreement are £17 million in 2004–05; and £6.6 million from April 2005 to December 2005.

Significant progress is being made on operating and office productivity software used on computers. Becta negotiated a memorandum of understanding with Microsoft. The potential savings for schools are £46 million over three years and equates to typical savings for schools of between 20 per cent. and 37 per cent. dependent upon the mix of software used. Savings achieved so far are £2.6 million from January 2004 to March 2004; £10.6 million in 2004–05; and £7.9 million from April 2005 to December 2005.

Becta is developing a more comprehensive range of framework agreements in order to obtain best value for money on behalf of our schools.

Further Education

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will extend fee remission for further education courses to pensioners in receipt of pensions credit. [50673]

Bill Rammell: We are committed to ensuring further education (FE) serves the needs of the whole community and those learners, and their dependants, receiving a means tested benefit, and unemployed people on Jobseekers Allowance will continue to benefit from free tuition on publicly funded courses. Older learners receiving the Pension (Guarantee) Credit are already eligible for free learning on publicly funded FE courses. The Learning and Skills Council policies on funding free learning (fee remission) are based on the principle that those on low incomes should not have to contribute to the tuition costs of their learning. Learners of any age will continue to have access to literacy, numeracy and English language courses free of charge, as well as free tuition to undertake a first full level 2 qualification.

GCSE Results

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what proportion of pupils achieved five GCSEs grade A* to C including mathematics and English in *(a)* community schools with a specialism, *(b)* foundation schools with a specialism, *(c)* voluntary controlled schools with a specialism and *(d)* voluntary aided schools with a specialism in 2004–05; [50024]

(2) To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many secondary schools with a specialism are *(a)* community schools, *(b)* foundation schools, *(c)* voluntary controlled schools and *(d)* voluntary aided schools; [50025]

(3) how many secondary *(a)* foundation schools and *(b)* voluntary aided schools have sixth forms; and what proportion of pupils gained (i) five GCSEs grades A* to C and (ii) five GCSEs grades A* to C including English and mathematics in each category of school in the last year for which figures are available; [50026]

(4) how many specialist secondary schools *(a)* with and *(b)* without sixth forms are (i) community schools, (ii) voluntary aided schools, (iii) voluntary controlled schools and (iv) foundation schools; and what proportion of pupils gained (A) five GCSEs A*-C and (B) five GCSEs A*-C including English and mathematics in each category of specialist secondary school in the last year for which figures are available. [50027]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is outlined in the following table.

2005 GCSE and equivalent results for 15-year-old pupils by school type, specialist status and sixth form status

School type/specialist	Sixth form	Number of schools	Percentage of 15-year-old pupils achieving: 5+ A*-C	5+ A*-C including English and maths
Community				
Specialist	with sixth form	652	56.9	44.6
	without sixth form	533	54.0	39.7
	Total	1,185	55.7	42.6
Non-specialist	with sixth form	315	47.4	35.8
	without sixth form	488	42.1	29.7
	Total	803	44.4	32.4
Total	with sixth form	967	54.1	42.0
	without sixth form	1,021	48.9	35.5
	Total	1,988	51.7	39.0
Voluntary aided				
Specialist	with sixth form	216	70.4	57.9
	without sixth form	89	62.5	48.5
	Total	305	68.2	55.4
Non-specialist	with sixth form	120	61.5	49.7
	without sixth form	107	50.4	37.5
	Total	227	57.3	45.1
Total	with sixth form	336	67.4	55.1
	without sixth form	196	56.9	43.4
	Total	532	64.1	51.5
Voluntary controlled				
Specialist	with sixth form	54	64.7	54.0
	without sixth form	8	57.8	49.2
	Total	62	64.0	53.5
Non-specialist	with sixth form	22	65.7	58.2
	without sixth form	11	45.8	31.4
	Total	33	60.3	50.9
Total	with sixth form	76	65.0	55.1
	without sixth form	19	51.6	40.0
	Total	95	62.9	52.8
Foundation				
Specialist	with sixth form	305	66.0	54.5
	without sixth form	75	57.6	43.3
	Total	380	64.5	52.5
Non-specialist	with sixth form	80	54.8	42.7
	without sixth form	42	47.7	37.7
	Total	122	52.6	41.2
Total	with sixth form	385	63.8	52.2
	without sixth form	117	54.4	41.5
	Total	502	61.8	49.9

GNVQs

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many vacancies there were on GNVQ courses in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England in each year between 1997 and 2005. [50144]

Phil Hope: The figures requested are not collected centrally.

Grammar Schools

Mr. Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many grammar schools have a specialism; and what proportion of pupils achieved five GCSEs A*-C including mathematics and English in grammar schools with a specialism in the last year for which figures are available. [50045]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is outlined in the table.

2005 GCSE and equivalent results for 15-yea- old pupils in grammar schools: results broken down by specialist status as at September 2004.

Specialist	Number of schools	Percentage of 15-year-old pupils achieving: 5+ A*-C	5+ A*-C including English and Maths
Specialist	120	97.9	96.7
Non-specialist	44	97.7	96.2
Total	164	97.9	96.5

Head Teachers

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment her Department has made of the potential impact of the introduction of the extended schools scheme on head teachers' work-life balance. [49310]

Jacqui Smith: By 2010 we expect all schools to be providing access to a core offer of extended services, including child care from 8 am to 6 pm; a varied menu of study support activities; parenting support; swift and easy referral to specialist services and wider community use of facilities. Head teachers, along with others, will want to ensure that these services are planned to support the overall vision of the school and contribute towards the School Improvement Plan. However, we do not expect teachers to provide or head teachers to directly manage all these new services.

Schools working with their local authority may wish to nominate an extended schools co-ordinator to develop services, and may work in clusters with other schools and children's centres in their area. We are also encouraging schools to work in partnership with existing local private and voluntary sector providers.

The National Remodelling Team will take a lead role in supporting schools through the development of extended services to ensure that it is consistent with the tenets of work force reform. Extended services can help remove barriers to learning and give support to pupils with their non-educational problems, helping school heads and teachers focus on their core job of teaching.

We do recognise that the context of school leadership continues to evolve quickly, and so we have welcomed the School Teachers Review Body's timely recommendation for an independent study to report by December 2006 on the roles, responsibilities, structures and reward systems of the leadership group, looking at both current practice and likely future developments. We will announce shortly further details on the independent study.

Higher Education

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many 16 to 19-year-old parents have returned to higher education in Doncaster North constituency since 1997. [50587]

Bill Rammell: The information is not held centrally.

Infant Schools

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to amend the funding formula for infant schools to reduce fluctuations arising from unpredictable pupil numbers. [50983]

Jacqui Smith: With the introduction of new funding arrangements from April 2006, all local authorities will be required to use a single pupil count, based on pupil numbers in the January before the start of each financial year, to determine their schools' budget shares. The use of a single pupil count will make a significant contribution to improved certainty of funding for our schools.

At the same time, fluctuations in pupil numbers may cause difficulty for some schools and so our school funding regulations allow authorities to vary school budget shares in the face of exceptional pupil turbulence. The new funding arrangements also recognise that primary and infant schools may operate an admission point for their reception pupils in the summer term that the use of a single pupil count would not recognise. Our school funding regulations therefore allow authorities to make an adjustment in the January pupil numbers used to determine a school's budget share, by taking account of the number of pupils admitted at the beginning of the previous summer term.

International Baccalaureate

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment her Department has made of the potential for use of the International Baccalaureate for post-16 education. [51009]

Jacqui Smith: We have always acknowledged the particular strengths of the International Baccalaureate (IB). But we are clear that the IB was not designed to be, and is not, a suitable model to meet the needs of all young people in this country.

Key Stage 2

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of primary school leavers had a reading age of 11 in each of the last five years. [48129]

Jacqui Smith: The requested information is not available. The Department does however; collect data on pupils' achievements in the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are expected to reach Level 4 in English. Pupils are assessed in both reading and writing to arrive at their overall level in the English test.

The National Curriculum tests measure the literacy skills that children are able to demonstrate at different levels of attainment. Children who reach Level 3 of the National Curriculum are assessed as having effective English skills and can demonstrate a good standard of reading. They are able to read a range of texts accurately and independently, tackle unfamiliar words and self correct when their reading doesn't make sense. Children achieving Level 4 have access to more complex forms of language and can access more complex ideas. They can use inference and deduction and can locate and use ideas and information.

Achievement of the target Level 4 provides children with a solid foundation in learning from which to access the full secondary curriculum. Pupils who achieve level 4 or above at the end of primary school are six times more likely to achieve 5 A*- C grades at GCSE. This is why the Government has set a target for 85 per cent. of 11-year-olds to achieve Level 4 or above in English.

The information provided in the table shows the proportion of pupils achieving Level 3 and Level 4 or above in the KS2 National Curriculum reading tests since 2001.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005[1]
Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in KS2 reading	82	80	81	83	84
Percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 or above in KS2 reading	92	91	91	91	92

[1] 2005 figures are provisional. All other figures are final.

Learning and Skills Council

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the impact of industrial action on the re-structuring of the Learning and Skills Council; and if she will make a statement. [50038]

Bill Rammell: The Learning and Skills Council has been having regular discussions with the trade unions at both national and local level. I am encouraged that these discussions have continued beyond the end of the formal consultation period. There is currently no industrial action as a result of LSC restructuring, and I very much hope that it can be avoided.

List 99

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of those who received a caution for having indecent pictures of children were placed on List 99 in the last year for which figures are available. [48436]

Jacqui Smith: The Department does not collect the information that you require in the format requested.

Literacy/Numeracy

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to introduce further measures to combat poor literacy and numeracy skills among adults. [49435]

Phil Hope: The Skills for Life Strategy, launched by the Prime Minister in 2001, is the first comprehensive strategy to tackle adult literacy, language and numeracy skills across England. Since 2001, 3.7 millions adults have taken up 7.8 million learning opportunities and 1,130,000 of these learners went on to achieve at least one Skills for Life qualification. The Government plans to help 2.25 million adults to achieve a literacy, language or numeracy qualification by 2010.

Since the launch of the strategy, the Government have put in place the first national literacy, language and numeracy infrastructure, consisting of national standards, curriculum and qualifications. The next phase of the Skills for Life strategy will focus on raising the quality of teaching and learning, professionalizing the workforce, engaging adults who can benefit most from improving their skills, embedding literacy and numeracy learning in wider learning programmes (particularly vocational learning), and fostering progression to wider and higher levels of learning.

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the progress of the review of the national literacy strategy. [49998]

Jacqui Smith: The Primary National Strategy has been asked to renew and update its framework for the teaching of literacy. It has been conducting a period of informal consultation, including discussions with consultancy groups drawn from national samples of head teachers, teachers, local authority representatives, subject and professional organisations and higher education institutions. A consultation forum has been set up on the DfES website.

The Primary National Strategy has started work on writing a draft revised framework for more formal consultation, taking into account points arising from the informal consultation and the interim report of the Rose review of the teaching of early reading. This work will be completed by drawing on the findings that Jim Rose will set out in his forthcoming final report. The draft document will set out key learning objectives for the Foundation Stage and each year of Key Stages 1 and 2, giving a clear sense of the progression expected. It will also provide examples based on a particular year of the range of supporting material that the revised framework will marshal to ensure that teachers and practitioners have easy access to guidance and resources to help them plan and execute high-quality teaching. The draft revised framework will be published for consultation at Easter 2006.

Mathematics

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students chose to take *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* further mathematics A-level in each academic year between 1997 and 2006 in (i) Leicester and (ii) England. [51006]

Jacqui Smith: The following table shows GCE A level entries in Mathematics and Further Mathematics in Leicester Local Authority and in England

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Leicester									
Mathematics	280	323	332	294	292	237	207	246	298
Further Mathematics	18	23	10	14	15	8	7	11	10
England									
Mathematics	43,167	43,646	43,155	41,635	41,934	33,546	33,850	35,057	35,486
Further Mathematics	3,312	3,466	3,467	3,379	3,357	2,941	2,982	3,246	3,210

Note:

The figures include students in maintained school sixth forms, Academies, City Technology Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges and general FE Sector Institutions. Independent schools are not included.

National Institute of Economic and Social Research

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding the National Institute of Economic and Social Research received in each year since 1997–98 in *(a)* framework and *(b)* projected funding; and what the purpose was in each case. [49816]

Bill Rammell: To gather this information would accrue a disproportionate cost. What I can do is provide details of public funding awarded to the National Institute of Economic and Social Research as payment for carrying out research projects on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills.

New School Buildings

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment her Department has made of the suitability of former landfill sites for the development of new school buildings; and how many new schools have been built on such sites in each local education authority area in the North West of England. [51138]

Jacqui Smith: The Department has not carried out any studies on the suitability of using former landfill sites for the development of new school buildings, and nor does it have any data on how many schools have been built on such sites. Local planning authorities may well hold this information.

Ofsted

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the savings made in the last two financial years as a consequence of a lighter touch process for Ofsted inspections. [50124]

Jacqui Smith: The new lighter touch inspection of schools commenced in September 2005. Changes in the delivery of inspections will result in annual savings within Ofsted of £15 million.

School Food

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many primary schools in England have vending machines that offer chocolate. [49859]

Jacqui Smith: This information is not collected centrally.

School Funding (Data)

Peter Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if, in her review of the funding methodology for schools from 2006–07, she will make it her policy to ensure full comparability of data with earlier years. [49418]

Jacqui Smith: Following the changes to school and local authority funding for 2006–07 and 2007–08, the Department is working on figures for spending on school provision in earlier years that are comparable with the new funding system based around the Dedicated Schools Grant, on both a cash and per pupil basis, and will place them in the Library as soon as they are available. As we take forward the review of funding for schools, we will keep in mind the need to maintain comparability of data going forward to 2008–09 and beyond.

School Hours

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what her policy is on the time of day at which children start school; [50266]

(2) at what time of day secondary school children start school in each local education authority area; [50274]

(3) what research she has evaluated on the time of day at which school children in EU member states start school; and if she will make a statement. [50272]

Jacqui Smith: The governing body of each maintained school determines the time at which schools start, and this is not uniform within individual local education authority areas. My Department does not collect information on start times in individual schools. I have not received any research on the time of day at which school children in EU member states start school.

School Music Facilities

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding her Department has made available for school music facilities in *(a)* Tamworth and *(b)* England in each academic year since 1997. [51416]

Jacqui Smith: Capital allocations made to Staffordshire local authority and its schools are set out in the following table:

	£ million
1997–98	7.4
1998–99	28.4
1999–2000	18.5
2000–01	34.1
2001–02	27.4
2002–03	32.9
2003–04	35.5
2004–05	41.1
2005–06	29.2

Capital allocations to local authorities and schools are higher than ever before. In 2005–06 they are £5.5 billion and they are planned to rise to £6.3 billion in 2007–08, an increase from £683 million in 1996–97.

Capital allocations made to local authorities and schools in England since 1997–98 are set out in the table below:

	£ billion
97–98	0.6
98–99	1.3
99–00	1.6
00–01	2.5
01–02	2.5
02–03	3.3
03–04	4.2
04–05	4.9
05–06	5.5

Allocations are made on a financial year basis, not the academic year. It is the responsibility of schools and local authorities to determine how they allocate these funds to different projects, including enhancing school music facilities, taking account of local needs and priorities.

Records are not held centrally that show how much of this funding is spent on school music facilities, neither am I able to provide a breakdown for Tamworth.

School Selection

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what factors she took into account when deciding not to allow selection in schools by academic ability. [50799]

Jacqui Smith: Since 1998, it has been unlawful for schools to introduce new selection by high academic ability. It has long been our view that selection by academic ability is divisive.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what factors she took into account when deciding to allow selection in schools by *(a)* sporting and *(b)* physical ability. [50800]

Jacqui Smith: Schools with certain specialisms, including physical education or sport have, since 1999, been able to select up to 10 per cent. of their pupils based upon their aptitude for subjects prescribed by the Education (Aptitude for Particular Subjects) Regulations 1999.

We allow this flexibility so that pupils with an aptitude in one of the prescribed subjects can gain access to schools with specialist teaching when they might not otherwise have been able to do so. Physical education and sport were prescribed because we considered that it was possible to assess aptitude in them as opposed to academic ability.

It is for schools' admission authorities to determine whether they wish to adopt these arrangements.

Adam Afriyie: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the criteria on which maintained secondary schools may select pupils. [50805]

Jacqui Smith: Maintained secondary schools may select 10 per cent. of their intake by ability in subjects prescribed by the Education (Aptitude for Particular Subjects) Regulations 1999. Any tests used must be to assess aptitude for the particular subject, and not ability or aptitude for another subject.

Legislation prevents schools from introducing selection by academic ability as part of their admission arrangements, and only those schools that selected on this basis before 1998 may continue to do so.

Grammar schools and schools which are allowed to continue to select part of their intake on the basis of high academic ability may allocate places to top scorers in their entrance test, or set a pass mark. Where there is a pass mark, if more children pass the test than there are places available, the school must apply other criteria to determine who to make offers to. These admission criteria must comply with legislation and be set with regard to guidance in the School Admissions Code of Practice, which requires them to be clear, fair, and objective.

Schools (Newcastle-upon-Tyne)

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of pupils of secondary schools in Newcastle-upon-Tyne achieved *(a)* English GCSE grades A to C, *(b)* mathematics GCSE grades A to C, *(c)* no GCSEs, *(d)* five GCSE grades A to C and *(e)* GNVQ four grades A to C equivalents in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [49347]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested on the number of pupils achieving various qualifications in Newcastle-upon-Tyne local authority can be found it the table.

GCSE achievements of 15-year-old pupils[1] in Newcastle-upon-Tyne local authority

		% of pupils achieving				
	Number of pupils	*English GCSE (A*-C)*	*Mathematics GCSE (A*-C)*	*No GCSE passes[2]*	*5 GCSE A*-C passes[3]*	*4 GNVQ grades A*-C[4]*
2005	2,621	46.4	39.2	7.5	36.4	25.4
2004	2,784	44.3	38.4	8.5	36.3	15.5
2003	2,917	43.2	36.7	10.1	35.4	6.9

[1] Age at the start of the academic year
[2] Pupils achieving no passes at grades A*-G in GCSEs only
[3] Pupils achieving at least five passes at grades A*-C in GCSEs only
[4] Pupils achieving the equivalent of at least one full Intermediate GNVQ

Schools for the Hearing Impaired

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to her answer of 12 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 830W, on schools for the hearing impaired, how many of the special schools approved to make provision for pupils with hearing impairment are schools for the deaf; and how many schools for the deaf there were in each year since 1996. [48247]

Jacqui Smith: The available information is shown in the table. Numbers of schools that indicated they were approved to make provision for hearing impaired pupils, and no other category of need, are also shown in the table.

Number of special schools approved to make provision for hearing impaired pupils only[1], 1996–2005
Position in January each year

England	*Number of schools*
1996	20
1997	19
1998	19
1999	20
2000	21
2001	18
2002	19
2003	18
2004	17
2005	16

[1] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools

Special Needs

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidelines have been issued by her Department to local education authorities on the allocation of special needs funding. [50116]

Jacqui Smith: In May 2004 the Department published guidance to local authorities "The Management of SEN Expenditure", which can be viewed online at www.teachernet.gov.uk/senexpenditure. It includes information and recommendations on delegating SEN resources to mainstream schools and also on the monitoring and accountability arrangements that local authorities should put in place to ensure that pupils' needs are being met.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the role of the Index of Multiple Deprivation in the establishment of guidelines for the allocation of special needs funding. [50117]

Jacqui Smith: Our funding guidance "The Management of SEN Expenditure", published in 2004, included advice to local authorities on developing a funding formula to support most pupils with additional and special educational needs. The guidance included information on the most commonly used indicators and the Index of Multiple Deprivation was suggested as an indicator of deprivation. Other commonly used indicators include prior attainment based upon end of key stage test data; a social need factor such as free school meals; a turbulence factor based on unplanned admissions and leavers; and the number of children for whom English is a second language.

State Education (Procurement Budget)

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total procurement budget for the state education sector has been for the last three financial years; and what the project budgeted is for the next three financial years. [50112]

Jacqui Smith: The Department for Education and Skills does not have a specific budget for procurement that it allocates to the state education sector. The Government believes that educational institutions should be responsible for managing their funding according to their individual priorities and to make their own expenditure decisions.

Data on non-pay expenditure is available for 2003–04 which amounts to approximately £13 billion. This will include expenditure on procurement as well as running costs and capital expenditure. It is not possible to break down the non-pay expenditure further.

Student Mobility

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to support UK student mobility within the European Union in the years 2007 to 2013. [51211]

Bill Rammell: The Government will continue to encourage UK higher education students to take part in Erasmus, the European Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students. We will work with the national agency responsible for Erasmus to promote the benefits of student mobility.

Sure Start

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children living in disadvantaged areas of Doncaster North constituency participated in Sure Start local programmes in the last period for which figures are available. [50592]

Beverley Hughes: There are six Sure Start local programmes in Doncaster reaching a total of 3,898 children under the age of four. Three of the Sure Start local programmes are based within Doncaster North reaching a total of 2,192 children: Sure Start Moorends and the Willows covers 429 children; Sure Start Bentley, Central and Adwick serves 951 children and Sure Start Spa Spiders which covers 812 children.

Teacher Training

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Training and Development Agency category rating is of each school-centred initial teacher training schemes in the single secondary subject of physical education. [51470]

Jacqui Smith: The following table shows the quality grading of school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) providers which offer physical education (PE) as an initial teacher training (ITT) route.

Provider	*Quality category*
Chiltern Training Group	C
Colchester SCITT	C
Marches Consortium SCITT	C
North East Partnership	B
Suffolk and Norfolk Secondary SCITT	C
Titan Partnership	C
West Midlands Consortium	B

Note:
The quality scale comprises five categories:
A—Very good;
B—Good;
C—Satisfactory;
D—Unsatisfactory; and Non-compliant.

In academic year 2006/07 there will be seven SCITT providers offering PE. These providers will offer about 5 per cent. of the available places.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what criteria are used by the Training and Development Agency in allocation rounds for school-centred initial teacher training schemes. [51473]

Jacqui Smith: The criteria used by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) when making allocations of initial teacher training (ITT) places are the same for higher education institutions (HEI) and school-centred initial teacher training institutions. The overwhelming influence on allocations decisions is the quality of ITT offered by the provider, determined through independent inspection by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

These criteria are set out annually for all providers in an 'invitation to bid' issued by the TDA each July and are further described in their allocations manual. Both the letter and the manual are publicly available on the TDA website: http://www.tda.gov.uk/partners/funding/fundingallocations/allocations.aspx

The criteria for 2006/07 and 2007/08 allocations are listed as follows:

Quality of provision. The TDA give priority to bids from providers with high Ofsted quality gradings;

Track record in recruiting from under-represented groups in primary. Priority is given to bids from providers with good track records in recruiting primary trainees from minority ethnic groups and/or men (greater than 1.5 times the national average);

Denomination. Priority is given to bids from denominational over non-denominational providers if analysis shows the balance needs to be adjusted;

Viable cohort size. Priority is given to bids from providers with small cohorts that need additional or recycled places to make those cohorts of an economic size;

Regional need. Priority is given to bids from providers in regions or sub-regions where vacancies are particularly high (Greater London, the West Midlands, the South East and the Eastern Area Government Office regions);

Training, standards or management and quality assurance. Priority is given to providers receiving a grade 1 for their training, standards or management and quality assurance cells when inspected by Ofsted; and

Qualified teacher status (QTS. Priority is given to providers with a strong track record in converting completers with QTS into newly qualified teachers in maintained schools as evidenced by their performance profiles data (providers with completion rates greater than average plus 10 per cent.).

Teachers

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the effects on costs of introducing a new pay structure for the upper pay spine for teachers. [50966]

Jacqui Smith: As a result of the January 2004 Pay Agreement the potential annual spend of £700 million on upper pay spine costs is reduced to a more manageable £400 million per annum in the steady state. We now have a clear framework for rewarding our best and most experienced teachers and the first Excellent Teacher Scheme appointments will be made in September.

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the amount of time spent on administrative tasks by teachers; and what steps she has taken to reduce *(a)* the number of and *(b)* the time spent on such tasks. [50967]

Jacqui Smith: The independent study into teacher workload conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers in 2001 identified that two-thirds of a teacher's time was spent on activities other than teaching. Following proposals made by the School Teachers' Review Body and extensive consultation, the National Agreement on Raising Standards and Tackling Workload was signed in January 2003 by Government, employers and the majority of school workforce unions. The agreement contained a series of phased changes to teachers' contracts including, from September 2003, that teachers would no longer be routinely required to perform administrative or clerical tasks.

In order to assess the amount of time spent on such tasks by teachers, the Department uses the Office for Manpower Economics (OME) Teachers' Workload Diary Survey. This survey provides independently collected data on the hours and working patterns of some 2,000 randomly selected teachers in schools in the maintained sector. The survey asks teachers to record the type and duration of activities undertaken in one week in March. Surveys have been carried out in 1994, 1996, 2000, 2003, 2004 and 2005. Estimates from the survey data of the average amount of time spent by teachers in schools each week on various categories of activity, including administrative and clerical tasks, are shown below for each year the survey has been run:

	Admin and clerical tasks	
	Primary	*Secondary*
1994	6.8	4.5
1996	7.8	4.4
2000	7.0	4.6
2003	6.9	4.4
2004	7.1	4.1
2005	5.9	3.8

Undergraduates

Mr. Vaizey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many undergraduates the Government expects to study in the 2006/07 academic year; and if she will make a statement. [49996]

Bill Rammell: The number of full-time and part-time UK domiciled undergraduates studying at English Higher Education institutions and Further Education colleges in the 2006/07 academic year is projected to be 1,400,000[1]. This represents a planned increase of nearly 20,000 (1.5 per cent.) on the projected figure for 2005/06. Projections of HE student numbers are issued each year in the Department's Annual Report and a revised projection will be available on publication of the 2006 report.

[1] Figure is on a headcount DfES whole year count basis and is rounded to the nearest 10,000.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Community Renewables Initiative

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what consultations his Department has undertaken on the Community Renewables Initiative. [50678]

Malcolm Wicks: The DTI along with other partner organisations commissioned a report into the need for the type of advice service provided by the CRI. This report was circulated to members of the CRI and is now being used to inform ongoing discussions into the future of the CRI.

Colin Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Community Renewables Initiative will receive financial support after 31 March. [50704]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* Discussions are still ongoing between DTI and other Government Departments and it s not possible to give an answer at this time. We recognise the difficulty this uncertainty is causing but we hope to make a decision shortly.

Company Directors (Personal Liability)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will seek to introduce legislation under which company directors would be held personally liable for publishing dishonest financial statements. [51507]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Clause 387 of the Company Law Reform Bill re-enacts the provisions in section 233 of the Companies Act 1985 which provide for the criminal liability of directors for annual accounts that do not comply with the requirements of the Act and, where applicable, of Article 4 of EC Regulation No 1606/2002 on the application of international accounting standards.

Clause 434 of the Bill re-enacts the provisions of section 245B of the 1985 Act which enable the court, if it finds that accounts do not comply with the Act's requirements (or, where applicable, Article 4's requirements) to order that any reasonable expenses incurred by the company in connection with the preparation of revised accounts be borne by the directors who were party to the approval of the defective accounts.

Company Law

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will seek to introduce legislation under which companies would be required to publish their tax computation. [50020]

Alun Michael: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has no plans to require companies to publish their tax computations. Tax computations are a matter for Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

There are many disclosure requirements under the Companies Act 1985 (which will be re-enacted in regulations to be made under the Company Law Reform Bill) and under accounting standards relating to tax that are required to be included in the accounts. As brief examples of the disclosure requirements, (by no means exhaustive), companies are required to report the following under UK GAAP:

- Amount of tax split between UK and foreign tax
- Any special circumstances that affect the overall tax charge or credit for the period, or that may affect those of future periods, should be disclosed by way of note to the profit and loss account and their individual effects quantified
- Deferred tax disclosures, including a reconciliation of the current tax charge or credit on ordinary activities for the period reported in the profit and loss account to the current tax charge that would result from applying a relevant standard rate of tax to the profit on ordinary activities before tax.

Companies reporting under International Accounting Standards need to include (among other things):

- Major component of tax expense/credit
- An explanation of the relationship between tax expense (income) and accounting profit

Consultancy Services

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much his Department spent on outside consultancy services in each year since 2001. [50634]

Alan Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1005W, to the hon. Member for Cheltenham (Martin Horwood)

Departmental Consultants

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what external consultants and advisers have been engaged by his Department on the proposals to consolidate the number of consumer bodies; and how much in fees has been paid to these external consultants and advisers for this exercise. [51197]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department of Trade and Industry has appointed KPMG LLP to undertake analysis on the proposals to strengthen and streamline consumer advocacy. The project fee is currently commercially sensitive information and the Department is unable to release this figure.

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by him in the last 12 months have been answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* between 14 and 28 days, *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if he will make a statement. [49896]

Alan Johnson: Departments aim to ensure that Members receive a substantive response to their Named Day question on the named day and endeavour to answer Ordinary Written questions within a working week of being tabled. Unfortunately, this is not always possible but this Department makes every effort to achieve these time scales.

Month	Total	Within 14 days	14–28 days	28 days-2 months	Excess of 2 months
February 2005	169	93	45	30	1
March 2005	231	177	54	0	0
April 2005	7	7	0	0	0
May 2005	85	83	1	0	1
June 2005	278	270	6	0	2
July 2005	322	317	5	0	0
October 2005	287	263	23	1	0
November 2005	496	474	21	1	0
December 2005	242	227	14	1	0
January 2006	341	334	7	0	0
Total	2,458	2,245	176	33	4

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the likely cost to the Post Office will be of ending the Post Office card account in 2010. [51704]

Barry Gardiner: The cost to the Post Office will depend on what accounts might be introduced as an alternative to the Post Office card account beyond 2010. Post Office Ltd. are currently discussing the options with the DWP.

Post Offices

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations he has received from Royal Mail on the minimum number of post office branches required to fulfil the terms of its universal service obligations. [50950]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* None. This is a matter for the Postal Services Regulator, Postcomm.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of franchisees of main posts office terminated their contracts before the agreed end date in each of the last five years; and on how many occasions action has been taken to enforce a contract until a suitable alternative location is in place. [51562]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. (POL). The Chief Executive has been asked to reply direct to my hon. Friend.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what powers the Post Office has to prevent franchisees of main post offices terminating their contract before the agreed end date. [51577]

Barry Gardiner: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. (POL). The chief executive has been asked to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Postal Services

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment his Department has made of the effect on UK businesses of the price differential between parcels posted in the UK sent to another EU country and parcels posted in another EU country sent to the UK. [51764]

Barry Gardiner *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* None. The pricing of parcel services for parcels weighing less than 1 kg that falls within the Universal Service Obligation is a matter for Postcomm, the industry regulator. The wider parcel services market is unregulated and thus fully open to price competition.

Sunday Trading

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many meetings officials from his Department have had with representatives of *(a)* trade unions, *(b)* retail organisations and *(c)* other groups on Sunday trading since September 2004. [51419]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Officials from the Department of Trade and Industry have had seven meetings specifically on Sunday trading with external parties, including a trade union, large and small retailers and other groups. All these meetings have taken place since the Secretary of State's announcement on 14 November 2005 that Sunday trading regulation would be reviewed.

The DTI maintains regular contact with the retail industry and interested parties, for example through the Retail Policy Forum, which meets quarterly.

Tidal Power

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment his Department has made of the potential of tidal power as an alternative to fossil fuels. [49443]

Malcolm Wicks: Tidal power can broadly be split into two categories: tidal-current—this extracts kinetic energy from fast moving tidal currents and tidal impoundment that generates in a similar way to a conventional dam.

The UK Tidal Energy Programme[1] that ran between 1978–94 at a cost of £20 million estimated the total tidal (impoundment) resource to be approximately 50 TWh/y. The largest and most economically viable scheme, the Severn Barrage could contribute ~17TWh/y or ~5 per cent. of UK demand.

The most recent study undertaken in 2004[2] estimated the tidal-current resource at approximately 16 TWh/y (~4 per cent. of current UK supply).

[1] Energy Paper 57 HMSO 1989 (ISBN 0 11 412952 5)

[2] Binnie, Black and Veatch 2005 Phase II Report "UK, Europe and Global Tidal Stream Resource Assessment".

Zirconium Silicate (Iran)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 9 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1379W, on zirconium silicate (Iran), who *(a)* the exporter was of the zirconium silicate intercepted in Bulgaria and *(b)* the end-user of the material; what the expected end-use of the material was; and if he will make a statement. [51799]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* Information on the exporter, end-user and expected end-use of the export in question is commercially confidential and as such is exempt from disclosure.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 9 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1379W, on zirconium silicate (Iran), what definition he uses of *(a)* end-user and *(b)* expected end-use; and if he will make a statement. [51800]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* While there is no written definition of end-user or end-use information, the end-user is the entity for which the goods are ultimately destined, and the end-use is the use to which the goods will be put. Applicants are required to declare that the contents of their application and the supporting documentation are, to the best of their knowledge, accurate. End-use and end-user information provided in support of a Standard Individual Export Licence (SIEL) application, where required, must be verified by documentation provided by the end-user.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Spellar: To ask the Solicitor-General how much the Law Officers Department spent on bottled water in 2004–05. [40326]

The Solicitor-General: 2004–05 the Crown Prosecution Service, HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate and the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers spent £75,600 on the provision by contract of bottled water, cups, machine rental, sanitisation and maintenance. It has not been possible to isolate the expenditure on bottled water alone.

The aforementioned figures do not include bottles of water available at meetings. No separate details are available for this expenditure and it would incur disproportionate cost to extract it.

The Serious Fraud Office, Treasury Solicitor's Department and parts of the Crown Prosecution Service do not purchase bottled water but provide staff with chilled, filtered water.

The Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office was set up on 18 April 2005 so does not fall within the timeframe of this question.

Government Papers

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General how many copies of Cm 6531 were produced; how many were supplied free-of-charge; to whom; and if he will make a statement. [41727]

The Solicitor-General: Cm 6531 is the Law Officers' Departments Departmental Report 2005. It set out the Attorney-General's Strategy for his Departments and reported on delivery in each Department, including objectives and expenditure plans.

The Stationery Office produced 765 copies of Cm 6531 of which 270 were provided to the Law Officers' Departments.

The Crown Prosecution Service received 170 copies which were distributed within CPS headquarters, throughout the CPS 42 geographical areas in England and Wales and to partners in the criminal justice system.

75 copies were shared between the Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office, Serious Fraud Office, Treasury Solicitor's Department and HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate where they were distributed for use internally.

The Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers received 25 copies, 11 of which were laid before Parliament or in the House Libraries. The remainder were distributed for use internally.

Jo Martinson

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to the answer of 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1963W, on Jo Martinson, what account was taken of the fact that the charges of *(a)* driving a vehicle without insurance, *(b)* driving without a licence and *(c)* not informing the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency of the existence of a material disability, were not instituted against the driver of the vehicle that caused the death of Jo Martinson. [51301]

The Solicitor-General: Offences of driving a vehicle without insurance, driving without a licence and driving a vehicle with a defective condition are instituted by the police. It is for the police to refer possible offences of failing to notify the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) of a material disability or not having a tax disc to the DVLA for its consideration.

No such offences in relation to the driver of the vehicle in question were referred to the CPS for consideration or prosecution in relation to the case involving the tragic death of Jo Martinson.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to the answer of 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1963W, on Jo Martinson, what inquiries he made into the evidence submitted by Essex police to the Crown Prosecution Service that the vehicle that caused the death of Jo Martinson did not have a tax disc. [51302]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is not responsible for the prosecution of cases involving defendants who do not have a vehicle excise licence. Where it is apparent that a valid vehicle excise licence is not in existence, the police will pass details of this to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency for its consideration.

I am informed that in the case involving the tragic death of Jo Martinson no evidence was submitted to the CPS regarding the vehicle in question not having a valid vehicle excise licence.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Grass-roots Sports Funding

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much each sports national governing body (NGB) has received from the community club development programme in each of the last three years; and how much NGBs have allocated to grass-roots sports development under the terms of the compact with her Department on income from broadcasting in each year. [51841]

Mr. Caborn: Sixteen National Governing Bodies for Sport and the community sports clubs affiliated to them have received awards from the Community Club Development Fund in the period 2003 to date as follows:

£

NGB	Year 1 (2003–04)	Year 2 (2004–05)	Year 3 (to date) (2005–06)
All England Netball Association	436,500	222,665	781,547
Amateur Rowing Association	1,657,056	199,445	436,510
Amateur Swimming Association	0	6,720	763,502
Badminton England	134,227	666,644	448,389
British Canoe Union	519,500	635,431	645,985
British Cycling	588,136	216,389	598,630
British Gymnastics Association	60,076	690,000	645,110
British Judo Association	45,625	329,694	1,236,712
England Basketball	205,809	110,000	597,442
English Cricket Board	2,996,330	1,592,513	2,233,388
England Hockey	185,000	248,800	623,308
English Table Tennis Association	14,777	31,485	1,446,738
Football Association	6,706,197	2,236,017	678,816
Lawn Tennis Association	4,413,234	2,394,918	1,610,800
Rugby Football League	38,188	260,591	994,598
Rugby Football Union	7,442,027	1,772,009	1,141,316

The Voluntary Code relating to broadcasting rights and grass roots sport was established and is administered by Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR), which is independent of my Department. Signatories have undertaken to invest at least 5 per cent. of broadcasting income in the development of their sports in order to ensure that the next generation of competitors has the support and facilities necessary to succeed at the highest level. Comprehensive information on allocations under the Code is not held by the Department.

National Lottery

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the average annual *(a)* number and *(b)* value of National Lottery grants awarded to recipients was in (i) Denton and Reddish and (ii) all UK parliamentary constituencies between establishment of the Lottery and 2000 and (A) 2001 and (B) 2005. [51549]

Mr. Caborn: Up until the end of 2000, the average number of Lottery awards per constituency per year was 25, with an average value of £115,000.

In the same time period in Denton and Reddish, the average number of grants per year was 9, with an average value of £13,000.

Between 2001 and 2005, the average number of Lottery awards per constituency per year was 57, with an average value of £50,000.

In the same time period in Denton and Reddish, the average number of grants per year was 24, with an average value of £44,000.

The monetary amounts given are rounded to the nearest £1,000. The information is derived from the Department's Lottery award database. This is searchable at www.lottery.culture.gov.uk, and uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

Olympic Games

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) if she will publish an organisation chart of staff in her Department working on the 2012 Olympics; [50624]

(2) if she will list the key civil servants in her Department involved in the delivery of the 2012 Olympics; what the responsibilities of each are; and if she will make a statement; [50625]

(3) how many civil servants in her Department *(a)* were part of the bid team for the 2012 Olympics, *(b)* are working on the 2012 Olympics and *(c)* she expects to work on overseeing preparations for the 2012 Olympics over the next six years. [50626]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* Approximately 12 staff in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) worked on London's bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. Approximately 30 staff in DCMS are currently working on the preparations for the 2012 Games. I anticipate that the core team will number approximately 40 staff over the coming years. In addition, staff across the Department as a whole contribute to the delivery of the Olympic Games. As the team working on preparations for the 2012 Games within DCMS is still in transition, an organisation chart is not yet available.

Princess Diana Memorial Fountain

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been spent by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* its non-departmental public bodies and executive agencies and *(c)* National Lottery distributors on the Princess Diana Memorial Fountain; and if she will make a statement. [51859]

Mr. Lammy: To date, the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fountain has cost £5,247,366. The Department has funded £3,862,800 and The Royal Parks Agency has contributed £1,384,566. The Memorial Fountain has not received any funding from National Lottery distributors.

SCOTLAND

Departmental Energy Costs

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much was spent by his Department on *(a)* gas and *(b)* electricity in 2004–05. [51773]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office spent £23,372 on electricity and £96,362 on gas in 2004–05.

Departmental Entertainment

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much was spent on entertainment by his Department in 2004–05, broken down by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [50892]

David Cairns: The information is not held in the form requested; however, in 2004–05, the Scotland Office spent £18,420 on hospitality.

Departmental Information

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much was spent on the Department's public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [48969]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office has incurred no expenditure on external public relations.

The running costs of the Office's Press Office since 2000–01 are as follows:

	£
2000–01	178,236
2001–02	157,826
2002–03	162,021
2003–04	136,932
2004–05	131,149

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43488]

David Cairns: There have been a small number of disciplinary actions against civil servants loaned to the Scotland Office; to protect the privacy of individual staff, data relating to fewer than five people is not disclosed.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many staff in his Department are paid on a performance-related basis. [50487]

David Cairns: All.

Energy Provision

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Scottish Executive regarding the provision of energy for people in the winter months. [48567]

David Cairns: My right hon. Friend and I meet regularly with Scottish Executive Ministers to discuss a range of issues. Government effort is focused on improving supply and working with energy companies and others to mitigate the impact of price rises on vulnerable consumers. Addressing the problem of fuel poverty through installation of central heating is a devolved responsibility in Scotland.

Fair Trade

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what his Department's policy is on the procurement of fair trade produce for consumption on its premises. [49967]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office has taken opportunities to use fair trade products but has very limited requirements for goods which are subject to fair trade schemes. In accordance with Government procurement policy we seek best value for money, in the interests of the taxpayer.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much and what proportion of his Department's catering budget was spent on fair trade produce in the last period for which figures are available. [49968]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office is unable to provide the information requested as expenditure on fair trade produce cannot be readily identified separately from the total catering expenditure.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his assessment is of the security situation in *(a)* Nimrooz, *(b)* Farah, *(c)* Ghor, *(d)* Oruzgan and *(e)* Kandahar provinces. [50349]

Mr. Ingram: Nimruz, Farah and Ghowr have remained stable throughout the period in which ISAF have been in Afghanistan. The security situation in Kandahar and Oruzgan provinces is less permissive than in the north and west of the country. Coalition partners and Afghan forces constantly review the security situation to determine the appropriate size and composition of their forces in order to operate effectively in these areas.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* British and *(b)* Allied troops are deployed in (i) Nimrooz, (ii) Farah, (iii) Ghor, (iv) Oruzgan and (v) Kandahar provinces; and what such troops are due to be deployed in each province in the next (A) six and (B) 12 months. [50350]

Mr. Ingram: As announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on 26 January 2006, the UK plans to deploy some 3,300 troops to Southern Afghanistan (Helmand and Kandahar provinces). We currently have around 500 UK troops in Southern Afghanistan. The detail and timing of the deployments of other nations is not for us to comment on.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what training British troops in Helmand province received prior to deployment. [50357]

Mr. Ingram: All troops deploying to operational theatres, including Afghanistan, receive a pre-deployment training package which is tailored to the theatre into which they are deploying.

Aircraft Carriers

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessments *(a)* have been and *(b)* are planned to be made of the practicability of operating Typhoons from the Future Aircraft Carriers. [50574]

Mr. Ingram: In reaching the Joint Combat Aircraft selection decision, we assessed a number of options including Typhoon. Our judgment was, and remains, that the Joint Strike Fighter best meets United Kingdom requirements.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his latest estimate is of the cost of designing the Future Aircraft Carrier; and what price France is paying for purchasing that design. [51295]

Mr. Ingram: The total cost of the assessment phase is approximately £300 million and, as we announced on 14 December, we have now committed to the demonstration phase, amounting to some £300 million of further work. This includes elements for long-lead items and risk reduction, as well as developing the design to a point at which a decision to manufacture can be taken.

We subsequently announced, on 24 January, that we will be co-operating with France to produce a common baseline design that both countries can further use to develop their own carriers. France will make a financial contribution in recognition of the investment UK has already made in the design (comprising £30 million now and £25 million in July with a further £45 million at the end of the demonstration phase if France decides to commit to manufacture) and will contribute one third of the demonstration phase costs of the common baseline design.

BBC Monitoring

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what funding BBC Monitoring has received from *(a)* his Department, *(b)* other Government Departments and *(c)* other sources in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [50362]

Ian Pearson: I have been asked to reply.

BBC Monitoring has received the following funding in each of the last five years:

£000

Source	*Financial year* 2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
FCO	7,596	6,602	6,813	7,072	7,072
MOD	7,249	6,506	6,720	6,982	6,982
BBC World Service	4,201	4,961	5,105	5,280	5,278
Cabinet Office	454	2,546	2,623	2,719	2,719
Other sources	2,265	3,657	3,486	3,632	3,293
Total	21,765	24,272	24,747	25,685	25,345

In 2005, BBC Monitoring Stakeholders agreed a funding regime up to financial year2010–11 that provides BBC Monitoring with security and stability for the future.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what funding BBC Monitoring will receive in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07 from (i) his Department, (ii) other Government departments and (iii) other sources. [50365]

Ian Pearson: I have been asked to reply.

BBC Monitoring funding in 2005–06 and 2006–07 is listed in the table. From 2006–07 onwards, all funding will be channelled through the Cabinet Office and held in a ring-fenced budget. "Other sources" includes commercial sales which are variable and therefore must be regarded as approximate. In the financial year 2005–06 BBC Monitoring will, in addition, draw down £1 million from the BBC Monitoring Reserve Fund.

£000

Source	*Financial year* 2005–06	2006–07
FCO	5,072	—
MOD	6,982	—
BBC World Service	5,278	—
Cabinet Office	3,719	24,600
Other sources	3,192	3,338
Total	24,244	27,938

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the countries from which media output is monitored by BBC Monitoring. [50368]

Ian Pearson: I have been asked to reply.

In association with its US partner, BBC Monitoring is required to maintain a global capability. The level of coverage differs from country to country. Priorities and coverage is amended to monitor specific events such as elections.

Departmental Catering Budget

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much and what proportion of his Department's catering budget was spent on fair trade produce in the last period for which figures are available. [49917]

Mr. Ingram: Fair Trade items have only recently been selected for inclusion in the Core Range food catalogue available to Service Caterers. Information on expenditure on these items is not yet available.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's policy is on the procurement of fair trade produce for consumption on its premises. [49928]

Mr. Ingram: To meet the Ministry of Defence's value for money requirements, all catering contractors are required to seek the best price in the open market, consistent with meeting the MOD's quality standard; indeed to do otherwise would contravene European law. In the case of fair trade products, the Department's policy requires contractors to give full consideration to such goods whenever they meet these criteria.

Frimley Park Hospital

Michael Gove: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the possible release of departmental land next to Frimley Park hospital for hospital use. [49840]

Mr. Touhig: The Ministry of Defence property adjacent to Frimley Park hospital is Cadet Training Centre Frimley Park. It is the focus of the UK cadet movement and a valued and fully-utilised facility.

No plans exist at present to vacate or dispose of any part of the site. If such plans are formed in future, due consideration will be given to Frimley Park hospital's past expressions of interest.

Gulf War-related Illnesses

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what fuels used by UK forces on Operation *(a)* Granby and *(b)* Telic contained pyridines. [50298]

Mr. Ingram: Testing for pyridine in fuel is not standard Ministry of Defence or industry practice. However, fuels used by the UK armed forces during Operation Granby and Operation Telic were and are commercial fuels and are likely therefore to contain minute traces of pyridine, either through being an inherent component of the crude oil stock, or possibly as a contaminant picked up by the fuel from the distribution system.

Helicopters

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of helicopter lift capability in the armed forces. [51836]

Mr. Ingram: Last year the Ministry of Defence conducted an analysis of our Battlefield helicopter requirement, which drew on military judgement and recent operational experience. This concluded that there are shortfalls in certain specific lift capabilities. In the short term, we are addressing these by looking at ways of delivering the maximum capability from our existing fleets, including by ensuring greater availability and utilisation through streamlined logistic support. In the longer term, the future rotorcraft capability programme is looking at building our helicopter fleets for the future.

Joint Combat Aircraft

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he will continue with the proposed purchase of the Joint Combat Aircraft (JCA) without an agreement by the US to share the technological data required for future upgrading of the JCA. [50575]

Mr. Ingram: We continue to work closely with the United States Government at all levels to ensure that our needs for JSF technical information required to support our Sovereign capabilities are met. This is a key area in our negotiations on the Production, Sustainment and Follow on Development Memorandum Of Understanding.

Marine Life (Sonar)

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the possible effects on marine life of Sonar 2087. [51296]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has conducted environmental impact assessments of marine habitats in which Sonar 2087 might operate. These assessments indicated that while Sonar 2087 has the potential to impact on the marine environment, a range of rigorous mitigation measures have been developed to minimise this and these are integral to our operating procedures. There have been no recorded incidents of harm being caused to marine life by Sonar 2087. We continue to support a sustained programme of research into the effects of active sonar.

Copies of the environmental analysis reports relating to the Sonar 2087 sea trials conducted in 2002 and 2004 have been released to interested parties and are available in the Library of the House.

Met Office

Mr. Leech: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the likely net change in jobs in Manchester arising from the restructuring of the Meteorological Office Civil Centre Forecast Production Network. [50355]

Mr. Touhig: As a result of my recent decision to move forecast production from Birmingham, London, Belfast, Cardiff and Manchester to the Met Office Operations Centre in Exeter, the number of Met Office jobs at the Met Office's Manchester civil centre will be reduced from 31 to eight. The eight jobs remaining in Manchester will be customer account managers and forecast advisers.

Mine Countermeasures

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what provisions are being made in the Future Mine Countermeasures Vision for the use of *(a)* remote sweep systems and *(b)* unmanned surface vessels. [51294]

Mr. Ingram: The Future UK Mine Countermeasures Strategy is in the early stages of development. It is too early to say what part remote sweep systems and unmanned surface vessels might play in the delivery of future capability.

Missile Defence

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his policy is on UK involvement in ballistic missile defence programmes; and if he will make a statement. [50616]

John Reid: The Government have not yet decided whether or not to pursue missile defence for the United Kingdom, but we continue to examine, with our NATO allies, the developing threat from ballistic missiles and the appropriate responses. We have agreed to the upgrading of the radar at RAF Fylingdales as part of the United States missile defence system, and we also have a programme of joint technical and research projects with the US exploring the relevant technologies.

Pingat Jasa Malaysia

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the written statement of 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 10–11WS, on the Pingat Jasa Malaysia, what steps veterans who wish to apply for such medals should take. [50556]

Ian Pearson: I have been asked to reply.

Information on how veterans can apply for the Pingat Jasa Malaysia can be found in the section entitled 'Medals' on the Ministry of Defence Veterans' Agency website at http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk. Members of veterans' or regimental associations should approach their own organisations which will co-ordinate their

applications and arrange for them to be channelled to the Malaysian High Commission in London. Veterans who do not belong to an association can approach the National Malaya and Borneo Veterans' Association (NMBVA), which has agreed to co-ordinate applications for non-members as well as its own members. Full details of the NMBVA are included on the website.

Portland Port

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for the future use of Portland port by the Royal Navy. [50577]

Mr. Ingram: We intend to continue using berths in Portland port for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and occasionally for Royal Navy surface warships.

We will also pursue plans to develop the capability within Portland port to host occasional visits by RN nuclear powered submarines.

QinetiQ

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether there are provisions in the contract signed with QinetiQ for the management of his Department's practice ranges to cancel the arrangement early; and what penalties would be incurred. [50513]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* As is common with contracts of this nature, the Ministry of Defence's Long Term Partnering Agreement with QinetiQ includes clauses that provide for early termination of the arrangement. The compensation payable would depend upon the circumstances of the cessation.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of the agreement governing the Government's payments to QinetiQ pension fund prior to the initial public offering; and if he will make a statement. [51851]

John Reid *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* The agreement between Ministry of Defence and QinetiQ governing the Government's payments to the company's pension fund is part of a commercially confidential agreement between MOD and the company and I am therefore unable to release it. However, a detailed summary of the key aspects of the pensions agreement appears on pages 83 and 286 of the QinetiQ prospectus, a copy of which was placed in the Library of the House on 26 January.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the QinetiQ shareholdings, broken down by *(a)* size and *(b)* type, of QinetiQ managers, from board level to business group managers, broken down by (i) name and (ii) position. [51862]

John Reid: The shareholding interests of the senior executives in QinetiQ are set out in the QinetiQ IPO prospectus, a copy of which was placed in the Library of the House on 26 January. The prospectus also has details of the award of free shares worth £500 to each QinetiQ employee and the Employee Priority Offer, which formed part of the IPO on 10 February, and of the company's plans for employee share schemes after the IPO. Any further details are a matter for the company and should be addressed to the Chief Executive at the following address:

Graham Love
Chief Executive
QinetiQ Ltd.
Cody Technology Park
Building A1
Ively Road
Farnborough
Hampshire GU140LX

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what loans, grants and financial guarantees have been made by his Department to QinetiQ in the last five years. [51863]

John Reid: Over the last five years, the Department has made a number of different loan arrangements with QinetiQ, all of which have since been repaid in full:

(i) At the time of vesting in July 2001 QinetiQ paid MOD for its assets through a combination of equity and £150 million of cash in the form of an interest-bearing loan note.

(ii) Also at vesting, QinetiQ undertook to pay for alternative accommodation for Chertsey-based staff based at the MOD-owned Defence Scientific and Technology Laboratory (Dstl), to allow this site to be closed. This obligation took the form of a loan note for £30 million from QinetiQ to Dstl.

(iii) At vesting MOD put in place a working capital facility of up to £120 million for QinetiQ, for which it was charged a market rate of interest. This was necessary since QinetiQ as a wholly-Government owned company was not allowed to access facilities outside Government. This was subsequently replaced by commercial facilities at a lower rate of interest in February 2002.

MOD also has certain obligations in the form of contingent liabilities which have been presented to Parliament in departmental minutes dated 4 December 2001, 8 July and 17 December 2002.

RAF Menwith Hill

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the purpose is of the two further radomes planned for RAF Menwith Hill. [50808]

Mr. Ingram: The proposed new radomes at RAF Menwith Hill will house additional antennae that will be used in support of the current mission of the base.

RAF Stafford (Museum)

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to put on open display the museum items stored at RAF Stafford. [50863]

Mr. Touhig: As the RAF museum is a non-departmental public body, the day-to-day running is a matter for the Board of Trustees and the senior management team.

I understand that items held within the RAF museum's reserve collection, at RAF Stafford, are available to members of the public by appointment, as the site is not suitable for general public access. The RAF museum regularly reviews the items kept on display at its two public sites, and suitable items from the reserve collection may be included in the revised displays.

Reserve Forces

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the effect of the rate of deployment on the rate of recruitment for each of the reserve forces. [50949]

Mr. Touhig *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* There is no evidence to date to suggest that the rate of deployment has had any significant effect on the rate of recruitment for each of the reserve forces.

Roadside Bombs

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures are under development to protect British forces from shaped roadside bombs; and when these measures will be introduced. [51297]

Mr. Ingram: We continually adapt our training, tactics and procedures to ensure that our troops are not exposed to unnecessary risks in theatre. Additional measures to counter the evolving threat posed by roadside bombs are developed on an ongoing basis and introduced when they are sufficiently mature. However, information regarding specific measures is operationally sensitive.

Royal Navy

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of Royal Navy service personnel went to sea in *(a)* 2005, *(b)* 1995 and *(c)* 1985. [51438]

Mr. Touhig: The information is not held centrally in the form requested.

Information is however available on RN frontline personnel. These personnel work in posts with operational requirements. These personnel may not necessarily spend all their time at sea.

The data in the following table has been collated for the years 2005 and 1997; there is no data available for 1995 or 1985.

Percentage

	Frontline Royal Navy personnel	*Frontline Royal Marines personnel*	*Total frontline personnel*
1997	45.6	62.1	48.1
2005	53.9	65.7	56.0

Senior Officers

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* brigadiers and *(b)* generals were on the active list in the Army in each year since 1997; and what the total strength of the Army was in each year. [50181]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The following table shows the General, Brigadier and total strengths of the Regular Army at the 1 April of each year since 1997, and the latest published data as at 1 December 2005.

Regular Army trained and untrained strengths[1]

Date	*General*[2,3,4]	*Brigadier*[4]	*Total strength*[4]
April-1997	60	170	109,800
April-1998	60	180	109,830
April-1999	60	180	109,720
April-2000	60	180	110,050
April-2001	60	190	109,530
April-2002	50	180	110,050
April-2003	60	180	112,130
April-2004	60	180	112,750
April-2005	60	180	109,290
December 2005	60	180	107,930

[1] Figures are for the Regular Army and therefore exclude full-time reserve service, Gurkhas, the Home Service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment and Mobilised Reservists. It includes trained and untrained personnel.
[2] Includes officers who have held the appointment of chief of general staff and are retained on the active list.
[3] Figures for Generals include Generals, Lieutenant Generals and Major Generals.
[4] Figures rounded to the nearest 10.

The "Rank Structure of the UK Regular Forces" is published quarterly as a national statistic in the Defence Analytical Services Agency's "Tri-Service Publication 9" (TSP 9). This is available publicly on the internet at: www.dasa.mod.uk.

Service Families (Medical Services)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what general medical services are provided for the *(a)* families and *(b)* partners of those serving in the armed forces; and if he will make a statement; [51821]

(2) what steps he is taking to provide the *(a)* families and *(b)* partners of armed forces personnel at RAF Henlow with general medical services; and if he will make a statement. [51826]

Mr. Touhig: At its overseas bases, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) provides primary health care to all entitled dependants, as well as secondary health care in Cyprus and Gibraltar. In Germany, secondary care is provided by the MOD via contracts with regional German hospitals.

In the UK, the provision of general medical services for families and dependants is the responsibility of the NHS. Depending on the training requirements for Defence medical services staff and on the availability of spare capacity to care for a limited dependant population without compromising the medical centre's primary task, the MOD does provide primary care to dependants at some service medical centre locations.

The medical centre at RAF Henlow does not, however, conduct GP vocational training, nor does it have the spare capacity to provide health care for dependants. General medical services for dependants at RAF Henlow are therefore provided by the NHS. The local RAF welfare support services can provide details of the local NHS practices where dependants can register.

Service Widows/Widowers

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) under what circumstances the *(a)* widow and *(b)* widower of a former member of armed forces personnel may claim all or part of his or her spouse's pension; [47979]

(2) what pension the *(a)* widow and *(b)* widower of a former member of service personnel is entitled to if their partner's death was (i) a result of service in HM armed forces and (ii) not related to service in HM armed forces. [47982]

Mr. Touhig: A widow or widower of a former member of the armed forces is entitled to claim pension benefits if the member dies in retirement with a preserved pension or a pension already in payment. However, where the widow or widower married the member after the member left the armed forces, only the service given on or after 6 April 1978 will count towards their pension.

There are a range of benefits paid on the death of a former member. The level of benefit depends on a number of factors including date and cause of death, rank, salary and number of dependent children. I will arrange for the scheme booklets that cover these issues in more detail to be placed in the House Library. These booklets are available on www.mod.uk (with a search on 'pensions').

Space Tracking and Surveillance System

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the space tracking and surveillance system will be operational. [50809]

Mr. Ingram: This is a matter for the US Government which are developing this system for US use.

Submarines

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many UK ports cater for *(a)* UK nuclear submarines and *(b)* UK submarines armed with nuclear weapons; and if he will list those where maintenance of (i) UK nuclear submarines and (ii) UK submarines armed with nuclear weapons is carried out. [50262]

Mr. Ingram: Nuclear-powered submarines have two base ports in the UK: HMNB Clyde at Faslane and HMNB Devonport at Plymouth. In addition, nuclear-powered submarines are being built at Barrow-in-Furness. All three ports have facilities for the maintenance of the vessels' nuclear propulsion plants but, once submarines are in service, all such maintenance is carried out at Faslane or Devonport.

Nuclear-powered submarines are permitted to berth at five other locations in the UK (RNAD Coulport, HMNB Portsmouth, Loch Ewe, Loch Goil and Broadford Bay). Work is underway to authorise further UK ports for nuclear powered submarine visits, including Southampton and Portland. Maintenance of the submarines' nuclear propulsion systems is not carried out in any of these five existing berths, nor will it be at the two proposed ones. However, routine maintenance of non-nuclear systems—which is a normal part of maintaining any vessel, including nuclear-powered submarines—can be conducted at any suitable location.

The classification of berths for nuclear powered submarines does not differentiate between those armed with nuclear and/or conventional weapons.

Type 45 Destroyers

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* original estimated cost and *(b)* cost on completion was for HMS Daring; and what the (i) original and (ii) current estimate is for each of the other ships in the order. [51569]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence does not hold cost information in the way the question seeks it. However, I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 19 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 2349W.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Bearer Shares (Crown Dependencies)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which Crown Dependencies permit *(a)* the issuance and *(b)* trading in bearer shares. [50568]

Bridget Prentice: I am advised by the Governments of the Crown Dependencies that the issuance of, or trading in, bearer shares is not permitted in Jersey. Bearer shares are also not permitted under Guernsey companies legislation. Since April 2004 the issuance of bearer shares has no longer been permitted in the Isle of Man and any already in existence were disenfranchised unless converted into registered shares. There is a possibility that some remain in existence as registered shares and they could be passed from one person to another, but the Isle of Man Government are not aware of any trading taking place in bearer shares more widely.

Ethiopia

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the political and security situation in Ethiopia, with particular reference to the reported violence in rural areas of the country. [50734]

Ian Pearson: We remain concerned at the reports of ongoing sporadic violence in rural areas of Ethiopia, which demonstrate the continuing political and social divisions in the community. The people of Ethiopia need the reassurance of a peaceful, just and democratic future. To this end, we continue to urge the Government of Ethiopia, and opposition, to exercise restraint, return to inclusive peaceful dialogue and continue the democratisation process. We stand ready to support Ethiopia in achieving this.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the defence attaché in Addis Ababa last visited the ex-Somaliland Scouts Association. [50735]

Ian Pearson: The defence attaché from Addis Ababa visited the Somaliland Scouts Association in Hargeisa on 28 April and 14 September 2005. The principal purpose of the first visit was to discuss the ex-Scouts' welfare. In this context he explained that the UK Government had made provision for their pensions at independence and therefore has no residual responsibility. He also discussed ways in which the defence section in Addis Ababa could assist with

communications to the relevant UK charities to address demonstrable cases of hardship and followed this up on his second visit.

Press Coverage

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on how many occasions since 1 April 2003 he has complained to the Press Complaints Commission about the coverage in the press of *(a)* Ministers or officials and *(b)* his Department; and how many of these complaints were upheld. [47085]

Mr. Straw: None.

Somalia

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the security situation in Somalia. [51424]

Ian Pearson: Somalia has had no effective Government since 1991. We are supporting the establishment of Transitional Federal Institutions to restore peace and security, but in the interim most of Somalia continues to be controlled by armed clans and factions which frequently resort to violence. We therefore advise against all travel to Somalia because of the terrorist threat, the dangerous level of criminal activity and internal insecurity. Westerners and those working for western organisations have been targeted in recent shootings.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the activities of *(a)* al-Qaeda and *(b)* Islamic fundamentalists in Somalia. [51427]

Ian Pearson: The absence of effective Government in Somalia creates a vacuum in which terrorists, such as, al-Qaeda, operate, threatening the region and the wider international community. Islamic fundamentalists are seeking to create an Islamic State in Somalia. We have been closely engaged in the Somali national reconciliation conference and the subsequent political process. We continue to work closely with the UN and other members of the international community to achieve a comprehensive and lasting settlement and a return to good governance in Somalia, through the establishment of Transitional Federal Institutions and a return to democracy.

Staff Pay

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many staff in his Department are paid on a performance-related basis. [50515]

Ian Pearson: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office employs a total of 6,078 UK-based staff, including inward secondees from other Departments, at its locations in the United Kingdom and overseas. All are paid on a performance-related basis.

Locally-engaged (LE) staff at posts overseas are employed and paid on the basis of prevailing local practice. All posts have been asked to introduce wherever possible performance-related pay systems, although we have no details of the numbers of LE staff to whom this currently applies.

Sudan/Chad

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of cross-border attacks by militias between Sudan and Chad; and what discussions he has had with the *(a)* African Union and *(b)* UN on measures to reduce such attacks. [50526]

Ian Pearson: Relations between Chad and Sudan have been strained since the rebel attack on Adre, Chad on 18 December last year. Although an attack on that scale has not reoccurred, the security situation on the border remains extremely tense, with both Chadian and Sudanese militias operating. We have made clear our view that no action should be taken to inflame this situation and my noble Friend, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for Africa, Lord Triesman of Tottenham, did so most recently during the Sudanese Foreign Minister's visit to London on 3 February.

We welcome the signing in Libya of an agreement between Chad and Sudan on 8 February in which the two countries pledged to improve bilateral relations and refrain from supporting rebel militias. We will press both Governments to fulfil their commitments and our embassy in Khartoum is in regular contact with the African Union and the UN in order to monitor the situation.

UK Diplomatic Posts (Security)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the security of UK embassies and consulates in countries where there have been demonstrations about the cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed. [51545]

Ian Pearson: There has been no specific change in the threat to the security of our posts overseas as a direct result of the cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed. However, we have been in touch with all our posts to provide additional security advice in the event of possible demonstrations and advised that they maintain a heightened level of vigilance.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Business Investment

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* level of inward investment and *(b)* number of new start up businesses in Northern Ireland was in each year since 2000, broken down by council area. [51068]

Angela E. Smith: Table *(a)* as follows provides the level of inward investment associated with assisted projects for each of the financial years 2000–01 to 2004–05, analysed by district council area.

Table (a)[1]: Total planned investment

£ million

District council	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	Grand total
Antrim	—	24.8	0.5	—	16.4	41.8
Ards	2.1	—	2.8	0.0	0.1	5.0
Armagh	—	—	0.4	—	—	0.4
Ballymena	2.5	10.0	—	14.4	—	26.9
Banbridge	—	—	—	—	2.9	2.9
Belfast	43.9	25.6	7.0	98.8	66.2	241.5
Carrickfergus	35.1	6.9	5.4	—	—	47.4
Castlereagh	—	22.5	—	—	1.8	24.3
Coleraine	—	—	—	—	0.0	0.0
Cookstown	—	—	1.4	—	22.6	24.0
Craigavon	1.5	16.3	37.9	12.8	33.1	101.6
Derry	9.3	13.5	92.0	11.7	37.1	163.7
Down	—	3.4	—	—	—	3.4
Dungannon	0.7	11.8	—	0.1	4.2	16.8
Fermanagh	—	0.6	7.9	3.9	0.0	12.4
Larne	—	—	—	0.9	8.0	8.9
Limavady	34.0	—	—	1.1	—	35.1
Lisburn	—	17.5	—	—	1.1	18.5
Magherafelt	—	—	—	0.0	0.0	0.0
Moyle	—	—	—	—	6.5	6.5
Newry and Mourne	5.0	9.0	0.6	—	—	14.5
Newtownabbey	129.3	41.5	—	0.0	0.0	170.9
North Down	—	0.3	1.6	1.2	5.3	8.4
Omagh	—	27.7	—	—	—	27.7
Strabane	1.3	—	9.3	4.4	4.4	19.4
Grand total	[2]264.7	[2]231.4	[2]166.7	[2]149.4	[2]209.7	[2]1,021.8

[1] Planned investment (£ million) by assisted inward investment projects 2000–01 to 2004–05.
[2] Some differences between table totals may arise due to rounding.

Table *(b)* as follows presents the number of assisted business starts during the same time period.

Table (b)[1]

District council	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	Grand total
Antrim	17	25	47	51	83	223
Ards	57	65	95	152	155	524
Armagh	59	50	85	112	129	435
Ballymena	47	49	64	59	99	318
Ballymoney	15	19	39	38	64	175
Banbridge	44	54	67	81	105	351
Belfast	95	118	211	319	429	1,172
Carrickfergus	11	22	41	52	86	212
Castlereagh	22	33	48	71	103	277
Coleraine	42	26	63	71	124	326
Cookstown	57	47	62	75	104	345
Craigavon	81	67	93	136	196	572
Derry	119	102	140	212	360	933
Down	83	92	96	157	233	661
Dungannon	34	57	80	116	151	438
Fermanagh	104	80	93	148	227	652
Larne	26	23	56	61	88	254
Limavady	37	28	46	66	112	289
Lisburn	47	62	154	126	164	553
Magherafelt	59	64	102	109	131	465
Moyle	8	9	15	17	41	90
Newry and Mourne	153	132	162	145	274	866
Newtownabbey	29	33	83	143	139	427
North Down	60	92	82	127	137	498
Omagh	43	45	65	75	104	332
Strabane	25	40	43	62	83	253
Grand total	1,374	1,434	2,132	2,781	3,921	11,642

[1] Number of assisted start-ups by district council area 2000–01 to 2004–05

Carers (Subsidised Travel)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to provide subsidised travel for carers in Northern Ireland. [51063]

Mr. Woodward: I have no plans at present to provide subsidised travel for carers in Northern Ireland. The Department for Regional Development is committed to reviewing the Northern Ireland Concessionary Fares Scheme. This review is due to commence shortly. Options for extending provision, including to carers, will be considered as part of this review.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to extend the Northern Ireland concessionary fares scheme to include carers; how many people he expects would benefit as a result; how much the extension would cost; and if he will make a statement. [51064]

Mr. Woodward: I have no plans, at present, to extend concessionary travel on public transport to include carers. The Department for Regional Development is committed to reviewing the Northern Ireland Concessionary Fares Scheme. This review is due to commence shortly. Options for extending provision, including to carers, will be considered as part of this review.

Citizens Jury

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions his Department consulted citizens juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens jury. [46245]

Mr. Hain: The Northern Ireland Office has never consulted citizens juries on departmental policies.

Although the Northern Ireland Office has not used citizens juries we do provide an opportunity for stakeholders and the wider public to contribute to NIO polices and legislation including where appropriate focus groups and public meetings. The aim is to increase the involvement of people and groups in public consultation and to seek their views. Consultations are carried out in accordance with the Cabinet Office Code of Practice on Written Consultation and the consultation period will normally last for a minimum of 12 weeks to give the public time to respond. The Northern Ireland Office website www.nio.gov.uk provides a library of consultations and where available the summary of responses and associated revision to the policy or legislation.

Invest Northern Ireland

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions have taken place between representatives of Invest Northern Ireland and *(a)* each district council in Northern Ireland and *(b)* Larne Enterprise Development Company in the last 12 months; and what representations Invest Northern Ireland have received from each. [51050]

Angela E. Smith: In the last 12 months, Invest NI staff have represented the agency at 383 meetings of committees/partnerships that have either been council led or have included council involvement. In most cases these meetings involved more than one council. A breakdown for each individual council area is given in the following table.

In addition, staff throughout the agency, and in particular its local office network, are regularly involved in discussions with local councils in relation to a broad range of Invest NI's functions and activities.

In the same period, Invest NI's chief executive also met with ten local councils to update them on Invest NI's current activity in their areas and to discuss any issues of concern (these meetings are also captured in the following table). During this period each council was also invited to meet with Invest NI's chairman and chief executive to comment on Invest NI's 2005–08 draft corporate plan.

Invest NI has invested considerable time and effort to build a positive working relationship with Larne Enterprise Development company (LEDCOM) and staff from the agency have attended a total of 43 formal meetings or events associated with LEDCOM during the last 12 months. In addition there have been many other informal discussions between Invest NI and LEDCOM.

Council	*Number of meetings involving representatives of council and Invest NI*
Antrim	39
Ards	40
Armagh C and DC	48
Ballymena	43
Ballymoney	43
Banbridge	43
Belfast CC	54
Carrickfergus	48
Castlereagh	15
Coleraine	55
Cookstown	37
Craigavon	50
Derry CC	50
Down	43
Dungannon and South Tyrone	49
Fermanagh	36
Larne	42
Limavady	33
Lisburn CC	16
Magherafelt	19
Moyle	39
Newry and Mourne	57
Newtownabbey	39
North Down	36
Omagh	47
Strabane	54

Planning Appeal Commission

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Planning Appeal Commission hearings were held in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [51329]

Angela E. Smith: The Planning Appeals Commission is a tribunal non-departmental public body, and the chief commissioner has written to the hon. Gentleman. A copy of the letter has been placed in the Library.

Post-primary Education

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will carry out an audit of the post-primary schools estate in Northern Ireland to establish the *(a)* extent and *(b)* cost of (i) investment and (ii) divestment that would be necessary to implement the changes proposed in the draft Education (Northern Ireland) Order. [51484]

Angela E. Smith: The changes being proposed by the draft Education (Northern Ireland) Order do not necessarily require accommodation changes. As local collaboration plans are developed to meet the entitlement framework there may be a need to provide facilities in some schools in support of the new arrangements, and these would be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has also announced recently an independent review of education in Northern Ireland which will look at the strategic planning of the whole estate, taking account of provision for 14 to 19-year-olds. Conclusions from the review would therefore inform implementation of decisions following consultation on the draft Order.

Tourism

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to assist the hospitality industry in Northern Ireland to improve further the levels of service to visitors. [51357]

Angela E. Smith: The tourism and hospitality sector has been identified as a key area for achieving economic growth in Northern Ireland. There are a number of Government agencies working together to assist the hospitality industry in areas such as customer service, staff skills development and competitiveness by providing a range of initiatives and programmes.

Government supports the People 1st Sector Skills Council to identify the skills needs of the hospitality industry in Northern Ireland and to broker a formal agreement between Government, educators and employers to meet these skill needs. In addition, hospitality and tourism has been identified as a priority skill area for further education by the Department for Employment and Learning.

Invest NI also has an important role to play; client companies of Invest NI, including those with a tourism focus, can avail of a range of support for businesses such as the Business Improvement Training programme which is targeted at delivering company specific projects which address specific training and development issues. Mentoring support may also be provided aimed at helping companies improve their product and service.

NITB as the strategic leader of tourism has as one of the objectives of the Strategic Framework for Action 2004–2007 'The Delivery of Memorable Experiences'. One of the delivery mechanisms for this objective is a series of Masterclasses the aim of which is to raise the performance in the tourism industry and develop international competitiveness. NITB, in conjunction with Tourism Training Trust (TTT) has recently completed a review of the Welcome to Excellence suite of training programmes for the hospitality industry and TTT in conjunction with other tourism stakeholders will be encouraging the hospitality industry to avail of this training.

HEALTH

Children (Behavioural Problems)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children were referred to NHS services with behavioural problems in 2004–05, broken down by local education authority. [43916]

Mr. Byrne: Information is not collected in the format requested. An Office for National Statistics survey, "Mental Health of Children and Young People, 2004" (September 2005) found that 6 per cent., of children aged five to 6 had a conduct disorder.

Colon Cancer

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of *(a)* the number and *(b)* the proportion of the population of England aged over 50 who have been screened for cancer of the colon; what plans she has (i) to promote and (ii) to extend such screening; and what estimate she has made of the proportion of the population likely to be screened in the future. [44309]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Screening for bowel cancer in England is currently only available as part of the English bowel cancer screening pilot in Coventry and Warwickshire. The pilot began in 2000, and is now into its third round of screening. People aged 58 to 69 are sent a kit called a faecal occult blood (FOB) test, which looks for hidden blood in the stools, an indicator that bowel cancer may be present. People are invited every two years, and complete the kit in their own homes before returning it to the laboratory where the results are interpreted.

Around two percent., of people who take the FOB test will be positive, and they are invited for a full bowel investigation called a colonoscopy.

In 2004–05, 31,074 people were screened at a cost of around £800,000. Research and an independent evaluation of the pilot have shown that around 60 percent., of the population take up their invitations to participate in bowel cancer screening.

The Government have stated its commitment to a national bowel cancer screening programme. On 30 January 2006, the new Health White Paper, "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services" reaffirmed that the programme will be rolled out from April 2006. Departmental budgets for 2006–07 are currently being finalised, and announcements will be made in due course.

Free Care

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what directions she plans to give to NHS trusts following the recent decision by the High Court to clarify the responsibility between the NHS and social services departments on what constitutes *(a)* free care and *(b)* means-tested care. [48907]

Mr. Byrne: I intend to reinforce existing guidance to the national health service and local councils, alerting them to the decision of the High Court and ensuring that their current local policies are in line with the

judgement. In April, we will publish for consultation a national framework for NHS continuing care, which will give further clarity and consistency on the responsibilities of NHS and social services for long term care.

Maternity Services

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many midwifery assistants have been employed by Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust in each of the last five years. [45100]

Mr. Byrne: The table shows the number of unqualified maternity nursing staff employed by Southport and Ormskirk Hospital National Health Service Trust.

NHS hospital and community health services: unqualified maternity nursing staff employed by Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Unqualified nurses	33	39	33	30	14
Nursery nurse	[1] —	1	[1] —	[1] —	[1] —
Nursing assistant/ auxiliary	33	38	33	30	14

[1] zero

Source:
NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre Non-Medical Workforce Census.

NHS Trusts

Julia Goldsworthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 151W, on NHS trusts, if she will list the NHS organisations with which turnaround teams will be working; what the total number of staff is in those teams; and whether their reports will be made public. [49161]

Jane Kennedy: The turnaround teams were announced by the Secretary of State in a ministerial statement on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS.

The first stage of this is a baseline assessment, the aim of which is to ensure there is an agreed understanding of the local financial problem and that actions are in hand to address this. The contract for the baseline assessment was awarded to consultants KPMG. The full list of organisations where baseline assessments are being undertaken is as follows.

KPMG identified the specific staffing requirements to undertake the baseline assessments.

I released a report from the Director of Finance of the Department of Health on 25 January 2006. This gives the results of the first phase of assessments. Further reports will follow.

Organisations subject to baseline assessment

Norfolk Suffolk and Cambridgeshire SHA
Cambridge City PCT
South Cambridgeshire PCT
Ipswich PCT and Suffolk Coastal NHS Trust
Suffolk West PCT
Queen Elizabeth Hospital Kings Lynn NHS Trust
West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust
Broadlands PCT
Waveney PCT
North Norfolk PCT
Southern Norfolk PCT

Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA
Bedfordshire Heartlands PCT
Bedford Hospitals NHS Trust
West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust
Dacorum PCT
East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

Essex SHA
Chelmsford PCT
Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust
Essex Rivers Trust
Colchester PCT
Tendring PCT
Witham, Braintree and Halstead Care PCT

North West London SHA
Hillingdon PCT
Hounslow PCT
Kensington and Chelsea PCT
West Middlesex University NHS Trust
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust

North Central London SHA
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust
Royal Free Hospital NHS Trust
North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust

South East London SHA
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust
Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust
The Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust
Bexley PCT
Bromley PCT
Lewisham PCT
Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust

South West London SHA
Wandsworth PCT
Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust
Kingston PCT
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust

County Durham and Tees Valley SHA
Sedgefield PCT
South Tees Hospitals NHS Trust
North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust

North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire SHA
Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT
Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale PCT
Selby and York PCT

West Yorkshire SHA
Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust

Cheshire and Mersey SHA
Cheshire West PCT
The Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust

East Cheshire NHS Trust
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust

Thames Valley SHA
Oxford Radcliffe Hospital NHS Trust

Hampshire and IoW SHA
New Forest PCT
East Hampshire PCT and Fareham and Gosport PCT
Southampton University Hospital NHS Trust
North Hampshire Hospitals NHS Trust
Isle of Wight Trust
Isle of Wight PCT
North Hampshire PCT
Blackwater Valley and Hart PCT

Surrey and Sussex SHA
The Royal West Sussex NHS Trust
Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey PCT
Guildford and Waverley PCT
Ashford and St. Peters Trust
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust

Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA
West Wiltshire PCT
South Wiltshire PCT
Kennet and North Wiltshire PCT
RUH Bath
North Somerset PCT
Weston Area Health Trust
Cotswold and Vale PCT

Shropshire and Staffordshire SHA
North Stoke PCT
University Hospitals of North Staffordshire NHS Trust
Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust

Birmingham and the Black Country SHA
Royal Wolverhampton Hospital NHS Trust
Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospital NHS Trust
Good Hope Hospital NHS Trust

West Midlands South SHA
South Warwickshire NHS Trust
George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust

South Yorkshire SHA
Barnsley PCT
Sheffield PCTs (North)
Sheffield PCTs (South West)
Sheffield PCTs (South East)
Sheffield PCTs (West)

South West Peninsula SHA
Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust
Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust

Trent SHA
United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust
High Peak and Dales PCT

Cumbria and Lancashire SHA
Morecambe Bay Trust
Morecambe Bay PCT
North Cumbria Trust

Kent and Medway SHA
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells Trust
Maidstone Weald PCT
South West Kent PCT

Post-natal Depression

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what target she has set for the percentage of mothers identified with post-natal depression receiving treatment. [45707]

Mr. Byrne: The maternity standard of the national service framework for children, young people and maternity services requires all professionals involved in the care of women immediately following childbirth to be able to distinguish normal emotional and psychological changes from significant mental health problems, and to refer women for support according to their needs.

Professional Misconduct

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* prosecutions and *(b)* convictions of NHS employees there have been under sections 38 to 41 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003. [48218]

Fiona Mactaggart: I have been asked to reply.

Data is not held centrally by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform or the Department of Health on the number of NHS employees who have been prosecuted and found guilty of offences under sections 38 to 41 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum/Immigration

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many failed asylum seekers applied for judicial review of their decisions in 2005. [50640]

Mr. McNulty: Information on judicial reviews is published annually. Copies are available from the Library of the House and on the Home Office research development and statistics directorate website at http://homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html. Data for 2005 will be available in August 2006.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* immigration staff, *(b)* female immigration officers and *(c)* male immigration officers were in post at each of the asylum removal centres in the last period for which figures are available. [50641]

Mr. McNulty: The information requested is set out in the table.

IND staff employed in immigration removal centres (as at end January 2006)

	Total staff	*Male*	*Female*
Campsfield	6	2	4
Colnbrook	8	1	7
Dover	8	5	3
Dungavel	7	4	3
Harmondsworth	43	17	26
Haslar	6	3	3
Lindholme	6	3	3
Oakington	50	22	28
Tinsley	6	3	3
Yarl's Wood	22	11	11
Total	162	71	91

Note:

At all the centres there are both operational (warranted) and non-operational (administrative) staff who are responsible for managing contacts between detainees and case holders and for monitoring the custodial service, provided by contractors. There are additional members of staff at each of Harmondsworth, Oakington and Yarl's Wood who are responsible for performing on site casework for the non suspensive appeals (NSA) and fast track asylum processes.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library copies of the Home Office guidance issued to immigration officers on making decisions on whether to detain asylum applicants. [50643]

Mr. McNulty: Guidance to immigration officers on making decisions on whether to detain asylum applicants is contained in chapter 38 of the Operational Enforcement Manual (OEM) and in chapter 31 of the immigration directorate's instructions (IDIs). Both documents are maintained and updated as electronic guidance. Both are available from the IND website.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers who had fully complied with their reporting requirements were detained in 2005. [50646]

Mr. McNulty: 3,481 people were detained at Immigration Service reporting events during 2005. For the first quarter of the year, the figure contains both asylum and non-asylum cases as the data was not separately collated. Sifting out such cases could now only be achieved by the examination of individual case records at disproportionate cost. Also, without similar reference to individual records, it is not possible to confirm that all of these individuals had been fully compliant with reporting restrictions throughout their applications.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers were detained in removal centres in each of the last three years. [50661]

Mr. McNulty: The Home Office does not hold information on the total number of persons who were detained in each of the last three years. It would only be available by examination of individual case files at disproportionate cost. Quarterly snapshots are published showing the number of persons detained solely under Immigration Act powers on the last Saturday of each quarter. This information may be found in the quarterly asylum statistics publication and can be found on the Home Office research development and statistics directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what average time social services took to respond to a call to collect an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child in the last period for which figures are available. [50669]

Mr. McNulty: The Home Office does not hold centrally figures relating to the social services response time to collect an unaccompanied asylum seeking child and as these figures are not routinely recorded at United Kingdom ports they could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of *(a)* formal investigation of an immigration complaint by the immigration and nationality directorate and *(b)* processing a service-level complaint was in the last period for which figures are available. [50657]

Mr. McNulty: The costs associated with the immigration and nationality directorate's complaints process are variable, depending on the precise nature of the complaint and the investigation undertaken. Therefore these figures are not available.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the annual wage is of an *(a)* immigration officer and *(b)* entry clearance officer. [50663]

Mr. McNulty: The information is as follows.

(a) The annual basic salary of an immigration officer is dependent upon their length of service in the grade, their performance and the location in which they are working. Immigration officers based in London are paid on a scale currently rising from £19,337 to £24,670. Immigration officers working at Gatwick are paid on the same scale.

Immigration officers based outside of London are paid on a scale currently rising from £18,948 to £24,174. In addition to the basic salary, allowances may be paid according to location and shifts.

(b) The annual basic salary of an entry clearance officer (ECO) would normally be either on the immigration officer London scale rising from £19,337 to £24,670 or the executive officer scale rising from £18,568 to £22,978.

Those from a Government Department other than the Home Office are paid on their own Department's scale. In addition, allowances may be paid according to location.

Blueprint Project

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent on the Blueprint project in each of the last three years. [47705]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Expenditure on the Blueprint drug education research programme is shown in the table:

	£ million
2003–04	1.8
2004–05	2.3
2005–06	1.2

British Citizenship

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will waive the fees involved for applying for and gaining British citizenship in circumstances where British subjects who are long-term UK resident wish to travel to countries for whom citizenship is a requirement of entry. [50606]

Mr. McNulty: It is a legal requirement under section 42 (1) of the British Nationality Act 1981 that the fee payable by virtue of the Act shall be paid before a person is registered as a British citizen. There is, therefore, no discretion to waive fees for any particular group of applicants for British citizenship.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received from members of the public on the cost to British subjects of applying for and acquiring British citizenship. [50608]

Mr. McNulty: There is no record of such representations. To check whether any have been made could be achieved only at disproportionate cost.

Cannabis

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he plans to undertake to highlight the risks of cannabis use. [47696]

Mr. Charles Clarke: On 19 January, I announced our intention to introduce a comprehensive package of education and public health measures, in partnership with DH, DfES and the police, including:

- targeting young people through the FRANK campaign to raise understanding about the dangerous and illegal impact of cannabis consumption;
- a campaign aimed at the broader public that will be run in partnership with the police and will publicise the penalties for cannabis dealing, production and possession;.
- a campaign to highlight the dangers of cannabis of those with an existing mental health condition aimed at sufferers, carers and health professionals.

The package of communications will ensure that no one, including young people, is left in any doubt about the harms and legal status of cannabis.

Child Protection

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he has taken to reduce the incidence of children accessing obscene images on the internet. [48164]

Paul Goggins: The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) was formed following an agreement between the Government, police and the internet service provider industry that a partnership approach was needed to tackle the distribution of child abuse images online. It provides a 'notice and take down' service to UK ISPs so they can remove illegal content from their servers and works closely with law enforcement agencies to help them trace offenders. The IWF and ISPs have reduced the proportion of potentially illegal content found to be hosted in the UK from 18 per cent. in 1997 to less than 1 per cent. now. We have been working with the main UK ISPs as they put in place technical solutions to prevent their customers accidentally accessing illegal child abuse websites identified by the IWF.

In November 2005, we published the 'Good Practice Guidance for Search Safe Providers and Advice to the Public on How to Search Safely' document. This gives advice to the public on how to make good use of search engines to explore the internet and reduce the risk of being exposed to unwanted and unsuitable results. We are also working with industry to develop a BSI standard for software that helps parents control what their children access on the internet.

We launched a £1 million public awareness campaign on 15 January this year. The campaign is the latest wave of our awareness activity and includes advice for parents and children on how to use the internet safely, including how to avoid accessing illegal images.

We have announced the creation of the new Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre, which will be operational from April 2006. The centre will be a focal point for police, child protection and industry work to ensure that children can use the internet safely.

Commission for Racial Equality

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total budget for the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) was in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06; how much funding the CRE has received in each year since 2000–01 to support its work with public bodies to promote race equality; and how much it will receive in 2006–07 for that work. [44875]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* The total budget for the CRE comprises the grant-in-aid it receives from the Home Office plus income from other sources. In 2004–05, its total budget was £19.7 million, made up of £19.2 million grant-in-aid and £0.5 million other income. In 2005–06 its grant-in-aid is £19.1 million and Parliamentary Supply Estimates assume that the CRE will receive £0.5 million in other income. Estimates for 2006–07 are still in preparation.

In 2001–02 the CRE's grant-in-aid was increased by £3 million to provide for the cost of its new enforcement duties under the provisions of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, including its work with public bodies to promote race equality. As this sum was built into the baseline for subsequent years, it is not possible to identify how much of its grant-in-aid for later years relates to this work.

Consultants

Martin Horwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department takes to ensure that consultancies do not claim excessive expenses while working for the Department and its agencies. [29056]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Contracts provide that expenses are reimbursed on the basis of reasonable costs actually incurred within the standard limits of travel and subsistence rates paid to civil servants of equivalent status. Expenses will not be paid for assignments based within London. Claims are validated by Departmental supervisory staff. Invoices are paid in arrears and are monitored to ensure costs comply with the contract. Consultants are required under contract to retain records of reimbursable costs for two years for audit purposes.

Crack Cocaine

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of crack cocaine users in the UK. [47691]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The British Crime Survey (BCS) provides an estimate of the number of people in England and Wales who used drugs in the year before interview. The estimated numbed of people aged 16 to 59 in England and Wales who had used crack cocaine in the previous year obtained from the BCS for the year 2004–05 is 32,000.

The BCS is a good measure of drug use in the general population and provides a consistent measure of trends over time. However it should be noted that, as a survey of households, the BCS does not cover some groups who may have relatively high rates of crack cocaine use, such as the homeless and prisoners. Nor, in practice, will any household survey cover people whose lives are so busy or chaotic that they are hardly ever at home. Therefore these estimates may underestimate the number of crack users in the country. Home Office commissioned research to obtain better estimates of the number of problematic drug users, including crack users, on a regular basis is currently under way.

Criminal Justice System (Ethnic Monitoring)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the level of ethnic monitoring at all stages of the criminal justice system; and how it has changed since 1997. [49127]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government recognises the importance of ethnic monitoring in the criminal justice system and the necessity of continuing to improve this in order to ensure that the criminal justice system is fair and non-discriminatory.

Ethnic monitoring based upon visual perception began to be introduced in the criminal justice system in the 1980s. Since one April 2003 agencies have in addition introduced the recording of ethnicity based on self-classification using the 16 categories used in the 2001 census. The aim is to continue to work with agencies on implementing fully the 2001 categories across the criminal justice system over the next few years. The results from this monitoring are annually published by the Home Office in the report "Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System". Up until 1997 the published data covered racist incidents, homicides, stop and searches, cautioning, persons under the supervision of the probation service or in prison as well as the ethnicity of criminal justice practitioners. Since 1997 the extent of the data published has expanded and now also includes arrests, court proceedings, police complaints and youth offending.

Crown Prosecution Service

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions his Department had with the Crown Prosecution Service regarding the prosecutions of *(a)* Otis Ferry and *(b)* Maya Evans; and if he will make a statement. [50832]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office has had no discussions with the Crown Prosecution Service regarding these cases.

Custody Conditions

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the conditions in which people awaiting trial in custody are kept; and whether any changes are planned to the applicable standards. [50019]

Fiona Mactaggart: Unconvicted prisoners have a special status and as far as possible retain their rights as citizens. This includes arrangements to provide more visits and other privileges not available to convicted prisoners. There are no plans to alter the current Prison Service standard.

Domestic Violence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the new powers of arrest under section 10(1) of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 will be implemented in England and Wales. [51343]

Fiona Mactaggart: Section 10 of the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims (DVC&V) Act 2004 made the provision for common assault to become an arrestable offence. On 1 January 2006, the existing arrest provisions (under PACE) whereby specific offences are arrestable offences based on the concept of seriousness were replaced by a simplified approach providing a constable with the power of arrest for all offences.

The exercise of the power will be subject to the constable considering and being able to show that arrest is necessary. A new PACE Code of Practice on Arrest was introduced on 1 January 2006 which set out the necessity principle in line with section 110 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police (SOCAP) Act 2005.

This has meant that the commencement of section 110 of SOCAP has now overtaken section 10 of the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act. Section 10 of the DVC&V Act has therefore been repealed prior to commencement.

Domestic Violence

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what provision is available in *(a)* South Yorkshire and *(b)* Doncaster North constituency to deal with domestic violence. [50589]

Fiona Mactaggart: The following provision for domestic violence is available in South Yorkshire and Doncaster North constituency. *(a)* South Yorkshire Sheffield:Women's Aid: Provides advice, specialist support and safe accommodation for women and children experiencing physical, emotional or sexual abuse. Haven House: Provide advice, specialist support and safe accommodation. Ashiana:

An Asian Women's Refuge providing advice, support and safe accommodation for women and children who have experienced physical, mental or sexual abuse. Women from Sheffield are referred on to Asian women's refuges in other towns. Young Women's Housing Project: Provides support to young women affected by sexual abuse. They provide a safe house and supported flats for single women and women with children.

Parson Cross Domestic Abuse Project: Community based project providing telephone support, home visits and a referral service in the Fox Hill and Parson Cross areas. They offer a weekly self help 'Women Talking to Women' group, and offer a support service for children and young people. South East Sheffield Domestic Abuse Project: Community based project also offering a helpline, support and weekly women's self help group in the Woodhouse, Mosborough, Hackenthorpe, Beighton, Waterthorpe and Intake areas. Burngreave Domestic Abuse Project: Community based project in the Burngreave area, providing a helpline and support to women affected by domestic abuse.

Sheaf Domestic Abuse Project: A community based project covering the Sheaf Valley area. Provide a helpline and support to women or men affected by domestic abuse. Other services:Roshni Asian Women's Resource Centre: Provides advice and information for Asian women in a non-judgmental fashion, and also raises awareness of domestic abuse issues in Asian communities.

Sheffield Rape and Sexual Abuse Counselling Service: Provides phone and face-to-face counselling, and support groups for women and girls over 13 who have experienced sexual abuse or rape. Priority is given to Black women and women with disabilities.

Women's Counselling and Therapy Service: Work with women who have experienced childhood sexual abuse, and provide a general counselling service to young women (aged 16 to 25).Sheffield Working Women's Opportunities Project (SWWOP): Support women working in street prostitution. NSPCC—The NSPCC offer direct help to children and young people where there are significant concerns in relation to child abuse. Provide a national 24 hour helpline for advice and counselling. Rotherham:Rotherham Women's Refuge: Provides safe and supportive temporary accommodation to women, and women and their children escaping violence, four women and up to six children can be accommodated at any one time.

Choices and Options: An outreach/support service for women experiencing domestic violence. Apna Haq: An outreach/support service for non-white women particularly Asian women focussing on those who are or have experienced domestic violence, forced marriage, abandonment or sexual harassment. Risky Business: Works with girls/young women at risk from sexual exploitation Rotherham Women's Counselling Service: Provides counselling on a one to one for women who have experienced domestic violence and or sexual abuse. Barnsley:Primary Care Trust: £100,000 has been provided over two years for the provision of domestic abuse counselling and training, Barnsley Domestic Violence Group: Help and support for men and women, support groups, counselling, drop in facilities and helpline.

Barnsley Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Helpline: Telephone and face to face counselling for women who have been raped or sexually abused at any time in their lives. Women's Refuge: Refuge for women and children fleeing domestic violence. Support, advice, befriending and counselling. Referral via Samaritans. Pathways: Additional £88,000 has been identified from Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) for Pathways; an organisation that provides a wide range of services to victims of domestic abuse. *(b)* Doncaster Women's Aid: provides a service to women and their children who are living with, or fleeing Domestic Violence. Doncaster Women's Aid (DWA) works in accordance with the definition of Domestic Violence as decided upon by the Doncaster Domestic Violence Working Party.

Doncaster Women's Centre: The centre offers support, information, counselling, training and volunteering opportunities to women.H.E.L.P. Holidays: A non-profit making charity run mainly by people who are or have been lone parents. Dedicated to providing, high quality, low cost holidays for lone parent families. (Restricted to Members only). In respect of provision to deal with domestic violence in Doncaster North all of the above are accessible across Doncaster Metropolitan Borough

Council. National services, for example the National Free Phone 24 Hour Help Line, are also available to victims of domestic violence throughout England and Wales.

Drugs

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of how many users of class A drugs there were in the UK in each year from 1998 to 2005. [44142]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* Estimates of the number of users of class A drugs in each year in the period 1998 to 2005 are presented in the following table.

Number of 16 to 59-year-old users of class A drugs in England and Wales in the year before interview from the British Crime Survey

	Number
1998	[1]809,000
2000	1,001,000
2001–02	996,000
2002–03	1,028,000
2003–04	1,091,000
2004–05	1,012,000

[1] These point estimates are based on survey data and are therefore subject to sampling error and have associated confidence intervals.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the average sum spent each day by problematic drug users on drugs; and what percentage of such money he estimates is raised through crime. [44646]

Paul Goggins: Current estimates of the average sum spent each day by problematic drug users on drugs are not available.

	Average expenditure per day used (£)
1998	
Amphetamines	9.31
Heroin	28.80
Cocaine	13.68
Cannabis	6.40
Ecstasy	29.94

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of users of class A drugs aged under 25 years in each of the last five years; how many *(a)* residential and *(b)* non-residential drug treatment places were available in each year; and what estimate he has made of the (i) street price and (ii) volume of circulation of (A) cocaine, (B) crack cocaine and (C) heroin in each year. [44647]

Paul Goggins: The available information is given as follows.

Estimates of the number of users of class A drugs, aged 16–24, in each year in the period 2000 to 2005 are presented in table 1.

The Department of Health does not centrally collate information on the number of drug treatment places available.

Estimates of the street prices for cocaine, crack cocaine and heroin are shown in table 2. We do not have estimates of the volume of drugs in circulation on an annual basis.

Table 1: Estimated number of users of class A drugs aged 16 to 24 in England and Wales in the year before interview from the British Crime Survey

	Number of users[1]
2000	542,000
2001–02	499,000
2002–03	474,000
2003–04	493,000
2004–05	494,000

[1] These estimates are based on survey data and are therefore subject to sampling error and have associated confidence intervals.

Table 2: UK average drug prices 2000–05

£

	Cocaine (per gram)	*Crack (per 0.2 g rock)*	*Heroin (per gram)*
December 2000	65	23	70
December 2001	60	21	63
December 2002	56	20	61
December 2003	55	19	62
December 2004	51	18	55
April 2005	51	19	53

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much his Department has spent on campaigns to raise awareness of the health effects of illegal drugs in each year since 1997. [47546]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The FRANK campaign, launched in May 2003, which is administered and funded jointly by the Home Office and Department of Health, provides young people and their families with information and advice about drugs, including health effects. Spend on media and advertising on FRANK is given in the following table.

£ million

	Spend on media and advertising
2003–04	3.7
2004–05	1.9
2005–06 (planned)	1.4

Drugs Classification

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will refer tobacco and alcohol to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs for classification under Schedule 2 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 as Class A, B or C drugs. [45174]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* Tobacco and alcohol will not be referred to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs for the consideration of their control under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

EU Travel Ban

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what mechanisms are in place to alert Ministers to the entry to the UK of individuals on an EU travel ban list; and whether such mechanisms have been triggered since such bans were introduced. [50615]

Mr. McNulty: The Secretary of State designates EU and UN travel bans by order made under section 8B of the Immigration Act 1971—the most recent is the Immigration (Designation of Travel Bans) (Amendment) Order 2005. In accordance with section 8B an individual on an EU or UN travel ban is treated as an excluded person and must be refused entry to the UK. Unless it is considered that one of the exceptions to the obligation to exclude may apply Ministers are not normally approached in individual cases.

Group 4 Securicor

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what key performance indicators are used to evaluate the performance of group 4 Securicor in the provision of the electronic monitoring of offenders. [51209]

Fiona Mactaggart: The performance of group 4 Securicor in the operation of electronic monitoring is evaluated in the following areas of service:

1. Length of breaks in the electronic monitoring service (the period of time for which the service provider is unable to monitor people who are subject to electronic monitoring).

2. The cumulative period of electronic monitoring service breaks over a rolling 12-month period.

3. Length of breaks in call centre telephone services availability.

4. The cumulative period of breaks in call centre telephone services availability over a rolling 12-month period.

5. Telephone response time by human operator to calls to the free-phone in the call centre.

6. Availability of a facility to receive electronic notifications of people who are to be monitored.

7. Installing electronic monitoring equipment and inducting people on to the monitoring programme.

8. Visiting to remove the electronic monitoring equipment at the end of a monitoring requirement.

9. Advising those monitored of approved absences during the curfew period.

10. Reporting instances where the location of a person subject to active tracking is lost and regained, or where the tracking equipment is tampered with.

11. Contacting the curfew address in the event of an absence exceeding a specified time.

12. Reporting a violation of an exclusion requirement to the relevant authority.

13. Informing the relevant authorities of a decision to start breach proceedings, where the service provider is responsible for enforcement action.

14. Attending court breach hearings.

15. Timeliness of operational reports.

16. Providing a monthly statistical report.

17. Providing exception reports relating to the investigation of incidents, and equipment damage and failure.

18. Timeliness of providing reports by non-electronic means.

19. Levels of satisfaction with training provided by the service provider.

20. No persons employed by the service provider are known to have unspent convictions.

21. No incorrect confirmation of the identity of people to be monitored at the time of installing monitoring equipment.

22. Correct staff numbers and types for visits to juveniles.

23. Information about people being monitored being available to the Home Office within a specified to time of it going on to the service provider's computer system.

24. Reporting serious complaints against the service provider to the Home Office within a specified time.

25. Recording and maintaining data about persons already subject to electronic monitoring at the start of the current contracts.

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many contracts have been awarded to Group 4 Securicor for the provision of electronic monitoring of offenders by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* other Government agencies. [51214]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office awarded three contracts to Group 4 Securicor for the operation of electronic monitoring in England and Wales from one April 2005. These contracts are for the North East and North West; East Midlands, Yorkshire and Humberside; and the South East and South West. No such contracts have been awarded by other Government agencies.

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the value is of contracts between the Government and Group 4 Securicor for the provision of electronic monitoring of offenders. [51281]

Fiona Mactaggart: The value of the electronic monitoring contracts depends on the number of people monitored. In the financial year 2005–06, the total value of the contracts awarded to Group 4 Securicor for electronic monitoring is expected to be about £37 million.

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what mechanisms are in place to review contracts awarded to Group 4 Securicor for the provision of electronic monitoring of offenders. [51373]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office conducts a monthly audit of the performance of Group 4 Securicor against a range of performance measures. A failure to meet the specified service levels results in financial deductions from the amount paid to Group 4 Securicor for providing the electronic monitoring service. The contracts began to operate on one April 2005 and are for a period of five years, which may be extended by up to two more years. They will be reviewed nearer to their expiry date as part of the Government procurement process. The contracts contain standard provisions enabling the government to terminate them early if the contractor defaults on the provision of the service.

Home Detention Curfews

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders in Cambridgeshire were on home detention curfews

(HDCs) in 2004–05; and what proportion of these offenders failed to complete the HDC period successfully. [48665]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested, as recorded on the Prison Service IT system, is provided in the following table.

Number of persons released from prisons in Cambridgeshire[1] on home detention curfews (HDC) in 2004–05—and percentage of those offenders who failed to complete the HDC period.

	Those released on HDC from Cambridgeshire prisons			*Recalls*			*Percentage recalled*		
	2004	*2005*	*Total*	*2004*	*2005*	*Total*	*2004*	*2005*	*Total*
Littlehey	45	26	71	5	2	7	11	7.7	9.9
Whitemoor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0
Peterborough	0	408	408	0	24	24	0	6.4	5.9
All Cambridgeshire prisons	45	434	479	5	26	31	11	6	6.5

[1] The question has been answered to give the number of prisoners released from Cambridgeshire prisons; information on offenders from Cambridgeshire who have been released on HDC is not held centrally.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for how many hours in total tagged criminals in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England and Wales have broken their curfews since 2000. [48682]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information is not broken down in the way requested, and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many tagged criminals in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England and Wales have broken their curfews since 2000; and what proportion this represents of the total number of tagged criminals in each case; [48683]

(2) how many criminals in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England and Wales have been prosecuted for breaking their curfews since 2000. [48684]

Fiona Mactaggart: In the period from 1 April 2005 to 31 January 2006, a total of 37,336 people began and ended a period of electronic monitoring in England and Wales.

Of these, 25,708 (69 per cent.) completed their curfews without breaching, 9,434 (25 per cent.) completed their curfews following one or more breaches, and 2,194 (6 per cent.) had their curfews revoked following breach action. In the same period, in Leicestershire, from a total of 742 people on electronic monitoring, 637 (86 per cent.) completed their curfews without breaching, 83 (11 per cent.) completed their curfews following one or more breaches, and 22 (3 per cent.) had their curfews revoked following breach action. Information is not available for Leicester itself, or for the period before 1 April 2005, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Human Trafficking Convention

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the Government will sign the European convention on action against trafficking in human beings. [41873]

Paul Goggins: The Government have not yet taken a decision on whether the United Kingdom (UK) will sign the Council of Europe convention on action against trafficking in human beings. Whilst we support the aims of the convention, there are provisions which present some concerns for the UK and which remain under active consideration. We are assessing the level of risk associated with these provisions and looking at how we might implement the convention safely without placing more vulnerable people at risk.

The Government are committed to tackling trafficking in human beings, domestically and internationally, and has in place a multi-faceted strategy on trafficking in human beings. We are determined that the measures we take bring the criminals responsible for this serious organised crime to justice, protect the victims of trafficking and do not undermine our ability to control our borders.

Identity Cards Scheme

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent on the identity cards scheme to date. [47572]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Since the beginning of the financial year 2003–04, £32.05 million has been spent by the Identity Cards Programme up to the end of December 2005.

Identity Fraud

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his Minister's letter to the hon. Member for Birmingham, Selly Oak of 23 June 2005, Home Office reference M12110/5, how the identity card scheme will reduce the opportunity for those facilitating terrorist and organised criminals to operate using multiple identities; and how the scheme will monitor the support activities of terrorist networks. [50426]

Andy Burnham: The Identity Cards Scheme will combat the use of multiple identities in a number of ways. Details provided in applications will be verified through checks on public and private databases to verify the existence of an identity in society and its link to the applicant.

Key supporting documentation will be examined to check for inconsistencies where appropriate and applicants will be interviewed personally to verify their details. Enrolment staff will be subject to security checks and working processes will promote accountability and defeat internal collusion. A fraud investigation unit will supervise enrolment and work with law enforcement agencies to investigate suspicious activities. In addition

to all of these steps there will be the additional protection of verifying a person's biometrics against previously enrolled identities.

The biometric check at enrolment will conduct a check against previously registered biometrics to help detect a person attempting to enrol multiple identities or steal the identity of someone who has already enrolled. The cumulative effect of all these measures will make significantly more difficult the use of multiple identities by terrorists and their supporters. The increased security of identity will also help to combat money-laundering and other types of fraud which are perpetrated in support of terrorist activities.

In cases of serious crime or threats to national security the scheme will provide, subject to appropriate authorisation procedures, the capability for law enforcement and intelligence and security agencies to be provided with information on when a person's record on the Register has been checked or amended. This will make it harder for identified terrorist suspects to disguise transactions such as renting accommodation, hiring cars or buying mobile phones by using multiple identities.

Internet (Improper Use)

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2567W, on improper use of the internet, what recent assessment his Department has made of *(a)* the costs and *(b)* the timescale for development of the IMPACT programme; and if he will make a statement. [32854]

Mr. Charles Clarke: IMPACT is a key contributor to implementing the recommendations of Sir Michael Bichard's Inquiry into issues surrounding the Soham murders. The costs and timescale of the IMPACT Programme are currently being assessed as part of the work to finalise the business case, which will be considered by the Home Office Group Investment Board in March 2006.

New capability is already being delivered incrementally to the police service: the IMPACT Nominal Index was made available in a Child Abuse Investigation Unit in each force in England and Wales on 23 December 2005, enabling users in one force to identify which other forces might hold information on a specified individual in their intelligence, crime, custody, domestic violence, firearms and child protection business areas. This will be rolled out to other Child Abuse Investigation Units and into other business areas over the rest of this year.

Juvenile Offenders

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many crimes were committed by juvenile offenders in *(a)* Haltemprice and Howden, *(b)* the East Riding of Yorkshire and *(c)* the Humberside police authority area in each quarter since 2001; how many cautions were issued in relation to such cases; and how many children in the East Riding of Yorkshire (i) were convicted, (ii) were in local authority care, (iii) received a reprimand, (iv) received a final warning and (v) were found guilty in each year since 2001. [49102]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of juvenile offenders reprimanded, given final warnings, prosecuted, and found guilty of all offences in Humberside police force area, is provided in the following table. Figures are presented for the years 2001–04. It is not possible to separately identify *(a)* Haltemprice and Howden, and *(b)* East Riding of Yorkshire as the data is not collected at this level of detail.

Data on children looked after is collected by the DfES. Figures for the East Riding of Yorkshire for the years 2001–04 are available on the DFES website at www.dfes.gov.uk.

Number of juvenile offenders (aged 10 to 17) reprimanded and given final warnings[1], prosecuted[2], and found guilty[3] of all offences in Humberside police force area 2001–04[4]

	Reprimand[1]	*Final Warning[1]*	*Prosecuted[2]*	*Found guilty[3]*
Year/Quarter				
2001	1,116	589	2,344	1,718
Q1	354	191	714	535
Q2	329	195	432	324
Q3	247	129	658	477
Q4	186	74	540	382
2002	657	375	2,499	1,668
Q1	183	113	655	443
Q2	150	81	561	390
Q3	137	69	661	438
Q4	187	112	622	397
2003	940	409	2,727	1,858
Q1	167	82	690	430
Q2	143	77	687	454
Q3	320	140	683	478
Q4	310	110	667	496
2004	1,425	571	2,796	2,186
Q1	350	140	752	566
Q2	345	138	715	561
Q3	396	184	693	549
Q4	334	109	636	510

[1] Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 cautions were replaced for juveniles with reprimands and final warnings.
[2] Prosecuted at magistrates courts.
[3] Found guilty at all courts.
[4] All data given refer to the principal offence only.

Murder Inquiry

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to receive the report from the inquiry team into the murder of John Victor Monkton; and if he will make a statement. [50818]

Fiona Mactaggart: The investigation into the tragic death of John Monckton is being lead by Andrew Bridges, Her Majesty's chief inspector of probation. He will look carefully at what happened in this case, and whether there are wider implications for the release and management of offenders, in particular the case management and risk of Damien Hanson and Elliot White. Mr. Bridges will report back to the Home Secretary with clear recommendations and lessons

learnt from the case, which will be published on Her Majesty's inspectorate of probation website on 28 February 2006.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the National Offender Management Service in Wales requires a statutory regional body corporate for the purposes of *(a)* employing staff and *(b)* commissioning services. [49029]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 8 February 2006]:* The National Offender Management Service in Wales is part of the National Offender Management Service, which is in turn part of the Home Office. As such there would be no necessity to create a separate statutory body for employing staff or commissioning services in Wales.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how local delivery in the unitary authority area of Wales will be managed under the National Offender Management Service if the current probation boards are abolished. [49030]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 8 February 2006]:* In the consultation document "Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending", published on 20 October 2005, the Government set out its proposals for the future of the probation service in England and Wales. Further announcements on these proposals will be made in due course. Until the future structure of policing in Wales has been decided, it is not possible to be clear about the implications for the probation service.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what areas he expects the National Offender Management Service in Wales to prioritise within the diversity portfolio of issues in addition to those relating to the Welsh language and disability. [49041]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Director for the Offender Management Service in Wales is responsible for ensuring that there is full commitment to all aspects of diversity in developing and providing services to offenders.

The core principles surrounding this commitment include: recognising and valuing the uniqueness of each individual; embracing "difference" and treating every-one with dignity and respect; providing fair, accessible, inclusive, appropriate and effective provision that demonstrates a fair service to all; ensuring that no service is disproportionate or unwittingly influenced because of ethnicity, gender, class, religion, culture, age, sexuality or disability; meeting all legislative responsibilities under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Welsh Language Act 1993, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Religion and Beliefs Act 2003, and the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) (Amendment) Regulations 2003.

Joining Together in Wales—an Adult and Young People's Strategy to Reduce Re-offending—forms the basis of a consultation to develop a reducing re-offending action plan for Wales. The outcome of the consultation and the subsequent development of the action plan will also help inform the best way to meet diversity issues in Wales.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he will take to ensure that the implementation of National Offender Management Service *(a)* procedures and *(b)* allocated funding are fit for purpose in Wales. [49053]

Fiona Mactaggart: Full regard is being given to the difference devolution has made to Government. We will continue to work closely with the Welsh Assembly Government and other partners in Wales in developing the National Offender Management Service in Wales to ensure it is fit for purpose.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps will be taken under the National Offender Management Service to involve *(a)* local health trusts and *(b)* housing departments. [49069]

Fiona Mactaggart: The National Assembly for Wales has devolved responsibility for health and housing matters and they are two of the key themes being addressed through Joining Together in Wales: an Adult and Young People's Strategy to Reduce Re-offending.

The strategy was published jointly between the Welsh Assembly Government and the Home Office. It identifies key issues and work needed to address them and forms the basis of a current consultation to develop a reducing re-offending action plan for Wales that involves all the key stakeholders. In England, NHS Primary Care Trusts started to assume responsibility for the commissioning of prison health services in the public prisons in April 2004 and will assume full responsibility in April 2006.

In 2005–06 nearly £176 million has been allocated for prison healthcare. Following on from this transfer of responsibility and funding, a new development programme for extending offender health support is being launched on 8 February. One objective of this programme is to enable the effective co-commissioning of offender health services at all points of the offender's contact with the criminal justice system.

Regional Offender Managers in England are also working to develop links between local and regional criminal justice and housing services, including local authorities. Schemes under development include the Housing and Returning Prisoners protocol in the North East region, the Community Gateway in the South West region and work across the London Accommodation Pathway.

The National Probation service is also a formal partner with local housing authorities in the commissioning of housing support services through the 'Supporting People' programme. The new Civil Society Alliance will be working with local authorities and other partners to improve offenders' access to local services, including through involvement in the new Local Area Agreements.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which organisation in Wales will assume the lead role for the National Offender Management Service. [49201]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 9 January 2006]*: The Home Office will continue to develop the National Offender Management Service in Wales in partnership with the Welsh Assembly Government.

Operation Elucidate

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Chinese nationals were removed under Operation Elucidate in 2005. [50645]

Mr. McNulty: 172 Chinese nationals were removed under Operation Elucidate in 2005.

Police/Community Support Officers

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average salary of *(a)* a newly-trained police constable and *(b)* a community support officer was in each police force on the most recent date for which figures are available. [49043]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information is as follows:

(a) The table shows the salary of a police constable on completion of initial training and the relevant regional allowance. The pay scales for police constables range from £20,397 for a newly recruited officer, rising to £32,025 for an officer with 10 year's service. Additionally, a constable who has served at the top of the pay scale for one year has access to a competence-related threshold payment of £1,062 per year.

(b) Salary and other terms and conditions for police community support officers (PCSOs) are determined by the respective police authority. We do not routinely maintain data on PCSO salaries. The most recent data we have on PCSO salary costs and allowances is contained in a report by Accenture on terms and conditions for PCSOs, which was published on three February. The report provides a range of data on basic pay rates and allowances paid to PCSOs and an analysis of the variations between forces. The report found that the typical average salary for PCSOs was £17,269 and the average total cash reward (basic salary plus allowances and overtime) was £20,526. The report is available on the Home Office website:

http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/community-policing/community-support-officers

Police salaries

Forces	*Basic pay(£)*	*Allowances (£)*
Avon and Somerset	22,770	—
Bedfordshire	22,770	1,000
Cambridgeshire	22,770	—
Cheshire	22,770	—
City of London	24,765	4,338
Cleveland	22,770	—
Cumbria	22,770	—
Derbyshire	22,770	—
Devon and Cornwall	22,770	—
Dorset	22,770	—
Durham	22,770	—
Dyfed-Powys	22,770	—
Essex	22,770	2,000
Gloucestershire	22,770	—
Greater Manchester	22,770	—
Gwent	22,770	—
Hampshire	22,770	1,000
Hertfordshire	22,770	2,000
Humberside[16]	22,770	—
Kent[17]	22,770	2,000
Lancashire	22,770	—
Leicestershire	22,770	—
Lincolnshire	22,770	—
Merseyside	22,770	—
Metropolitan	24,765	4,338
Norfolk	22,770	—
Northamptonshire	22,770	—
Northumbria	22,770	—
North Wales	22,770	—
North Yorkshire	22,770	—
Nottinghamshire	22,770	—
South Wales	22,770	—
South Yorkshire	22,770	—
Staffordshire	22,770	—
Suffolk	22,770	—
Surrey	22,770	2,000
Sussex	22,770	1,000
Thames Valley	22,770	2,000
Warwickshire	22,770	—
West Mercia	22,770	—
West Midlands	22,770	—
West Yorkshire	22,770	—
Wiltshire	22,770	—

[16] Shift allowance is included in basic salary.
[17] This figure is when the higher of one of two Kent location allowances is paid, the salary plus allowance figure when the lower location allowance is paid is £165 less.

Prisoners

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will ensure that all prisons make condoms available anonymously to prisoners and other detainees. [49237]

Fiona Mactaggart: Prison doctors were advised in 1995 that they should make condoms available to individual prisoners, on application, if in their clinical judgement, there is a risk of transmission of HIV infection during sexual activity. The Prison Service is planning to issue, in the early part of 2006, revised guidance and instructions which aim to clarify the policy on condoms so that it can be applied more evenly across the prison estate.

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the shortest amount of time served by a prisoner sentenced to life imprisonment before being released on licence was in each year between 1987 and 1999. [49426]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested, as recorded on the Prison Service IT system, is provided in the following table.

Shortest time served[1] by a prisoner sentenced to life before they were released on licence, by:

Year of release	*Shortest time served (years)[2]*
1987[3]	—
1988[3]	—
1989	5.2
1990	6.9
1991	5.1
1992	3.8
1993	3.5
1994	4.9

Shortest time served[1] by a prisoner sentenced to life before they were released on licence, by:

Year of release	*Shortest time served (years)[2]*
1995	7.1
1996	5.2
1997	4.8
1998	6.8
1999	2.0

[1] Calculated using the centralised prisons IT system.
[2] Time served under sentence
[3] No data available for these years.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the Department's policy is on the transport of pregnant prisoners and what guidelines have been issued to the prison service on the matter. [49438]

Fiona Mactaggart: NOMS aims to transport pregnant prisoners in non-cellular vehicles, whenever possible. This follows an assessment of their medical and personal needs by prison operational managers and health care professionals. The contractor should be advised of this requirement in advance of the journey. Where this has not happened, and the prisoner declares herself to be pregnant, the contractor must seek the advice of a healthcare professional as to whether a non-cellular vehicle should be used for the transfer.

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of prisoners who have converted to Islam whilst in prison in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [50458]

Fiona Mactaggart: Statistics on the religious affiliation of prisoners in 1994 to 2004 is published in Table 8.5 of the Home Office Statistical Bulletin: Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004. Copies of this publication are available in the House of Commons Library. Information is not held centrally on the number of prisoners converting to different religions whilst in prison.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons breached a prison licence due to *(a)* a further offence, *(b)* inappropriate behaviour and *(c)* breaching supervision conditions in each of the last eight years. [48791]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information on the number of offenders released on Home Detention Curfew (HDC) or sentenced to four years or more who were recalled to prison as a result of a breach of post custody licence can be found in tables 10.7,10.8 and 10.9 of the Home Office Statistical Bulletin: Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2004. Information on the number of offenders sentenced to less than four years who were recalled to prison in 2004–05 is provided at paragraph 10.12 of the same publication. Copies of this publication are available in the House of Commons Library.

Specific information on the reasons for the recall in each of the last eight years of those released on parole is provided in the following table. Data held centrally on non-parole cases recalled by specific reason for recall are not sufficiently complete or reliable for publication.

Number of persons recalled from parole by reason for recall

Reason for recall	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Further offences	79	94	93	106	90	188	252	265
Being out of touch	48	57	74	85	76	108	177	199
Hostel: failure to reside/comply	29	34	32	41	28	37	48	70
Other reasons	34	48	51	35	135	87	124	178
Total number recalled	190	233	250	267	329	420	601	712

Prisons

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he has taken to ensure the Supply Reduction Good Practice Guide is applied in every prison establishment; and if he will make a statement. [48419]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Supply Reduction Good Practice Guide was distributed to all establishments in October 2003. Supply reduction performance is monitored by area managers during routine visits to establishments and bilateral meetings with governors and the director of operations. At an area level performance, is monitored by area drug co-ordinators who receive monthly data on performance targets from establishments. The good practice guide is central to that process.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many investigations for alleged misconduct have been conducted into *(a)* prison governors and *(b)* prison officers at each establishment in each of the last five years; what proportion of these investigations led to (i) no action being taken, (ii) revised guidance, (iii) informal disciplinary action and (iv) formal disciplinary action; and if he will make a statement. [48432]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data on investigations is not collated by grade and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. There have been 7,486 formal investigations between July 2000 and 1 February 2006. Table A details the number of investigations held in prisons, area offices and Prison Service headquarters. Table B details the outcome of the investigations completed in the period July 2000 and 1 February 2006.

Table A: Investigations held in prisons, area offices and Prison Service headquarters in England and Wales between July 2000 and 1 February 2006

	Number
Acklington	57
Albany	29
Altcourse[1]	9
Ashfield[1]	7

Table A: Investigations held in prisons, area offices and Prison Service headquarters in England and Wales between July 2000 and 1 February 2006

	Number
Ashwell	20
Askham Grange	8
Aylesbury	55
Bedford	59
Belmarsh	113
Birmingham	155
Blakenhurst	117
Blantyre House	18
Blundeston	29
Brinsford	45
Bristol	71
Brixton	218
Brockhill	43
Buckley Hall	38
Bullingdon	94
Bullwood Hall	36
Camp Hill	31
Canterbury	70
Cardiff	94
Castington	53
Channings Wood	13
Chelmsford	47
Coldingley	51
Cookham Wood	20
Dartmoor	61
Deerbolt	48
Doncaster[1]	11
Dorchester	23
Dovegate[1]	7
Dover	32
Downview	32
Drake Hall	24
Durham	95
Eastern Area Office	2
East Sutton Park	13
Eastwood Park	54
Edmunds Hill	32
Elmley	132
Erlestoke	44
Everthorpe	19
Exeter	27
Featherstone	34
Feltham	227
Ford	42
Forrest Bank[1]	9
Foston Hall	28
Frankland	60
Full Sutton	82
Garth	28
Gartree	27
Glen Parva	34
Gloucester	45
Grendon	40
Guys Marsh	46
Haslar	26
Haverigg	41
Hewell Grange	2
High Down	167
Highpoint	30
High Security Area Office	1
Hindley	102
Hollesley Bay	9
Holloway	174
Holme House	62
Headquarters	126
Hull	74
Huntercombe	36
Kent Area Office	4
Kingston	19
Kirkham	19

Table A: Investigations held in prisons, area offices and Prison Service headquarters in England and Wales between July 2000 and 1 February 2006

	Number
Kirklevington Grange	11
Lancaster Castle	35
Lancaster Farms	50
Latchmere House	21
Leeds	72
Leicester	42
Lewes	105
Leyhill	19
Lincoln	43
Lindholme	20
Littlehey	55
Liverpool	151
London Area Office	5
Long Lartin	45
Low Newton	15
Lowdham Grange[1]	2
Maidstone	79
Manchester	133
Moorland Open	10
Moorland Closed	5
Morton Hall	34
New Hall	58
North Sea Camp	20
Northallerton	23
North West	2
Norwich	54
Nottingham	47
Onley	76
Parc[1]	37
Parkhurst	44
Pentonville	233
Portland	44
Preston	100
Ranby	46
Reading	27
Risley	156
Rochester	73
Rye Hill[1]	11
Send	40
Shepton Mallet	21
Shrewsbury	31
South West Area Office	1
Stafford	82
Standford Hill	30
Stocken	21
Stoke Heath	76
Styal	33
Sudbury	16
Surrey and Sussex Area Office	3
Swaleside	131
Swansea	30
Swinfen Hall	39
Thames Valley, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Area Office	3
The Mount	88
The Verne	49
The Weare	41
Thorne Cross	45
Usk and Prescoed	8
Wakefield	82
Wandsworth	149
Warren Hill	5
Wayland	29
Wealstun	49
Wellingborough	33
Werrington	33
Weatherby	17
West Midlands Area Office	1
Whatton	11

Table A: Investigations held in prisons, area offices and Prison Service headquarters in England and Wales between July 2000 and 1 February 2006

	Number
Whitemoor	98
Winchester	70
Wolds[1]	2
Woodhill	64
Wormwood Scrubs	176
Wymott	43

[1] Indicates contracted prisons.

Note:

Some of the units at headquarters have since transferred from the Prison Service to the National Offender Management Service.

Table B: The result of investigations held in prisons, area offices and Prison Service headquarters in England and Wales between July 2000 and 1 February 2006

Award	Total
Investigation Closed/Stopped	43
Individual medically retired	15
No disciplinary action recommended	3,960
Recommendation of disciplinary action not accepted by Commissioning Authority	392
Awaiting outcome of investigation/disciplinary hearing	232
Individual resigned during the investigation	339
Individual retired during the investigation	25
Death in custody (no staff disciplinary element)	70
Case dismissed	188
Final written warning	196
Financial penalty	21
Formal advice and guidance	416
Informal advice and guidance	192
Oral warning	203
Outcome withheld from database due to sensitivity	1
Re-graded	38
Removed from the field of promotion	78

Table B: The result of investigations held in prisons, area offices and Prison Service headquarters in England and Wales between July 2000 and 1 February 2006

Award	Total
Dismissed	365
Written warning	786
Total	7,560

Note:

The total number of investigations does not match the total number of investigation outcomes as an investigation can refer to more than one individual and an individual may receive more than one disciplinary award.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with *(a)* the National Offender Management Service, *(b)* the Prison Service and *(c)* private sector operators regarding the role of the private sector in the delivery of penal services; and if he will make a statement. [48508]

Fiona Mactaggart: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has regular discussions with his officials in the Home Department, both within the National Offender Management Service and with the Prison Service, about the delivery of penal services. The role of the private sector may be raised at such discussions. The Home Secretary met with representatives of the private sector delivering penal services on 8 November 2005.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which prisons offer anger management courses; and how many offer psychiatric support. [48882]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Prison Service delivers a controlling anger and learning to manage it course (CALM) this is an accredited offending behaviour programme and is run in the 24 prisons listed in the table. Additionally, there are a number of prisons offering local non-accredited work on issues relating to anger management.

There are mental health in-reach teams in 102 prisons this will soon be available across the prison estate.

Prisons delivering CALM

Establishment	Prog	Male/female	Category	Area
Aylesbury	CALM	Male	YOI (closed)	Thames Valley, Hants, Isle of Wight
Blundeston	CALM	Male	C	Eastern
Bristol	CALM	Male	Local	South West
Camp Hill	CALM	Male	C	Thames Valley, Hants, Isle of Wight
Cardiff	CALM	Male	Local B	Wales
Dartmoor	CALM	Male	C	South West
Garth	CALM	Male	B training	North West
Gartree	CALM	Male	B	East Midlands
Glen Parva	CALM	Male	YOI (closed)	East Midlands
Featherstone	CALM	Male	C	West Midlands
Hindley	CALM	Male	YOI (closed)	North West
Kingston	CALM	Male	B	Thames Valley, Hants, Isle of Wight
Long Lartin	CALM	Male	A	High Security
Moorland Closed	CALM	Male	YOI (closed)	Yorks and Humberside
Parkhurst	CALM	Male	B training	Thames Valley, Hants, Isle of Wight
Pentonville	CALM	Male	Local	London
Risley	CALM	Male	C	North West
Stocken	CALM	Male	C	East Midlands
Swaleside	CALM	Male	B training	Kent
Swinfen Hall	CALM	Male	YOI (closed)	West Midlands
The Mount	CALM	Male	C	Eastern
Whatton	CALM	Male	C	East Midlands
Whitemoor	CALM	Male	A	High Security
Wolds[1]	CALM	Male	Local	Contracted Out

[1] Contracted Prison

Probation Services

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will bring forward legislation to devolve the commissioning of probation services. [51187]

Fiona Mactaggart: We intend to bring forward legislation to restructure the probation service as soon as parliamentary time allows. This will not devolve the commissioning of probation services. As set out in our consultation paper Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending, we propose to alter the statutory framework to enable the regional offender managers, including the director of offender management service Wales, to commission services in their area from a range of providers

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the national probation service in Wales will conclude its restructuring process. [51192]

Fiona Mactaggart: Restructuring of the probation service is dependent on legislation and may be affected by other structural changes in the criminal justice system, for example to police force boundaries. We cannot at this stage be certain about when these processes will conclude.

Reoffending

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many adult offenders were reconvicted *(a)* in 1997 and *(b)* in 2005. [43590]

Fiona Mactaggart: Reoffending rates are published annually. The most recent data are published in 'Adult reoffending: results from the 2002 cohort'. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 25/05. This is available on the Home Office's website (http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html). The report contains information on reconviction for the 1997 cohort and reoffending that results in conviction for the 2002 cohort.

Stolen Pets

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been prosecuted for holding a stolen pet as ransom in each year since 1997; and what punishments have been imposed. [49437]

Fiona Mactaggart: It is not possible, from the information held on the court proceedings database by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform, to identify instances of holding a stolen pet as ransom.

Tackling Drugs, Changing Lives

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what events are planned as part of the Tackling Drugs, Changing Lives strategy in *(a)* February and *(b)* March. [44193]

Paul Goggins: No events are planned to take place in February as part of the Tackling Drugs Changing Lives series of events. In March, events have been planned to take place in Portsmouth and Peterborough.

Terrorism

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the cost is of the anti-terrorist poster campaign in London; [50844]

(2) for how long the anti-terrorist poster campaign in London will run; [50845]

(3) how many sites are covered by the anti-terrorist poster campaign in London. [50846]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The posters in question were produced by the Metropolitan Police Service, for which the Metropolitan Police Commissioner has operational responsibility. I will ensure that he receives a copy of your questions and ask him to reply direct to you.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to extend the anti-terrorist poster campaign in London to other cities. [50847]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The posters in question were produced by the Metropolitan Police Service, for which the Metropolitan Police Commissioner has operational responsibility. I will ensure that he receives a copy of your questions and ask him to reply direct to you.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has for further poster campaigns once the one in London finishes. [50848]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The posters in question were produced by the Metropolitan Police Service, for which the Metropolitan Police Commissioner has operational responsibility. I will ensure that he receives a copy of your questions and ask him to reply direct to you.

Terrorism Act

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many stop and searches have been made under the Terrorism Act 2000, broken down by *(a)* ethnicity and *(b)* age group. [50225]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Statistics on the number of stop and searches under the Terrorism Act 2000 are published annually by the Home Office. The Home Office Report—'Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System 2004' details the number of stop-searches under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000, by force and ethnicity. It is available via the following link: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/s95race04.pdf.

Statistics do not include a breakdown of age groups because they are not collated in this way.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrests have been made as a result of stop and searches under the Terrorism Act 2000. [50226]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office Statistical Bulletin—'Arrests for Recorded Crime (Notifiable Offences) and the Operation of Certain Police Powers under PACE 2004–05', provides information on the number of stop-searches by force area, under section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000. It also details resulting arrests under both the Terrorism Act and other

legislation, and can be accessed via the following link http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb2105.pdf.

Traffic Offences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were (i) prosecuted and (ii) convicted in (A) Southend, (B) Essex, (C) the Metropolitan police area of London and (D) England and Wales of driving the wrong way down one-way streets in each of the last five years for which information is available. [39748]

Paul Goggins: The information requested has been taken from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform and is contained in the table.

Number of males and females proceeded against and found guilty at all courts for offences under S36(1) Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 1994 S.2(10) at South-east Essex petty sessional area (PSA), Essex and Metropolitan police force areas(PFA) and England and Wales, 2000–04 [1]

Offence description: Failing to comply with traffic light signals/signs—offences not detected by camera devices

Principal statute: Road Traffic Act 1988 S.36 (1); Traffic Signs Regulations and General Regulations 1994 S.2(10)

Area/Gender		*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
South East Essex PSA						
Males	Proceeded against	5	1	3	3	2
	Found guilty	3	1	2	3	2
Females	Proceeded against	1	0	0	1	0
	Found guilty	1	0	0	1	0
Essex PFA 2						
Males	Proceeded against	115	81	39	n/a	17
	Found guilty	103	73	33	n/a	14
Females	Proceeded against	29	14	10	n/a	2
	Found guilty	27	14	9	n/a	0
Metropolitan police force 3						
Males	Proceeded against	1,503	1,161	1,311	1,441	1,811
	Found guilty	1,285	992	1,112	1,214	1,475
Females	Proceeded against	203	156	149	172	281
	Found guilty	187	135	133	152	249
England and Wales						
Males	Proceeded against	9,306	7,682	7,252	7,724	6,768
	Found guilty	8,247	6,735	6,462	6,791	5,827
Females	Proceeded against	1,525	1,246	1,228	1,408	1,122
	Found guilty	1,401	1,147	1,136	1,278	1,008

n/a—not available

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis

[2] Data for Essex PFA for 2003 has not been provided as inconsistent with previous years

[3] Includes City of London

Work Permits

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many work permit holders were granted permanent settlement in the UK in each of the last five years. [50652]

Mr. McNulty: The latest published information on work permit holders granted permanent settlement in the UK in each of the last five years is shown in the annual Command Paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics, United Kingdom, 2004". Copies are available from the Library of the House and on the stationery office website: http://www.official- documents.co.uk/document/cm66/6690/6690.asp.

Young Offenders

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many repeat youth offenders there were in *(a)* Romford and *(b)* Havering in each of the last five years. [48549]

Fiona Mactaggart: The data are not currently available on a sub-national basis. Information on the criminal histories of sentenced young offenders is published on an annual basis by the Home Office. The most recent data was published in chapter six (in particular, table 6.5) of Sentencing Statistics 2004 (HO Report 15/05) a copy of which has been placed in the Library or can be found at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb1505.pdf

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Data Sharing

Mr. Heald: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will place in the Library a copy of the advice and guidance issued by the Information Commissioner on *(a)* data-sharing between public sector databases and *(b)* the co-ordinated online register of electors. [43541]

Ms Harman: I have placed in the Library a copy of the Information Commissioner's office's February 2001 publication, 'Data sharing between different local authority departments'. Any other advice issued by the Information Commissioner's office on this issue would likely to have been specific to particular databases and so would be held by the organisations responsible for those databases, rather than by my Department.

In respect of the Co-ordinated Online Record of Electors specifically, I have placed in the Library the relevant parts of a letter of 7 July 2005 from the Information Commissioner's office, encapsulating their views on the Government's thinking on CORE at that time.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many of her Department's staff are paid on a performance-related basis. [50079]

Bridget Prentice: Staff who are employed on DCA terms and conditions are all subject to performance related pay. These include staff in the former Court Service agency (now part of Her Majesty's Courts Service), staff at the Public Guardianship Office and those staff who are part of the DCA and its Associated Offices. This is a total of 12,750 staff.

On 1 April 2005, with the creation of Her Majesty's Courts Service as an executive agency of the Department, the DCA became responsible for all former employees of the Magistrates' Courts Service in England and Wales. This is a total of 12,067 staff. Those staff who were previously employed by the magistrates courts currently remain on their previous terms and conditions and are not paid on a performance-related basis. There is a DCA Pay and Grading Project currently under way. New pay, grading and benefit arrangements are due to be introduced for all DCA staff later this year. Performance related pay is likely to be a feature of the new system.

Legal Services Commission

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) what assessment the Legal Services Commission made of the contribution of the Specialist Support Project to the Legal Services Commission's corporate priorities; [51375]

(2) on what basis the Legal Services Commission assessed that funding for the Specialist Support Project was not sustainable. [51376]

Bridget Prentice: Specialist Support Contracts form part of the Legal Services Commission's (LSC) special projects budget, that was reviewed in the summer 2005 against a number of criteria. These included the LSC's Corporate Priorities, compatibility with the future vision for the Community Legal Service, and Value for Money effectiveness.

The LSC has concluded that as specialist support services provide advice to other legal advisors and not directly to clients, this did not represent the most cost-effective approach to meet the increasing need for front-line advice.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) how her Department plans to replace the Specialist Support Project's expertise in dealing with the legal cases of vulnerable minority groups once Legal Services Commission funding ends; [51377]

(2) what estimate her Department has made of the future level of demand for specialist support legal services. [51378]

Bridget Prentice: The Legal Services Commission contracting arrangements include quality assessment such as Peer Review, File Assessment, and Quality Profiles. These all look to improve the quality of advice across front line providers, by indicating areas for improvement, allowing providers to build on and improve their legal competences and expertise, and reducing the need for specialist support services.

An example is the Immigration and Asylum Accreditation scheme, mandatory from August 2005, which should ensure that clients get the quality of advice they expect.

First tier organisations will continue to be able to seek specialist advice (e.g. counsel's opinion) in particularly complex circumstances.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Allotment Land

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the applications he has received in the last 12 months for the de-registration of allotment land; and if he will make a statement on his Department's policy on such applications. [44574]

Yvette Cooper: Under Section 8 of the Allotments Act 1925 the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's consent is required for the disposal of statutory allotments. 45 applications were received for disposal in the period from January 2005 to January 2006, which are set out in the table, of which six were granted approval for disposal.

In determining such applications the following criteria are applied:

Consent for disposal cannot be given unless certain criteria are met. The criteria are that:

The allotment in question is not necessary and is surplus to requirements;

Adequate provision will be made for displaced plot holders, or that such provision is not necessary or is impracticable;

The number of people on the waiting list has been effectively taken into account;

The authority has actively promoted and publicised the availability of allotment sites and has consulted the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners;

and,

The implications of disposal for other relevant policies, in particular development plan policies, have been taken into account.

List of applications for disposal consent received between January 2005 and January 2006 of allotment land

Regional Office	*Local Authority and name of site*	*Application date*	*Decision date*	*Number of plots*	*Size*	*Replacement plots provided? If yes, how many?*	*New use of land*	*Disposal application refused (x)*
GO-NE	Brittons Fields Allotments, Barnard Castle, County Durham-Teesdale DC	14 December 2004	Case is still live	16	0.126 ha	Council is considering a replacement allotment site. Number of plots unknown as yet	Not known. I have requested more details	
GO-NE	Brittons Fields, Barnard Castle, Co. Durham (Barnard Castle Town Council)	14 December 2004	16 May 2005	16	0.1053 hectares	0	Housing and car parking	
GO-EAST	Terrington St. Clements pc Land at Terington St. Clements	17 December 2004	1 February 2005		5.2 acres	No relocation	Change of use to farming land	
GO-EAST	Breckland DC Plots 68–84 Shouldham Lane, Swaffham, Norfolk	1 April 2005	1 April 2005	16 plots	0.91 hectares	All not used	for use as grazing land	
GO-EAST	Chelmsford BC Melbourne allotments, Chelmsford	16 May 2005	20 June 2005	35	0.85 hectares	Some of the allotment holders have been moved to new plots.		
GO-EAST	Broadland dc, Ramsey Road Allotments, Saint Ives	9 September 2005	9 November 2005		3.5 hectares		Change of use	
GO-EAST	Cambridge City Council, Land at Hulatt Way, Cambridge	16 February 2005	9 March 2005		0.1 hectares	None	Construction of 20 flats for elderly people	n/a
GO-EAST	Swaffham Town Council, Tumbler Hill, Norfolk	30 March 2005	5 May 2005	24	1.24	None	To be used as a base for a charity who help people with learning difficulties develop independent living skills through gardening	n/a
GO-EAST	Balsham Parish Council, South Cambridgeshire DC	16 May 2005	5 December 2005		0.44 hectares	allotment holders will be provided with cultivated allotments on the new site with hard standing for a shed	The parish council are applying for permission to build 18 affordable houses in the village of Balsham	Allowed
GO-EM	Leicester City Council, (Land on the South Side of the Muston Garden Development), Washbrook Allotments, Welford Road, Leicester	19 January 2005	18 March 2005	1	0.0082ha	No	Land is required to amend boundary discrepancy with adjoining residential development	No
GO-EM	Leicester City Council, Wycombe Road Allotments, Wycombe Road, Leicester	12 May 2003	28 February 2005	87	2.606ha	No	The land is for residential development	None

List of applications for disposal consent received between January 2005 and January 2006 of allotment land

Regional Office	*Local Authority and name of site*	*Application date*	*Decision date*	*Number of plots*	*Size*	*Replacement plots provided? If yes, how many?*	*New use of land*	*Disposal application refused (x)*
GO-EM	Broxtowe Borough Council, The Hassocks Beeston	25 February 2005	31 May 2005	62	1.6ha	No	The land will be used for a new fire station plus residential or industrial development	No
GO-EM	Leicester City Council, Bonney Road Allotments , Bonney Road, Leicester	2 November 2004	31 May 2005	12	0.42ha	No	Open Space	No
GO-EM	Leicester City Council, Bonney Road Allotments, Bonney Road, Leicester	2 November 2004	31 May 2005	16	0.53ha	No	The land is for residential development	No
GO-EM	Leicester City Council, Groby Road Allotments, Groby Road, Leicester	13 May 2005	31 May 2005	100	3.81ha	No	The land will be used for development and open space	No
GO-EM	Leicester City Council, Braunstone close Allotments, Braunstone Close, Leicester	2 November 2004	31 May 2005	42	1.11ha	No	Open Space	No
GO-EM	Heanor and Loscoe Town Council, Hands Road Allotment, Hand Road, Heanor, Derbys	12 September 2004	26 May 2005	8	0.227ha	No	The land will be used for residential development.	No
GO-WM	Birmingham City Council, Yardley Green Allotments	28 June 2004	15 February 2005	131	5.08 hec	No—but more revised plots made available	Release of land at Yardley Green Allotments for development	
GOWM	Walsall MBC, Herberts Park/ Stanbury Avenue	14 October 2004	24 March 2005	unused land	0.28hec	n/a	Residential Development	Statutory status being clarified
GOWM	Coventry City Council, Coundon Hall	19 October 2004	16 November 2004	133	3.4 hec	n/a	Community Woodland	
GOWM	Rugby Borough Council, Addison Road	3 February 2005	14 April 2005	10	0.6 hec	n/a	Cemetery	
GOWM	Malvern Hills District Council Elgar Avenue, Malvern	22 February 2005	15 July 2005	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Refused
GOWM	Herefordshire County District Council UA, Rockfield Allotment Site	22 February 2005	17 November 2005	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
GOWM	Redditch BC, Sillins Avenue and Farm Road, Redditch	8 March 2005	6 April 2005	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Withdrawn
GOWM	Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, Mill Gardens Allotments	12 May 2005	6 July 2005	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Invalid

List of applications for disposal consent received between January 2005 and January 2006 of allotment land

Regional Office	*Local Authority and name of site*	*Application date*	*Decision date*	*Number of plots*	*Size*	*Replacement plots provided? If yes, how many?*	*New use of land*	*Disposal application refused (x)*
GOWM	Rugby Borough Council, Addison Road Allotments	31 May 2005	12 July 2005	None	0.1 hec	n/a	Access to new housing development	
GOWM	Wolverhampton MBC, Parker Road	10 June 2005	4 July 2005	5	0.21 hec	n/a	Residential Development	
GOWM	Walsall MBC, Berry / Bradshaw Allotments site	20 September 2005	24 October 2005	10	0.25 hec	n/a	Residential Development	
GOWM	Wolverhampton MBC, Sandy Lane Allotments Site	21 September 2005	24 October 2005	Part of 1	1.43 hec	n/a	Road Widening	
GOWM	Redditch Borough Council, 233 Bromsgrove Road	21 December 2005					Gardens	
GO-L	LB Croydon, 166 Spa Hill	30 December 2004	23 March 2005		0.00188 ha		Sale	Allowed
GO-L	LB Croydon, Midday sun allotments	29 November 2004	27 April 2005	Pending	1105sqm		Sale	Allowed
GO-L	LB Harrow Land at Harrow Leisure Centre	12 September 2005	2 November 2005	n/k			Sale	Allowed
GO-L	LB Harrow Kenmore Avenue	9 September 2005	02 November 2005				Sale	Allowed
GO-L	LB Bromley Southfield Allotment	21 January 2005	8 April 2005		0.4704 hectares		For use as open space	Allowed
GO-SE	Newtown Allotments	2 November 2004	31 January 2005					
GO-SW	Dorchester Town Council (West Dorset District)	2 December 2004	20 January 2005	11	2.023 sq metres	0	for council depot	None
GO-SW	Bristol City Council, Marling Road, St George, Bristol	20 January 2005	11 February 2005	0	0.86 hectares	0	The land to be used as a riding school and stables	None
GO-SW	Bristol City Council, Cotman Walk Allotments, Lockleaze, Bristol	23 February 2005	31 March 2005	0	0.638 hectares	0	doesn't say	None
GO-SW	Bristol City Council, Stibbs Hill Allotments, St. George, Bristol	23 February 2005	31 March 2005	3	0.3571 hectares	1 plot of land offered on site 200m away	doesn't say	1 plotholder
GO-SW	Bristol City Council, Goulston Road, Bishopsworth, Bristol	3 February 2004	25 April 2005	13(10 vacant remaining 3 plotholders will retain their plots)	2,958 sq yards	None	doesn't say	None
GO-SW	Bridgewater Town Council (Sedgemoor district), Bristol Road, No. 2 site, Bridgewater	20 April 2005	7 June 2005	None the site is vacant	0.78 hecta res	None	Lease to Bridgewater Carnival Committee	None

List of applications for disposal consent received between January 2005 and January 2006 of allotment land

Regional Office	*Local Authority and name of site*	*Application date*	*Decision date*	*Number of plots*	*Size*	*Replacement plots provided? If yes, how many?*	*New use of land*	*Disposal application refused (x)*
GO-SW	Bristol City Council, Whitefield Road, Speedwell, Bristol	6 May 2005	21 June 2005	the site is vacant	0.126 hectares	None	doesn't say	None
GO-SW	Bristol City Council, Bedminster Down "C", Bedminster Down Road, Bristol	14 July 2005	1 September 2005	the site is vacant	0.0675 hectares	None	The land will be leased to the owners of the adjoining house	None
GO-SW	Henstridge Parish Council (South Somerset District)	28 June 2005	site is vacant	1.48 hectares	None	the land will be used as a play area (0.2ha) and leasing of the remainder (1.28) [holding answer] to a local farmer for grazing.	None	

Bonfires

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what powers local authorities have to regulate day-time bonfires. [51085]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have been asked to reply.

Bonfires on domestic and business premises are regulated by local authorities under the statutory nuisance provisions in sections 79 to 82 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Local authorities have a duty to investigate complaints of smoke from premises that might be prejudicial to health or a nuisance, and if satisfied that a statutory nuisance exists or is likely to occur or recur an abatement notice must be served requiring the abatement of the nuisance or the restriction of its occurrence or recurrence. Failure to comply with the terms of an abatement notice will, upon summary conviction, result in a fine of up to £5,000 for domestic premises and £20,000 for business premises, in addition, section 2 of the Clean Air Act 1993 prohibits emissions of dark smoke from the open burning of material on industrial and trade premises. The Act provides a maximum fine of £20,000.

Councils (Discussions)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance he has issued on the rights of councillors to initiate discussions on matters which may be opposed by the council executive. [49440]

Mr. Woolas: The New Council Constitutions Guidance, issued by the Government to assist implementation of Part II of the Local Government Act 2000, gives advice on the role of members in the local authority decision-making process, including their role on overview and scrutiny committees.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47685]

Jim Fitzpatrick: No items of property belonging to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its agencies were reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. However, two laptops previously reported as lost in my reply to the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green on 30 June 2005, *Official Report*, column 1651W are now reported as stolen.

This answer does not include property owned by Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of ten Government Departments.

Departmental Catering Budget

Andrew George: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his Department's policy is on the procurement of fair trade produce for consumption on its premises. [49927]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The purchasing policy of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister reflects the Government's value for money policy and the EU procurement rules, which require the procurement of goods and services to be based on value for money and acquired by competition unless there are convincing reasons to the contrary, and the objectives of the office.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not specify a requirement of fair or ethically traded products, but does welcome fair trade options as a part of any contracts for the supply of catering or hospitality services.

Deprivation

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the levels of deprivation were in each lower level super output area in *(a)* Cleethorpes constituency and

(b) Great Grimsby constituency in the last year for which figures are available, in ascending order from the most deprived. [42104]

Yvette Cooper: The following table lists the ranks for each lower layer super output area (LLSOA) in *(a)* Cleethorpes constituency and *(b)* in Great Grimsby constituency, based on the Indices of Deprivation 2004, which is the last index available.

In considering the data please note that these are national ranks, with the most deprived LLSOA in England being given a rank of one and the least deprived being ranked 32,482.

SOA code	*Local authority area*	*Constituency*	*IMD rank*
E01013137	North East Lincolnshire 002B	Great Grimsby	64
E01013136	North East Lincolnshire 002A	Great Grimsby	158
E01013139	North East Lincolnshire 002C	Great Grimsby	315
E01013208	North East Lincolnshire 019C	Great Grimsby	377
E01013212	North East Lincolnshire 015D	Great Grimsby	454
E01013138	North East Lincolnshire 006A	Great Grimsby	770
E01013205	North East Lincolnshire 019B	Great Grimsby	796
E01013210	North East Lincolnshire 019E	Great Grimsby	1,182
E01013165	North East Lincolnshire 011D	Great Grimsby	1,407
E01013142	North East Lincolnshire 002D	Great Grimsby	1,429
E01013232	North East Lincolnshire 009C	Great Grimsby	1,574
E01013221	North East Lincolnshire 003D	Great Grimsby	1,927
E01013140	North East Lincolnshire 006B	Great Grimsby	2,125
E01013209	North East Lincolnshire 019D	Great Grimsby	2,211
E01013144	North East Lincolnshire 004A	Great Grimsby	2,235
E01013159	North East Lincolnshire 011A	Great Grimsby	2,501
E01013181	North East Lincolnshire 016A	Great Grimsby	2,518
E01013162	North East Lincolnshire 011C	Great Grimsby	2,765
E01013222	North East Lincolnshire 003E	Great Grimsby	2,796
E01013218	North East Lincolnshire 003A	Great Grimsby	3,148
E01013141	North East Lincolnshire 006C	Great Grimsby	3,450
E01013220	North East Lincolnshire 003C	Great Grimsby	4,042
E01013206	North East Lincolnshire 015A	Great Grimsby	4,116
E01013219	North East Lincolnshire 003B	Great Grimsby	4,253
E01013204	North East Lincolnshire 019A	Great Grimsby	4,659
E01013187	North East Lincolnshire 008A	Great Grimsby	4,761
E01013164	North East Lincolnshire 012D	Great Grimsby	4,863
E01013161	North East Lincolnshire 011B	Great Grimsby	5,416
E01013229	North East Lincolnshire 013E	Great Grimsby	5,754
E01013147	North East Lincolnshire 009A	Great Grimsby	5,773
E01013184	North East Lincolnshire 016D	Great Grimsby	6,336
E01013143	North East Lincolnshire 006D	Great Grimsby	6,602
E01013233	North East	Great Grimsby	8,789

SOA code	*Local authority area*	*Constituency*	*IMD rank*
E01013231	Lincolnshire 008D North East	Great Grimsby	9,333
E01013207	Lincolnshire 008C North East	Great Grimsby	10,073
E01013158	Lincolnshire 015B North East	Great Grimsby	10,338
E01013192	Lincolnshire 012A North East	Great Grimsby	10,756
E01013146	Lincolnshire 021D North East	Great Grimsby	11,573
E01013211	Lincolnshire 004C North East	Great Grimsby	12,044
E01013227	Lincolnshire 015C North East	Great Grimsby	12,847
E01013183	Lincolnshire 013C North East	Great Grimsby	12,996
E01013188	Lincolnshire 016C North East	Great Grimsby	14,196
E01013160	Lincolnshire 008B North East	Great Grimsby	14,526
E01013230	Lincolnshire 012B North East	Great Grimsby	14,979
E01013234	Lincolnshire 009B North East	Great Grimsby	15,570
E01013163	Lincolnshire 009D North East	Great Grimsby	17,280
E01013228	Lincolnshire 012C North East	Great Grimsby	18,660
E01013145	Lincolnshire 013D North East	Great Grimsby	19,190
E01013185	Lincolnshire 004B North East	Great Grimsby	19,910
E01013182	Lincolnshire 016E North East	Great Grimsby	20,644
E01013186	Lincolnshire 016B North East	Great Grimsby	21,240
E01013189	Lincolnshire 016F North East	Great Grimsby	22,417
E01013150	Lincolnshire 021A North East	Great Grimsby	22,481
E01013149	Lincolnshire 013B North East	Great Grimsby	23,649
E01013194	Lincolnshire 013A North East	Great Grimsby	23,960
E01013193	Lincolnshire 021E North East	Great Grimsby	24,164
E01013190	Lincolnshire 022E North East	Great Grimsby	24,494
E01013148	Lincolnshire 021B North East	Great Grimsby	26,936
E01013191	Lincolnshire 004D North East Lincolnshire 021C	Great Grimsby	27,444

SOA code	*Local authority area*	*Constituency*	*IMD rank*
E01013177	North East Lincolnshire 001D	Cleethorpes	1,934
E01013199	North East Lincolnshire 010C	Cleethorpes	1,956
E01013203	North East Lincolnshire 005E	Cleethorpes	1,963
E01013201	North East Lincolnshire 005C	Cleethorpes	2,348
E01013129	North East Lincolnshire 017A	Cleethorpes	2,546
E01013174	North East Lincolnshire 001A	Cleethorpes	2,725
E01013128	North East Lincolnshire 010A	Cleethorpes	3,600
E01013196	North East Lincolnshire 005B	Cleethorpes	3,751
E01013131	North East Lincolnshire 014A	Cleethorpes	5,811
E01013195	North East Lincolnshire 005A	Cleethorpes	5,909
E01013130	North East Lincolnshire 018A	Cleethorpes	6,590
E01013202	North East Lincolnshire 005D	Cleethorpes	7,041
E01013135	North East Lincolnshire 018B	Cleethorpes	7,619

SOA code	Local authority area	Constituency	IMD rank
E01013198	North East Lincolnshire 010B	Cleethorpes	7,931
E01013179	North East Lincolnshire 001F	Cleethorpes	8,329
E01013133	North East Lincolnshire 014C	Cleethorpes	8,333
E01013259	North Lincolnshire 001F	Cleethorpes	8,647
E01013254	North Lincolnshire 001A	Cleethorpes	9,583
E01013258	North Lincolnshire 001E	Cleethorpes	10,069
E01013134	North East Lincolnshire 014D	Cleethorpes	10,547
E01013197	North East Lincolnshire 012E	Cleethorpes	11,627
E01013303	North Lincolnshire 002A	Cleethorpes	12,071
E01013308	North Lincolnshire 004C	Cleethorpes	12,743
E01013213	North East Lincolnshire 023A	Cleethorpes	12,924
E01013156	North East Lincolnshire 018D	Cleethorpes	13,657
E01013180	North East Lincolnshire 001G	Cleethorpes	13,757
E01013167	North East Lincolnshire 020D	Cleethorpes	14,333
E01013169	North East Lincolnshire 020E	Cleethorpes	14,599
E01013132	North East Lincolnshire 014B	Cleethorpes	14,619
E01013225	North East Lincolnshire 023F	Cleethorpes	15,379
E01013255	North Lincolnshire 001B	Cleethorpes	15,472
E01013176	North East Lincolnshire 001C	Cleethorpes	16,179
E01013306	North Lincolnshire 004B	Cleethorpes	16,948
E01013178	North East Lincolnshire 001E	Cleethorpes	17,087
E01013200	North East Lincolnshire 010D	Cleethorpes	17,297
E01013153	North East Lincolnshire 020A	Cleethorpes	17,643
E01013309	North Lincolnshire 004D	Cleethorpes	17,993
E01013256	North Lincolnshire 001C	Cleethorpes	18,657
E01013175	North East Lincolnshire 001B	Cleethorpes	18,677
E01013173	North East Lincolnshire 007A	Cleethorpes	18,957
E01013307	North Lincolnshire 002D	Cleethorpes	19,441
E01013224	North East Lincolnshire 007C	Cleethorpes	19,722
E01013166	North East Lincolnshire 020C	Cleethorpes	19,904
E01013305	North Lincolnshire 002C	Cleethorpes	20,634
E01013170	North East Lincolnshire 022B	Cleethorpes	21,329
E01013304	North Lincolnshire 002B	Cleethorpes	21,642
E01013215	North East Lincolnshire 023C	Cleethorpes	21,892
E01013226	North East Lincolnshire 007D	Cleethorpes	22,858
E01013168	North East Lincolnshire 022A	Cleethorpes	22,870
E01013151	North East Lincolnshire 017B	Cleethorpes	23,490
E01013152	North East Lincolnshire 017C	Cleethorpes	24,030
E01013172	North East Lincolnshire 022D	Cleethorpes	24,300
E01013257	North Lincolnshire 001D	Cleethorpes	24,343
E01013214	North East Lincolnshire 023B	Cleethorpes	24,459
E01013217	North East Lincolnshire 023E	Cleethorpes	25,613
E01013154	North East Lincolnshire 018C	Cleethorpes	25,797
E01013216	North East Lincolnshire 023D	Cleethorpes	25,981
E01013155	North East Lincolnshire 017D	Cleethorpes	27,397
E01013171	North East Lincolnshire 022C	Cleethorpes	28,611
E01013223	North East Lincolnshire 007B	Cleethorpes	28,970
E01013157	North East Lincolnshire 020B	Cleethorpes	29,914

Home Information Packs

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he plans to publish a detailed implementation plan for the introduction of home information packs. [48386]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is discussing the main elements of the implementation plan with stakeholders and expect to share the details with them shortly.

Homelessness

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 5 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 307W, on homelessness, when he expects to publish the code of guidance. [50993]

Yvette Cooper: A revised "Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities" is due to be published in the next few months.

Housing

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of right-to-buy sales in West Lancashire since 1980 were *(a)* bed-sit, *(b)* one-bed, *(c)* two-bed, *(d)* three-bed and *(e)* four or more bedrooms. [45133]

Yvette Cooper: Information on the number of bedrooms for properties sold through the right to buy scheme is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much funding local authority housing in *(a)* England and *(b)* Tamworth constituency received in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available, broken down by source. [48656]

Mr. Woolas: The information requested is not held centrally, and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to ensure that tenants of arm's length management organisations are able to decide their future tenancy arrangements when the current contracts expire; and if he will make a statement. [44464]

Yvette Cooper: Tenants should be fully consulted on all significant changes to the management of their homes, as they were on decisions to set up an arm's length management organisation.

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much funding local authority housing in *(a)* England and *(b)* Leeds has received in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available, broken down by source. [46004]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is currently not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to increase the volume of affordable social housing provided by *(a)* local authorities, *(b)* the not-for-profit sector and *(c)* the private sector. [46005]

Yvette Cooper: The Government set a target of providing 75,000 social rented homes from 2005–06 to 2007–08, that is, an additional 10,000 homes, a 50 per cent. increase on 2004–05.

Of these it is estimated around 3,000 will be provided through local authorities and at least 60,000 through registered social landlords or other developers. The Government have announced in the Barker review to explore new innovative ways for local councils to support more social house building in future.

The Government have already widened the availability of funding through the Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing programme to include non-registered social landlords.

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many council houses in *(a)* Barnsley and *(b)* Doncaster have been brought up to the Decent Homes Standard; and how many remain to be brought up to the standard. [46555]

Yvette Cooper: The information is as follows.

(a) Barnsley has reported that their number of non-decent dwellings has decreased from 8,437 in April 2003 to 5,458 in April 2005. Barnsley did not supply the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister with non-decent estimates prior to April 2003.

(b) In 2002 Doncaster reported that their number of non-decent dwellings as of April 2001 was 8,858. Their number of non-decent dwellings in 2005 was reported at 13,324.

This reported increase is due to Doncaster revising their figures after a stock condition survey and a validation of stock condition data in preparation for an option appraisal, and not necessarily a physical increase in their number of non-decent dwellings.

Source:

Business Plan Annual Monitoring returns.

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of council housing stock in *(a)* Barnsley and *(b)* Doncaster has been sold under the right to buy scheme since 1980. [46556]

Yvette Cooper: The proportion of council housing stock in Barnsley and Doncaster that has been sold under the right to buy scheme since its introduction in 1980 can be found on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?id=1156373

Mr. Hands: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people in the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham are waiting to be found suitable accommodation by the local authority while living in accommodation judged unacceptable by social services. [45947]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Leisure Facilities Transfer (West Lancashire)

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effect of the transfer of leisure facilities in West Lancashire to newly-formed charitable trusts on their access to capital for refurbishment. [51119]

Mr. Caborn: I have been asked to reply.

Specific information on the transfer of ownership of leisure centres from local authorities to newly-formed charitable trusts is not centrally collated. However, information from the Leisure Data Base Company suggests that approximately one-fifth of public leisure facilities in England are provided through trusts.

My Department recognises the importance of this issue in ensuring the continued sustainability of publicly provided sports facilities. The Audit Commission is currently undertaking a study into the different types of management arrangements available to local authorities for running these services and how they approach the task of choosing the option best suited to local needs. This is expected to include a consideration of the potential implications of each of these options, including for charitable trusts.

I will ensure a copy of the study is placed in the House Libraries once it is published.

Local Authority Expenditure

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much local authorities have spent on gas in each year between 1997 and 2005. [51148]

Mr. Woolas: Estimates for how much local authorities have spent on gas in each year between 1997 and 2005 have been tabled as follows. From 2002–03 onwards, figures include other (non-electricity) energy costs (eg solid fuel and fuel oil) as well as gas.

	£000
1998–99	114,439
1999–2000	112,727
2000–01	121,717
2001–02	151,698
2002–03	201,290
2003–04	187,822
2004–05	222,481

Source:

Subjective Analysis Returns (SAR) submitted by local authorities to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Figures prior to 1998–99 were not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The SAR is a sample survey and collects information from 121 authorities in England. The data have been grossed up to provide estimates for England as a whole.

Comparisons across years may not be valid due to changes in responsibilities and the method of reporting the information. In particular, the data for 1998–99 to 2002–03 are presented on a non-Financial Reporting Standard 17 (FRS17) basis while the data for 2003–04 and 2004–05 are presented on a FRS17 basis. Hence, figures for different years may not be directly comparable.

Millennium Dome (Redevelopment)

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what responsibilities he has had for the millennium dome in each year since his appointment as Deputy Prime Minister. [49713]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Deputy Prime Minister inherited responsibility for the millennium dome in May 2002 when the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created as a Department in its own right. Prior to that responsibility for the dome rested with the former Department for Transport, local government and the regions.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister sponsors English Partnerships, the national regeneration agency, which has owned the dome site since 1997 and was charged with securing a long term use for the millennium dome structure and regeneration of associated land on the Greenwich peninsula.

English Partnerships have entered into legally binding contracts with Meridian Delta Ltd (MDL), a consortium consisting of Lend Lease and Quintain Estates and Development Plc, and Anschutz Entertainment Group (Anschutz), for the redevelopment of the dome and the regeneration of approximately 190 acres of land on the Greenwich peninsula.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister continues to oversee and monitor English Partnerships' role in securing the financial returns from the deal and in working with MDL and Anschutz in the redevelopment of the millennium dome and associated land to ensure successful delivery of the regeneration of the area. English Partnerships also continues to have responsibility for certain aspects of the dome's maintenance, security and insurance until Anschutz completes the construction of the arena and takes on full responsibility for the dome structure and its immediate surroundings.

Supporting People

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will put mechanisms in place to ensure that the calculation of the needs-based formulae for supporting people grants will not include a ceiling; and that the implementation of the increase grant will take effect in full from April 2007. [51185]

Mr. Woolas: Through "Creating Sustainable Communities: Supporting Independence", the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently consulting on whether, and if so how, to take forward any changes to the basis for allocating supporting people grants to local authorities. In parallel, the ODPM is also consulting on a technical model which provides one option for an alternative approach to allocations. Consultation on both runs until 28 February 2006, and decisions will be taken once we have had the opportunity to consider all representations received.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has, however, already announced guaranteed minimum supporting people grant allocations for 2007–08. These have been set on the basis of each authority receiving at least 95 per cent. of their grant for 2006–07. The ODPM will determine and confirm how to allocate the remainder of the funding following and in the light of the current consultation. However, the announcement of minimum allocations means that any change to the basis for grant distribution cannot be implemented in full from April 2007.

TREASURY

Departmental Expenditure

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was spent by his Department on *(a)* gas and *(b)* electricity in 2004–05. [51769]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The amounts spent on *(a)* gas and *(b)* electricity consumed in 1 Horse Guards Road during 2004–05 were *(a)* £3,566 and *(b)* £332,130.

Free Bus Travel

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment he made of the method of distributing the sum of money allocated to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to cover the cost of the free bus travel policy announced in the Budget when deciding the total sum of money to be applied to the policy; [51466]

(2) how the sum of money allocated to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to cover the cost of the free bus travel policy announced in the Budget was calculated; [51467]

(3) what representations he has received concerning the calculation of the sum of money allocated to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to cover the cost of the free bus travel policy announced in the Budget. [51468]

Mr. Des Browne: The Government are providing an extra £350 million for 2006–07 through the Formula Grant system which will be sufficient to fund the cost to local authorities, as set out in Budget 2005. Local authorities were fully consulted by The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on the distribution by a new formula and received very few representations against. Decisions on the distribution of local government grant for 2006–07 and 2007–08 were made as part of the local government finance settlement, approved by this house on 6 February 2006.

The £350 million included reimbursement to operators for lost income, additional costs due to the increase in generated users, the reimbursement of authorities already offering free off-peak local bus travel, and inflation.

A small number of representations have been received regarding the Budget 2005 announcement of an increase in concessionary fares. However, these have concentrated on the method of distribution as opposed to the calculation of the £350 million allocated.

Parliamentary Questions

Anne Main: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and what percentage of the written parliamentary questions addressed to him he has answered personally in each year since he took up his post. [50227]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Written questions are usually answered by the Minister with day to day responsibility for the issue concerned.

Post Office

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what services to the public which are provided by his Department are available from the post office. [51199]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Customers can pay direct taxes (including national insurance contributions) at the post office. They can also buy National Savings and Investment products and £5 Royal Mint commemorative coins.

Revenue and Customs

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs and its predecessors spent on *(a)* television and *(b)* radio advertising in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and what the advertising campaigns were for in each case. [44791]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* The following table details media spend figures, by campaign, excluding VAT and all fees, for *(a)* television and *(b)* radio advertising from 2000 to 2005.

£

	TV	*Radio*
2004–05		
HMCE Fuel Fraud 2004–05	—	125,078
Total		125,078
Tax Credits 2004–05	2,302,241	930,427
Self Assessment 2004–05	3,138,961	1,025,965
PAYE 2004–05	—	84,788
Child Trust Fund 2004–05	1,112,299	334,528
Share Fishermen 2004–05	—	40,443
Total	6,553,501	2,416,151
Total	6,553,501	2,541,229
2003–04		
Tax Credits 2003–04	2,739,999	950,958
Self Assessment 2003–04	3,313,116	881,013
Share Fisherman 2003–04	—	47,758
Total	6,053,115	1,879,729
2002–03		
HM Customs & Excise 2002–03	—	74,454
Total		74,454
Self Assessment 2002–03	3,145,572	667,501
New Tax Credits 2002–03	6,705,001	732,960
Total	9,850,573	1,400,461

£

	TV	*Radio*
2001–02		
HM Customs & Excise 2001–02	—	184,908
HM Customs & Excise 2001–02 (New Terms)	—	8,000
Total		192,908
Self Assessment 2001–02	2,263,000	397,836
Working Family Tax Credits 2001–02	—	489,934
Self Assessment 2001–02 (New terms)	487,900	199,438
PAYE Online 2001–02 (New Terms)	—	324,966
Disabled Persons Tax Credit (New Terms)	—	559,170
Total	2,750,900	1,971,344

Tax Credits

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit cases have been with the *(a)* Compliance Co-ordination Unit and *(b)* Field Force in each month since 2003–04. [38555]

Dawn Primarolo: Compliance activity for this work area is no longer organised in the teams referred to as *(a)* Compliance Co-ordination Unit and *(b)* Field Force. This means that the Department is unable to supply the information requested.

Mr. Gale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what research was conducted in preparing the Government news network press release issued on 1 February on the tax credit system. [50215]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The press release was based on published statistics, administrative data on Tax Credits, and calculations by HM Treasury and HM Revenue and Customs.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much in total has been overpaid in tax credits since they were introduced. [50702]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* Estimates for 2003–04 of the numbers of in-work families with tax credits awards, including information on overpayments and underpayments, based on final family circumstances and incomes for 2003–04 are published in "Child and Working Tax Credits. Finalised Awards. 2003–04." This publication and provisional estimates for the number of in-work families with tax credit awards as at selected dates in 2004–05 are available on the HMRC website at:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-quarterly-stats.htm

Estimates of numbers and values of overpayments or underpayments for 2004–05 awards at 5 April 2005 will be published in May 2006.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the stages of the working tax credit system are from application to payment; how many claims have been stopped as fraudulent or possibly fraudulent cases at each stage since the scheme began; and if he will make a statement. [47657]

Dawn Primarolo: All claims for tax credits are subjected to risk assessment and key personal details are matched against other HMRC frameworks before any

payments are made. I refer the hon. Gentlemen to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 558W.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Asbestos

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will extend the Health and Safety Executive's consultation period on the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006. [47010]

Mrs. McGuire: The consultation on the proposed changes to the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 is being undertaken by the Health and Safety Commission. The length of the consultation period is therefore a matter for the Commission, not Ministers. I understand that this was set by the Commission in its meeting of 11 October 2005. I am informed by the HSC that key stakeholders have now submitted their views.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what factors the Health and Safety Executive took into account when setting the deadline for the consultation on the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006. [47011]

Mrs. McGuire: The Health and Safety Commission, rather than the Health and Safety Executive, set the timetable for consultation on proposed amendments to the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 and decided that the time allowed was an adequate period for people to properly consider the document and prepare their responses. This is in line with the 12-week minimum required by the Cabinet Office's code of practice on consultation. The Health and Safety Executive had also previously discussed the issues with key stakeholders.

Benefit Payment Methods

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many payments of *(a)* state pension, *(b)* pension credit and *(c)* other benefits are made each week to (i) Post Office card accounts, (ii) basic bank accounts and (iii) other bank accounts in (1) the UK, (2) Argyll and Bute constituency and (3) each region. [49344]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* The information is not available in the format requested. The table below shows the number of DWP pensions and benefits being paid into (i) Post Office card accounts and (ii) bank/building society accounts as at December 2005.

	Type of account	
	Post Office card account	*Bank account*
Total state retirement pension	1,886,500	7,459,800
Total pension credit	936,700	1,644,500
Total other benefits	1,685,600	5,956,400

Region	*State retirement pension*	*Pension credit*	*Other benefits*
(i) Post Office card account			
Argyle and Bute	2,900	1,300	1,600
North East	109,200	66,500	127,100
North West	252,000	133,000	274,200
Yorkshire and Humber	194,200	97,600	166,800
East Midlands	149,500	65,500	106,700
West Midlands	194,600	104,600	165,000
East of England	153,900	66,300	89,400
London	123,500	85,700	194,600
South East	182,400	73,300	112,400
South West	181,000	68,400	97,100
Wales	152,300	67,800	146,500
Scotland (excluding Argyle and Bute)	191,000	106,700	204,200
(ii) Bank accounts			
Argyle and Bute	10,200	2,300	6,600
North East	289,300	83,900	327,900
North West	827,800	207,700	827,200
Yorkshire and Humber	606,500	150,300	536,400
East Midlands	551,300	120,700	433,500
West Midlands	668,400	162,200	580,900
East of England	805,200	147,800	457,700
London	710,600	189,300	757,100
South East	1,216,000	194,500	620,600
South West	796,800	143,300	426,400
Wales	356,200	86,300	395,000
Scotland (excluding Argyle and Bute)	621,500	156,200	587,100

Figures are rounded to the nearest 100 and relate to payment accounts in Great Britain.

Pensions and benefits are paid at different frequencies. Most are paid weekly.

Figures refer to benefit payment accounts. People in receipt of more than one benefit/pension will be counted for each separate benefit/pension in payment. People who have their benefit/pension combined and paid at the same time will only be counted through the paying benefit.

Benefits

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the age bands *(a)* 18 to 25, *(b)* 25 to 40, *(c)* 40 to 55 and *(d)* 55 to 65 years were in receipt of (i) disability allowance, (ii) invalid care allowance, (iii) carers allowance, (iv) incapacity benefit and (v) other health-related benefit in (A) absolute numbers and (B) as a percentage of the total population of the Crosby constituency in each year between 2000 and 2005. [44964]

Mrs. McGuire: I have asked the chief executive of the Disability and Carers Service, Mr. Terry Moran to write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Terry Moran:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in the age bands *(a)* 18 to 25 *(b)* 25 to 40 *(c)* 40 to 55 and *(d)* 55 to 65 years were in receipt of (i) disability allowance (ii) invalid care allowance (iii) carers allowance (iv) incapacity benefit and (v) other health-related benefit in (A) absolute numbers and (B) as a percentage of the total population of the Crosby constituency in each of the years 2000 to 2005.

The Minister for Disabled People, Anne McGuire MP, promised you a substantive reply from the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service.

The information available is in the attached annexes.

I hope this is helpful.

Annex 1

Disability living allowance (DLA)

Number of DLA claimants in the parliamentary constituency of Crosby, as at May of each year from 2000 to 2005

Thousands

Age of claimant	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
18–24	*0.1	*0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
25–39	*0.4	*0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
40–54	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
55–65	0.6	0.7	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2
All	1.8	2.0	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.6

Number of DLA claimants in the Government office region of the north west, as at May of each year from 2000 to 2005

Thousands

Age of claimant	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
18–24	9.4	10.5	11.0	12.0	12.9	13.6
25–39	43.4	43.5	45.6	46.7	47.4	47.5
40–54	85.3	88.7	89.7	92.5	94.8	96.0
55–65	109.3	112.4	115.3	119.3	121.6	122.0
All	247.4	255.2	261.6	270.5	276.7	279.2

DLA claimants in the Government office region of the north west, as at May of each year from 2000 to 2005, as percentage of the relevant population

Percentage

Age of claimant	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
18–24	1.7	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.2
25–39	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5
40–54	6.3	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.9
55–65	13.9	14.1	13.9	14.0	14.0	14.0
All	6.0	6.1	6.3	6.4	6.5	6.6

Notes:

1. Population estimates are not available at parliamentary constituency level. Figures and percentages at GOR level are provided instead.
2. Totals show the number of people in receipt of an allowance, and excludes people with entitlement where the payment has been suspended, for example if they are in hospital.
3. Parliamentary constituencies and GORs have been allocated using the ONS postcode directory.
4. Percentages have been calculated using the relevant ONS mid year population estimates.
5. Figures pre 2002 have been based on the 5 per cent. QSE data and are therefore subject to sampling variation. Those below 500 are subject to a high degree of sampling error and are marked '*'.

Definitions and conventions: "-" Nil or Negligible; "." Not applicable; Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and expressed in thousands. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source: DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study for totals and 5% samples for detail/long time series.

Annexe 2

Carer's allowance (CA) previously invalid care allowance (ICA)

Number of CA claimants in the parliamentary constituency of Crosby, as at May[1] of each year from 2002 to 2005

Thousands

Age of claimant	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
18–24	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
25–39	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
40–54	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3
55–65	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
All	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5

Number of CA claimants in the Government office region of the north west, as at May[1] of each year from 2002 to 2005

Thousands

Age of claimant	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
18–24	2.4	2.6	2.7	2.8
25–39	18.2	18.5	18.4	18.4
40–54	23.9	24.6	24.7	25.4
55–65	13.1	13.9	14.2	14.6
All	57.6	59.5	60.1	61.1

Number of CA claimants in the Government office region of the north west, as at May[1] of each year from 2000 to 2005, as percentage of the relevant population

Percentage

Age of claimant	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
18–24	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
25–39	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
40–54	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
55–65	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7
All	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4

[1] 2002 figures as at June 2002.

Notes:

1. Population estimates are not available at parliamentary constituency level. Figures and percentages at GOR level are provided instead.
2. The pre 2003 figures shown have been calculated using the information from the 'old' CA 100 per cent. data source. For carer's allowance the earliest WPLS dataset is August 2003.
3. Only cases in payment are shown (those with underlying entitlement but not actually receiving payment have been excluded).
4. Parliamentary constituencies and GORs have been allocated using the ONS postcode directory.
5. Percentages have been calculated using the relevant ONS mid year population estimates.

Definitions and conventions: "-" Nil or Negligible; "." Not applicable; Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and expressed in thousands. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Source: DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study for totals and 100 per cent. samples for detail.

Annexe 3

Incapacity benefit (IB)/ severe disablement allowance (SDA)

IB/SDA claimants caseloads and percentage of the population, north west GOR and Crosby parliamentary constituency: May 2000 to 2005

	May 2000		*May 2001*		*May 2002*	
	Thousands	*Percentage*[1]	*Thousands*	*Percentage*[1]	*Thousands*	*Percentage*[1]
North West GOR						
All ages	448.0	6.6	454.2	6.7	449.6	6.7
Unknown	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
Under 18	1.9	[1]—	1.8	[1]—	1.6	[1]—

IB/SDA claimants caseloads and percentage of the population, north west GOR and Crosby parliamentary constituency: May 2000 to 2005

	May 2000		May 2001		May 2002	
	Thousands	Percentage[1]	Thousands	Percentage[1]	Thousands	Percentage[1]
18 to 24	23.8	0.4	24.6	0.4	24.3	0.4
25 to 39	103.7	1.5	105.9	1.6	103.6	1.5
40 to 54	169.0	2.5	173.2	2.6	170.2	2.5
55 to 65	146.6	2.2	145.5	2.2	146.5	2.2
66 and over	3.1	[1]—	3.2	[1]—	3.4	[1]—
All ages	3.8	[2]—	3.7	[2]—	3.7	[2]—
Under 18	[1]—	[2]—	[1]—	[2]—	[1]—	[2]—
18 to 24	0.1	[2]—	0.1	[2]—	0.1	[2]—
25 to 39	0.8	[2]—	0.7	[2]—	0.7	[2]—
40 to 54	1.4	[2]—	1.4	[2]—	1.4	[2]—
55 to 65	1.4	[2]—	1.4	[2]—	1.4	[2]—
66 and over	[1]—	[2]—	[1]—	[2]—	[1]—	[2]—

	May 2000		May 2001		May 2002	
	Thousands	Percentage1	Thousands	Percentage1	Thousands	Percentage1
North West GOR						
All ages	447.5	6.6	442.1	6.5	432.4	6.3
Unknown	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
Under 18	1.5	[1]—	1.6	[1]—	1.2	[1]—
18 to 24	25.1	0.4	24.7	0.4	23.1	0.3
25 to 39	102.5	1.5	100.6	1.5	97.0	1.4
40 to 54	169.5	2.5	168.2	2.5	166.5	2.4
55 to 65	145.4	2.1	143.5	2.1	140.8	2.1
66 & over	3.5	0.1	3.6	0.1	3.8	0.1
Crosby Parliamentary Constituency						
All ages	3.7	[2]—	3.6	[2]—	3.5	[2]—
Under 18	[1]—	[2]—	[1]—	[2]—	[1]—	[2]—
18 to 24	0.1	[2]—	0.2	[2]—	0.2	[2]—
25 to 39	0.7	[2]—	0.7	[2]—	0.7	[2]—
40 to 54	1.4	[2]—	1.4	[2]—	1.4	[2]—
55 to 65	1.3	[2]—	1.3	[2]—	1.3	[2]—
66 & over	[1]—	[2]—	[1]—	[2]—	[1]—	[2]—

[1] North west GOR total populations have been used to calculate percentages of the population. Crosby parliamentary constituency population figures are not available.
[2] Denotes nil or negligible.
[3] Denotes not applicable.

Notes:
1. Population estimates are not available at parliamentary constituency level. Figures and percentages at GOR level are provided instead.
2. Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and shown in thousands. Percentages are rounded to one decimal place
3. 'Claimant' figures include all IB/SDA claimants (including IB credits only cases).
4. There are a very small number of cases each year (less than 50) where the claimant age is unknown.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data. Office for National Statistics Mid-2000 to 2004 population data for Great Britain and North West GOR.

Annexe 4

Other health-related benefits

People receiving industrial injuries disablement benefit (IIDB) in the parliamentary constituency of Crosby

Thousands

	As at 1 April		As at 31 March[1]			
Age of claimant	*2000*[2]	*2001*[2]	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
18–24	—	—	—	—	—	—
25–39	—	—	20	20	15	15
40–54	0.1	0.1	120	105	100	95
55–65	0.1	0.1	120	125	120	130

People receiving IIDB by north west Government office region, numbers and as a percentage of relevant population

Thousands

Age of claimant	As at 1 April		As at 31 March[1]			
	2002[2]	*Percentage*	*2001*[2]	*Percentage*	*2002*	*Percentage*
18–24	0.2	0.04	0.2	0.04	150	0.03
25–39	5.1	0.35	4.6	0.32	4,215	0.30
40–54	12.9	0.95	12.8	0.94	11,830	0.87
55–65	13.0	1.65	12.8	1.61	12,795	1.55

Thousands

	As at 31 March[1]					
	2003	*Percentage*	*2004*	*Percentage*	*2005*	*Percentage*
18–24	130	0.02	110	0.02	85	0.01
25–39	3,910	0.28	3,540	0.26	3,180	0.23
40–54	11,590	0.84	11,255	0.81	11,055	0.80
55–65	12,980	1.52	12,905	1.49	12,910	1.49

[1] Figures are from a 100 per cent. sample from the Industrial Injuries Computer System (IICS) and are rounded to the nearest 5.
[2] Figures are from a 10 per cent. sample from clerical forms received from the Disablement Benefit Offices and are rounded to the nearest 100.

Note:
Population estimates are not available at parliamentary constituency level. Figures and percentages at GOR level are provided instead.

Source:
Office for National Statistics mid year population estimates

Citygate Public Affairs

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what meetings the Department has held with Citygate Public Affairs Ltd. since July. [36753]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department does not maintain a central list of such contacts. Ministers and civil servants, including special advisers meet many people as part of the process of policy development and business delivery. All such contacts are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Code, Civil Service Code, Code of Conduct for Special Advisers and Guidance for civil servants on contacts with lobbyists and people outside Government.

Compulsory Redundancies (Benefit Offices)

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on negotiations with the Public and Commercial Services Union on compulsory redundancies for jobcentre and benefit office workers. [44840]

Mrs. McGuire: In November 2004 the Department reached a negotiated agreement with the PCS, FDA and Prospect trade unions. This agreement states that staff would only be declared compulsorily redundant after full and meaningful consultation with trade unions has taken place. The agreement allows for consultation to be undertaken at the appropriate level within the organisation and with a view to reaching agreement about ways to avoid, minimise or mitigate compulsory redundancy. DWP Management and the unions agreed to work constructively together to seek to avoid compulsory redundancies through redeployment and voluntary measures.

In accordance with the agreement, a forum of management and departmental trade unions has met monthly to review jointly the operation of the agreement. At the latest joint forum the unions agreed that the agreement was holding up well in the majority of government office regions. To date the Department has reduced staffing by just under 15,000 with only one compulsory redundancy, which involved exceptional circumstances. The Department will continue to work with its trade unions to avoid compulsory redundancy wherever possible.

Credit and Benefit Overpayments

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many individual credit and benefit overpayment cases have been referred to his Department by hon. Members since 2001. [40529]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 11 January 2006]:* Records prior to 2003 are no longer available.

Details of individual pension credit and benefit overpayment cases referred to the Department by hon. Members for the years 2003 to 2005 are shown in the following table.

	Number
2003	151
2004	220
2005	406

Customer Management System

Mr. Anthony Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the estimated cost is of repairing the Customer Management System in his Department. [46829]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions has asked me to reply to your question asking what the estimated cost is of repairing the Customer Management System in his Department. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The Customer Management System (CMS) is performing to agreed service levels so there is no repair cost as such. However, like all DWP Information Technology systems, CMS has a programme of future releases that will update and improve the system to reflect changing legislative and business requirements.

Debt Manager Software

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much debt has been written off as a result of problems with the new IT software package debt manager. [45278]

Mr. Plaskitt: No debt has been written off.

Departmental Advertising Campaigns

Anne Milton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the public information advertising campaigns run by his Department in the past 12 months; and how much his Department spent on *(a)* newspapers and *(b)* television advertising for those campaigns. [42516]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available in the format requested and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The information is held in financial years and the following table provides the figures for the current financial year to date.

Department for Work and Pensions National Public Advertising Information Campaigns April 2005 to date

£000

	Newspaper advertising expenditure	TV advertising expenditure
Targeting Benefit Fraud	556	1,446
Pension Credit	109	0
State Pension Deferral	275	0
State Second Pension	786	0
Winter Fuel Payments	918	0
Images of Disability	0	0
National Sector Campaign	0	0
Age Partnership Group	0	0

Notes:
1. All figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
2. All national advertising campaigns are listed together with the newspaper and television advertising expenditure relating to those campaigns. National advertising campaigns that do not include either newspaper or television advertising are also listed.
3. The information is not available in the format requested and has therefore been provided for the current financial year only.
4. All figures are exclusive of VAT.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47671]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information requested is as follows:

(a) Items of departmental property worth over £100 reported as lost from 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2005 are as follows:

Asset description	CCNBV (£)
NEC TFT Monitor	118.52
Dell Latitude C600 Laptop	367.61
NEC Multisync Monitor LCD1550X	454.91
Dell Latitude C600 Laptop	460.67
Compaq EVO N600C Laptop	482.83
NEC Powerpoint Projector	909.51
NEC Powermate Desktop PC	446.70
Compaq EVO N600C PC	655.27

(b) The Department does not hold details of property that has been broken.

Departmental Expenditure

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the annual expenditure on vehicles by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39988]

Mr. Plaskitt: The figures provided are for the department, all its agencies and non-departmental public bodies and cover vehicle purchase costs and car hire and associated running costs. The department does not collect centrally information in the agency or geographic format requested and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

Departmental annual expenditure on vehicle purchase and car hire (£)

Period	Vehicle purchase	Car hire
2002–03	9,614,432	1,408,009
2003–04	4,209,396	1,015,311
2004–05	6,508,943	908,521
2005–06[1]	4,000,000	600,000

[1] Anticipated

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was by (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each English region and (4) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40091]

Mrs. McGuire: A full response is not available from standard information systems in the format requested and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. A partial response has therefore been provided.

(i) *(a) (b)* —The Department's estate has been sold or transferred under a PFI partnership deal to Land Securities Trillium (LST) and in return for the payment of a unitary charge, LST is responsible for providing a full facilities management service across the estate. As payments are made for the service as a whole the Department could provide a breakdown for the facilities, agencies and regions requested only at disproportionate cost.

(ii)(A)*(a) (b) (c)* —Listed as follows are the non-departmental public bodies which are not included in the PFI partnership deal with LST.

		£
Remploy Ltd.	*2002–03*	
	(a) Buildings	3,780,000
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	986,000
	2003–04	
	(a) Buildings	2,255,000
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	1,273,000
	2004–05	
	(a) Buildings	5,095,000
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	1,221,000
	Planned expenditure for 2005–06	
	(a) Buildings	730,000
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	1,178,000
Independent Living Funds (ILF) All buildings costs are met via the departmental PFI partnership with Land Securities Trillium	*2002–03*	
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	7,814
	2003–04	
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	9,973
	2004–05	
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	9,720

		£
	Planned expenditure for 2005–06	
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	11,700
Disability Rights Commission. The figures for expenditure on buildings cover all property costs for example rents, repairs, running costs and any mandatory insurance. In accordance with Treasury and departmental policy the terms of the DRC's financial memorandum preclude the Commission from taking out any commercial insurance without the prior approval of the Department, other than third party insurance required by the Road Traffic Acts and any other insurance which is a statutory obligation or which is permitted in paragraph 30.4.2 of Government Accounting.	*2002–03*	
	(a) Buildings	1,004,000
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	n/a
	2003–04	
	(a) Buildings	1,079,000
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	n/a
	2004–05	
	(a) Buildings	1,013,000
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	n/a
	Planned expenditure for 2005–06	
	(a) Buildings	1,329,342
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	n/a
Private Pensions Fund (PPF) Established 6 April 2005	*Planned expenditure for 2005–06*	
	(a) Buildings	556,000
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	10,000
The Pensions Regular (TPR) Established 6 April 2005	*Planned expenditure for 2005–06*	
	(a) Buildings	1,900,000
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff	50,000

n/a = Not available.

(ii)(B)(a)(b)(c)—Executive agencies

		£
Health and Safety Executive 2002–03 information has now been archived and can only be provided at disproportionate cost	*2003–04*	
	(a) Buildings:	
	Scotland	1,945,740
	Wales	260,506
	London HQ	5,462,639
	East and South East	2,225,177
	Midlands	1,919,605
	South West	367,464
	North West	4,931,070
	Yorkshire and North East	1,502,751
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff:	
	Scotland	10,485
	Wales	1,535
	London HQ	0
	East and South East	22,887
	Midlands	9,145
	South West	8,301
	North West	10,221
	Yorkshire and North East	14,777
	2004–05	

(ii)(B)(a)(b)(c)—Executive agencies

		£
	(a) Buildings:	
	Scotland	2,147,423
	Wales	264,580
	London HQ	6,120,556
	East and South East	2,257,637
	Midlands	2,180,534
	South West	496,212
	North West	5,078,636
	Yorkshire and North East	1,563,863
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff:	
	Scotland	11,292
	Wales	1,826
	London HQ	0
	East and South East	18,387
	Midlands	10,499
	South West	9,575
	North West	7,285
	Yorkshire and North East	16,780
	Planned expenditure 2005–06	
	(a) Buildings:	
	Scotland	2,272,678
	Wales	325,520
	London HQ	6,115,630
	East and South East	2,286,326
	Midlands	2,271,892
	South West	459,331
	North West	5,064,025
	Yorkshire and North East	1,634,265
	(b) Insurance of buildings and staff:	
	Scotland	10,989
	Wales	1,020
	London HQ	0
	East and South East	17,477
	Midlands	10,168
	South West	8,062
	North West	6,606
	Yorkshire and North East	18,550

		£
The Rent Service—became part of DWP in April 2004. The figure includes rent, rates, insurance and service charges on all our leases, both for occupied and unoccupied property. It does not include capital expenditure on refurbishments and fit cuts. The Rent Service is unable to breakdown costs in the format requested without incurring disproportionate costs and information is not available by region.	2004–05	5,522,136
	2005–06	5,085,839

(ii)(C)(a)(b)(c)—Other public bodies

		£
Motability	*2002–03*	
	(a) Buildings	208,630
	(b) Insurance of buildings	11,211
	2003–04	
	(a) Buildings	196,822
	(b) Insurance of buildings	13,857
	2004–05	
	(a) Buildings	259,263
	(b) Insurance of buildings	18,929
	Planned expenditure for 2005–06	
	(a) Buildings	277,946
	(b) Insurance of buildings	19,872
The Pensions Advisory Service (TPAS)	*2002–03*	
	(a) Buildings	194,910
	(b) Insurance of buildings	14,470
	2003–04	
	(a) Buildings	259,914
	(b) Insurance of buildings	19,051

(ii)(C)(a)(b)(c)—Other public bodies

	£
2004–05	
(a) Buildings	247,328
(b) Insurance of buildings	22,891
Planned expenditure for 2005–06	
(a) Buildings	286,000
(b) Insurance of buildings	10,000

Departmental Staff

Justine Greening: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the cost to be included in the departmental expenditure limits for involuntary and voluntary staff exit schemes in *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2006–07 and *(c)* 2007–08; and if he will make a statement. [32430]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 28 November 2006]:* The latest estimate of the cost to be included in the departmental expenditure limit on voluntary and voluntary exits is in the following table.

	£ million
2005–06	213
2006–07	85
2007–08	205

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans his Department has to change the London allowance of its staff; and if he will make a statement. [50010]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions no longer has separate "London allowances" for its staff. Instead the Department has four pay zones which all attract different rates of basic pay: inner London; outer London; specified location pay zones, which are a number of offices in the South East which have experienced recruitment difficulties in the past; and national, which covers the rest of the country. The difference between pay rates in the national zone and inner London differs for each pay scale, but is generally about £3,500.

The pay scales are fixed until July 2007 as part of a three year pay deal agreed with the unions in 2004. The negotiations with the unions about the detail of pay 2007 will cover the full range of pay arrangements, including the approach to geographic pay.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff in his Department are paid on a performance-related basis. [50481]

Mrs. McGuire: All employees below senior civil service level are eligible for bonuses, depending on their level of performance. For members of the senior civil service both their bonuses and their base pay increases are dependent on performance.

Disability Symbol

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the criteria are for use by an organisation of the two tick disability symbol; under what circumstances organisations lose the right to use the symbol; and how many organisations have lost the right to use the symbol in each of the last five years. [44512]

Mrs. McGuire: The Disability Symbol does not apply in Belfast North as the scheme does not operate in Northern Ireland. However, in the rest of the UK, organisations applying for symbol status must agree to meet commitments, which cover guaranteeing an interview for disabled people who meet the minimum requirements for the job, consultation with disabled employees on developing and using their abilities, retention, disability awareness and review.

Front-line Staff

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what definition he uses of front-line staff as referred to in the introduction to the 2005 departmental report. [45239]

Mrs. McGuire: The front-line staff referred to in the introduction to the 2005 departmental report are defined as those staff that have regular, direct contact with customers. The definition is included in the Department's Efficiency Technical Note, which is published on the Department's website.

Full-time Carers (Financial Support)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what financial support the Government have made available to full-time carers since 1997. [45882]

Mrs. McGuire: The Government's national carers strategy, which we developed with carers and the organisations that represent them and published in 1999, has achieved much in improving the financial support for carers, including older carers, through carer's allowance and other benefits, and through introduction of the carers grant to support local authorities in providing breaks and services for carers. Carers have access to the full range of social security benefits depending on their individual circumstances.

We have extended access to carer's allowance to carers aged 65 and over through abolition of the age limit which precluded them from claiming the benefit; extended entitlement to carer's allowance for up to eight weeks after the death of the person being cared for; linked the amount, net of allowable expenses, that a carer's allowance recipient can earn from paid employment to the level of the annually increased national insurance lower earnings limit; and increased in April 2001 the carer premium in income support and other income-related benefits by an extra £10 a week on top of the normal uprating.

Since 1997, the number of carers receiving carer's allowance has increased by 21 percent. to over 437,000, with a further 287,000 entitled to but not in receipt of carer's allowance (because they receive another income maintenance benefit). Expenditure on the benefit has increased by 26 percent. in real terms (at 2005–06 prices) and is expected to be over £1.1 billion in 2005–06. Some 207,000 carers under 60 years of age also receive extra help through the carer premium in income support, and over 164,000 pension credit recipients (households) receive the additional amount for carers.

In addition, most carers entitled to carer's allowance are credited with national insurance contributions to protect their entitlement to state pension and around two million carers will benefit from the special arrangements we have made for them in the state second pension.

In the last local government finance settlement we confirmed our commitment to continue the carers grant beyond 2006. Until at least the end of the 2007–08 financial year, provision for the grant will be £185 million a year.

Source:

Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study Data May 05

Gas Safety

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many deaths occurred due to carbon monoxide poisoning in each of the last 10 years; and how many of these deaths involved *(a)* liquid petroleum gas, *(b)* fire and explosions, *(c)* exposure to unburnt gas from piped gas and *(d)* exposure to carbon dioxide from piped gas. [50998]

Mrs. McGuire: An analysis of gas-related incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive in the last 10 years shows the following breakdown of fatalities from exposure to carbon monoxide (CO), fire and explosions, and other exposure (these are primarily from exposure to unburnt gas from piped gas):

Number of gas-related fatalities by incident kind and year

	Exposure to CO		*Fire and explosion*			
	Piped Gas	*LPG*	*Piped Gas*	*LPG*	*Other exposure*[1]	*Total*
1995–96	29	[2]—	6	[2]—	—	35
1996–97	29	2	9	—	—	40
1997–98	24	4	8	—	—	36
1998–99	29	8	8	3	—	48
1999–00	18	8	10	—	—	36
2000–01	20	5	9	1	—	35
2001–02	15	7	5	—	—	27
2002–03	17	3	4	1	—	25
2003–04	8	3	5	—	2	18
2004–05[3]	16	2	2	—	2	22
Grand total	205	42	66	5	4	322

[1] Information on 'other exposures' was not collected prior to 2003–04.
[2] In the case of exposure to CO and fire & explosion, these are separated into those from piped gas and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).
[3] The figures for 2004–05 are provisional.

Notes:
1. HSE does not collect information on exposure to carbon dioxide.
2. Information on LPG was not collected separately prior to 1996–97.
3. These figures may not correspond with official statistics because the analysis has been conducted using a different source.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many prosecutions there have been by the Health and Safety Executive of unregistered gas installers in each of the last 10 years; and how many of these were successful. [50999]

Mrs. McGuire: The number of prosecutions relating to unregistered gas installers is as follows:

	Reg 3(3)1		*Reg 3(7)2*		*Total*	
	Total number of prosecution actions taken	*Of which: Convictions*	*Total number of prosecution actions taken*	*Of which: Convictions*	*Total number of prosecution actions taken*	*Of which: Convictions*
1996–97	36	33	0	0	36	33
1997–98	57	53	0	0	57	53
1998–99	56	51	0	0	56	51
1999–2000	50	39	3	0	53	39
2000–01	23	22	8	8	31	30
2001–02	27	17	4	0	31	17
2002–03	34	32	12	11	46	43
2003–04	20	18	7	7	27	25
2004–05[3]	21	20	5	5	[4]26 (29)	[4]25 (28)

[1] Regulation 3(3) requires installers to be a member of a class of persons approved by HSE (i.e. CORGI registered).
[2] Regulation 3(7) prohibits anyone from falsely pretending to be a member of a class of persons (i.e. CORGI registered).
[3] The information for 2004–05 is provisional.
[4] In 2004–05, there were also three successful prosecutions under Reg 3 which have not been allocated to a sub-reg number. In summary 29 prosecutions were made, 28 of which were successful.

Note:

The question seeks information for each of the last 10 years. The table sets out data from 1996–97. Access to older data is not readily available and would require the restoration of archived databases.

Source:

Health and Safety Executive, Safety and Enforcement Statistics.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much funding has been spent by his Department on reducing rates of carbon monoxide poisoning in each of the past 10 years; and what steps the Government is taking *(a)* to promote gas safety awareness and *(b)* to prevent deaths by carbon monoxide poisoning. [51001]

Mrs. McGuire: The amount spent by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on campaigns to publicise the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning in each of the past 10 years was as follows:

	Amount (£)
1995–96	[1]1,374,000
1996–97	101,000
1997–98	695,000
1998–99	82,000
1999–2000	150,000
2000–01	150,000
2001–02	250,000
2002–03	150,000
2003–04	112,000
2004–05	100,000

[1] Inc. TV and radio.

Additionally, during the period, £101,000 was spent maintaining the Gas Advice Helpline.

During 2006, HSE is undertaking a major review of the gas safety regime and this will be launched at a stakeholder forum on 20 February. The review is aimed at ensuring that the gas safety regime is based on the most sensible and proportionate approach to managing the risk. It will include research to examine the scale of the CO problem and awareness of the risks.

Other interdepartmental efforts to promote CO awareness have included:

HSE has worked with ODPM on their Home Fire Risk Check Initiative, where, in addition to smoke alarm installation, funding is also available for fire and rescue services to purchase and install a number of carbon monoxide detectors to offer additional protection.

DH produced a leaflet in autumn 2005 about domestic carbon monoxide poisoning that is endorsed by HSE, industry and the registered charity CO-Gas Safety. In his update newsletter of 11 January 2006, the Chief Medical Officer gave advice to all doctors in England on how to recognise CO poisoning.

GPs (Personal Capability Assessments)

Mr. Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what changes in the role of general practitioners he expects in relation to personal capability assessments for benefits. [48591]

Mrs. McGuire: General Practitioners do not play any direct role in the personal capability assessment; they do however provide medical information as part of the initial evidence gathering process.

We will be reviewing this process, including the forms that General Practitioners have to complete, to increase compliance with requests for medical information and the quality of the information provided. In addition the claimant's General Practitioner will receive a copy of the new capability report at the end of the assessment process identifying health interventions which would help the individual improve their functional capability so that they would be more likely to return to work.

Our Green Paper; "A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work"; has proposals for measures to support this. These include proposals designed to help General Practitioners support patients with health conditions and disabilities to remain in or return quickly to work thus reducing the likelihood of them having to claim incapacity benefits.

Health and Safety Executive

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the Health and Safety Executive was involved in *(a)* recommending and *(b)* approving planning permission for the development of (i) the Buncefield Oil Depot in Hemel Hempstead and (ii) residential or business properties near the depot; and if he will make a statement. [50954]

Mrs. McGuire: Since 1995 the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has advised the local planning authority on 28 planning applications for developments near the Buncefield Depot. HSE advised against four proposals and advised that a further seven should be allowed only if additional conditions were met. So far as HSE is aware, the local planning authority followed HSE's advice in all 28 cases. No records are available concerning the original development of the Depot, which took place before HSE was established.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the role of the Health and Safety Executive is in *(a)* approving and *(b)* commenting on planning applications relating to (i) fuel depots and (ii) developments near fuel depots. [51078]

Mrs. McGuire: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is consulted under the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1992 by a hazardous substances authority before the authority decides whether to issue a consent for an establishment, such as a fuel depot, to hold a quantity of prescribed hazardous substances above a specified threshold. HSE advises the authority on the hazards and risks presented by the proposed substances and supplies a consultation distance around the establishment. Before granting planning permission for specified subsequent developments within this consultation distance, the local planning authority is required to consult HSE under the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.

HSE's role is to advise the hazardous substances authority or the local planning authority on whether or not to grant consent or planning permission. In all cases the decision is made by the relevant authority.

Incapacity Benefit

Sir Malcolm Rifkind: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people aged 25 years or under claimed incapacity benefit in each year for which figures are available since 2000. [30848]

Mrs. McGuire: Information on the number of claims made broken down by age is not available. The available information, caseloads for those under 25, is in the following table.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants aged 25 years or under; Great Britain.

May	*IB/SDA*	*IB*	*SDA*
2000	194,900	133,800	61,100
2001	204,200	143,600	60,600
2002	204,900	173,800	31,100
2003	208,900	184,600	24,300
2004	210,300	192,600	17,700
2005	201,000	189,600	11,400

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
2. 'Claimant' figures include all incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disability allowance, including IB credits-only cases.
3. Figures place 25-year-olds in the '25 years or under' group.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data.

Mr. Holloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of incapacity benefit claimants in Gravesham constituency who might be able to work if provided with support. [43267]

Margaret Hodge: No formal assessment has been made.

Mr. Khan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Tooting are in receipt of incapacity benefit, broken down by age, gender and ethnicity. [47747]

Mrs. McGuire: Information on the ethnicity of incapacity benefits claimants is not available. The available information is in the following table.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance claimants in the Tooting parliamentary constituency, as at August 2005.

	All persons	*Men*	*Women*
All ages	3,400	2,000	1,400
Under 25	200	100	100
25–34	500	300	200
35–44	800	500	300
45–49	400	300	200
50–54	500	200	300
55–59	600	300	300
60–64	300	300	[1]—
65 and over	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—

[1] Nil or negligible.

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. 'Claimant' figures include all IB/SDA claimants, including IB credits only cases. *Source:*
DWP Information Directorate, Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many recipients of incapacity benefit in Tamworth had their benefit reduced in each of the last five years, broken down by reason; and if he will make a statement; [48647]

(2) how many people living in Tamworth constituency claimed incapacity benefit in each year since 1997; and what proportion of the working age population in the constituency this represents in each year. [48648]

Mrs. McGuire: The only reason for a claimant's incapacity benefit to be reduced is the receipt of an occupational pension in excess of £85.00 a week. The number of cases so affected in Tamworth is too small to be able to provide a precise figure.

Information on the number of incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimants in the Tamworth parliamentary constituency is in the following table. Working-age population figures are not available for parliamentary constituencies, so the information about proportions cannot be estimated.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants in the St Albans parliamentary constituency.

August	*Number*
1997	3,800
1998	3,600
1999	3,400
2000	3,500
2001	3,600
2002	3,600
2003	3,700
2004	3,600
2005	3,600

Notes:
1. The parliamentary constituency figures for the years 1997 to 1998 have been produced using the 5 per cent. data and have been rated up proportionally using the Great Britain WPLS 100 per cent. IB/SDA totals.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
3. 'Claimant' figures include all IB and SDA, including IB credits only cases.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. Samples from 1997 to 1998 and Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 per cent. data thereafter.

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many recipients of incapacity benefit in St. Albans had their benefit reduced in each of the last five years, broken down by reason; and if he will make a statement; [49334]

(2) how many people living in St. Albans claimed incapacity benefit in each year since 1997; and what proportion of the working age population in the constituency the figure represents in each year. [49335]

Mrs. McGuire: The only reason for a claimant's incapacity benefit to be reduced is the receipt of an occupational pension in excess of £85.00 a week. The number of cases so affected in St. Albans is too small to be able to provide a precise figure.

Information on the number of incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claimants in the St. Albans parliamentary constituency is in the table. Working-age population figures are not available for parliamentary constituencies, so the information about proportions cannot be estimated.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants in the St. Albans parliamentary constituency.

	Number
August 1997	2,800
August 1998	2,400
August 1999	2,400
August 2000	2,400
August 2001	2,400
August 2002	2,400
August 2003	2,400
August 2004	2,400
August 2005	2,500

Notes:
1. The parliamentary constituency figures for the years 1997 to 1998 have been produced using the five percent. data and have been rated up proportionally using the Great Britain WPLS 100 percent. IB/SDA totals.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. Claimant' figures include all IB and SDA, including IB credits only cases.
Source:
DWP Information Directorate, five percent. samples from 1997 to 1998 and Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100 percent. data thereafter

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many new *(a)* applicants and *(b)* recipients there were of incapacity benefits in each of the last five years. [51765]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information on the number of claims processed each year is in the table.

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance claims processed and awarded

Period (January to December)	*Claims processed*	*Claims where payment was awarded*	*Claims where NI credits-only were awarded*	*No award*
2001	811,715	258,225	290,300	263,190
2002	806,550	274,410	422,010	110,130
2003	787,525	281,435	428,395	77,695
2004	759,545	261,265	366,475	131,800
2005	691,760	242,745	306,875	142,140

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest five.
2. 'No award' figures include cases where conditions of entitlement were not met, together with 'transferred out', 'withdrawn', 'deleted' and 'accident declaration' cases.
3. "NI" = National Insurance.
4. Figures for overseas cases are excluded.
Source:
MISP 100 per cent. counts.

Learning Disabled (Employment)

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of people with a learning disability are in paid employment; and if he will make a statement. [43068]

Mrs. McGuire: The spring 2005 release of the Labour Force Survey shows that proportion of people with a learning difficulty in paid employment was 17.2 per cent.

The Labour Force Survey is unable to differentiate between people with a learning difficulty and people with a learning disability, and groups them together within the above category. Officials are currently examining the feasibility of future releases having separate categories.

It should also be noted that the above employment rate has been calculated using 'main health condition', and thus will not include people who's learning difficulty may be their second or subsequent health condition. The figure should be used as a guide rather than as fact.

Ministerial Travel

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on how many occasions since 7 July he has used the London underground in connection with his official duties. [35028]

Mrs. McGuire: The Secretary of State has used the London underground once in connection with his official duties since his appointment as Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on 2 November 2005.

Ministers use public transport wherever possible and practical to complete their journey and all ministerial travel on official business is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in travel by Ministers.

Pension Credit (Denton and Reddish)

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Denton and Reddish constituency receive the pension credit. [51140]

Mr. Timms: The number of people in receipt of pension credit in the Denton and Reddish constituency as at November 2005 is 5,900 individuals (5,000 households).

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. Caseload figures are taken from the GMS scan at 25 November 2005, rated up to give end-month estimates.
3. Pension credit (PC) replaced minimum income guarantee (MIG) on 6 October 2003. Existing MIG recipients were automatically converted onto pension credit on that date (assuming they still met the eligibility criteria).
4. Household recipients are those people who claim PC either on behalf of themselves only or on behalf of a household. This number is equal to the number of households in receipt of PC. The number of individual beneficiaries is the claimants plus their partners.
5. Parliamentary constituencies are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant postcode directory.
6. These figures are early estimates. Operational processing times mean that a number of claim commencements and terminations are not reflected in the figures. The final figures incorporated within the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) will take account of such cases.
Source: Information Directorate: 100 per cent. data from the Generalised Matching Service (GMS)
Pension credit scan taken as at 25 November 2005

Pensions (Direct Payment)

Mark Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether it is his policy to stop an individual's pension payments if he or she refuses to receive pension payments by the direct payment method. [50257]

Mr. Plaskitt: It is not the Departments policy to stop an individual's pension payments if he or she refuses to receive pension payments by the direct payment method.

Direct payment into an account is the safest, most reliable way to receive payment and in most cases provides the greatest range of access to cash and other financial services. Customers who do not provide account details are paid by cheque. However, we do not believe that cheques are appropriate for the vast majority of our customers.

Personal Capability Assessments

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his Department's estimate is of the average cost of undertaking a medical examination for the personal capability assessment. [49801]

Mrs. McGuire: This information is confidential and cannot be disclosed as to do so may prejudice the commercial interests of the Department and/or its suppliers.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of statutory sick pay claimants *(a)* received personal capability assessments (PCAs) in each year since 1997 and *(b)* he expects to receive PCAs in each year to 2008. [51976]

Mrs. McGuire: The personal capability assessment does not apply to statutory sick pay because, in that instance, incapacity for work is judged in relation to the job that the person has been doing under their contract of employment.

Post Office Card Accounts

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the timetable is for migrating Post Office card account customers to other forms of bank accounts. [48732]

Mr. Plaskitt: Government funding for the Post Office card account will continue until March 2010 as always planned.

We are starting some small scale pilots shortly to test various approaches to moving people from having their benefit or pension paid into a Post Office card account to payments into a bank account. Our emphasis will be on those bank accounts which can be used at post office branches. The pilots will help us see how customers react, including how many people continue to use the Post Office.

The pilots will run for about three weeks. We will then evaluate the results and discuss the findings with the Post Office. We will aim to develop a joint strategy with the Post Office to move customers from the Post Office card account. Our priority will be to ensure that this is a straightforward process for the customers themselves. Our timetable and strategy will be informed by the results of the pilots. There is no reason why the viability of post offices should be threatened if customers continue to draw cash at the Post Office after moving on from the Post Office card account.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the three pilot schemes his Department plans to operate during February to test the approaches for moving recipients of pensions and benefits away from Post Office card accounts. [49232]

Mr. Plaskitt *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* Government funding for the Post Office card account will end in March 2010 as always planned. All existing Post Office card account customers will still be able to use the Post Office to collect their benefit or pension if they wish by using a bank account there—25 different bank accounts can be accessed at Post Office branches now, and we hope there could be more in the future.

We are starting some small-scale pilots shortly to test various approaches to moving people from having their benefit or pension paid into a Post Office card account to payments into a bank account. Our emphasis will be on those bank accounts which can be used at Post Office branches, to help the Post Office retain as much business as possible. The pilots will help us see how customers react, including how many people continue to use the Post Office.

The pilots will run for about three weeks. We will then evaluate the results and discuss the findings with the Post Office. We will aim to develop a joint strategy with the Post Office to move customers from the Post Office card account. Our priorities will be to ensure that this is a straightforward process for the customers themselves and to help the Post Office retain as much business as possible. The pilots will be important in identifying the best way to do this.

I understand the Post Office is developing new banking and savings products which will be suitable for some existing Post Office card account customers. Our pilots will also help the Post Office design these products to ensure they meet customers' needs. We would like every DWP customer who currently has a Post Office card account to do their banking at the Post Office if that is what they want.

As the National President of the National Federation of SubPostmasters has recognised, although the Post Office card account itself has a limited life, there are opportunities to convert customers to other Post Office services.

That is why it is important that the Government and Post Office should work closely together to ensure customers are fully aware of developments and continue to have a range of choices in how they access their money. Our pilots will ensure that our future payments strategy between now and 2010 reflects the needs of our customers and helps the Post Office develop its proposed new banking and savings products.

Post Office Ltd

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the service contracts in place between his Department and Post Office Ltd. [48730]

Mr. Plaskitt: The service contracts in place between the Department for Work and Pensions and Post Office Ltd are:

1. The Post Office card account contract.

2. A contract to ensure that customers who are receiving payment by cheque can continue to receive payments in the event of disruption to normal delivery services.

Public Service Agreement Data

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the data to measure 2004 public service agreement target No. 2 are published. [29200]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions 2004 public service agreement target No. 2 is a joint target with the Department for Education and Skills. The target appears as target No. 1 in the Department for Education and Skills public service agreement.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer provided on 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 517W, by my right hon. Friend the Minister for Children and Families (Beverley Hughes).

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the data required to measure 2004 public service agreement target No. 3 are from consistent data sources. [29201]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions 2004 public service agreement target No. 3 is a joint target with the Department for Education and Skills. The target appears as target No. 2 in the Department for Education and Skills public service agreement.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer provided on 9 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 426W, by my right hon. Friend the Minister for Children and Families (Beverley Hughes).

Social Security Benefits

Stewart Hosie: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what *(a)* identifiable administration costs and *(b)* Scotland's share of non-identifiable administration costs associated with the delivery of social security benefits in Scotland were in 2004–05; and what the (i) identifiable and (ii) non-identifiable costs were per benefit recipient of administration. [46144]

Mr. Plaskitt: The administration budgets regime overseen by Treasury does not monitor country or regional administration costs separately. In addition administration costs are only reported at a strategic objective level.

Non-identifiable expenditure is deemed to be incurred on behalf of the UK as a whole.

The Public Expenditure Statistical Analysis published annually by Treasury contains information on country and regional analysis of departmental expenditure.

Statutory Instruments

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many statutory instruments introduced by his Department were *(a)* withdrawn, *(b)* amended by a further statutory instrument and *(c)* reprinted because of defective drafting in each session since 1997; and what steps he (i) is taking and (ii) plans to take to prevent further such instances. [33656]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available in the format requested. The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the Department of Social Security and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment including the Employment Service. The information in this response relates to the DWP and the DSS. Since 1997, four draft statutory instruments have been withdrawn and 23 instruments issued free of charge because of an error or defect in an earlier instrument.

The Department lays in the order of 90 statutory instruments a year. We have a range of measures in place to provide expert advice and training to lawyers and officials involved in the process and aim to ensure that lessons are learned.

Vandalism

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of his Department's buildings in the last 12 months. [49513]

Mrs. McGuire: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 16 February 2006

CABINET OFFICE

Better Regulation

Mr. Bone: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on progress on delivering the Government's better regulation agenda. [51524]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Government remain on track to deliver the radical programme of regulatory reform set out in the March 2005 Budget and the Better Regulation Action Plan published in May 2005.

The Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill will make it quicker and easier to reform out-dated, unnecessary or over-complicated legislation to bring about a risk-based approach to regulation.

Crown Copyright

Peter Law: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what restrictions are placed on the use made of materials released by Government Departments under Crown copyright. [52422]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The re-use of Crown copyright material is generally encouraged. The main restrictions on re-use include not using Crown copyright for the principal purpose of advertising or promoting a particular product or service; not presenting products as if they were issued on behalf of government; and not to present information in a way that could mislead the public.

Departmental Information

Mr. Gale: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much was spent on the Department's public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [48965]

Mr. Jim Murphy: Cabinet Office expenditure on public relations and information services in the last five years is shown in the table

	Amount (£)
2000–01	1,963,878
2001–02	2,192,538
2002–03	2,164,812
2003–04	2,019,075
2004–05	2,751,622

These figures comprise:

the costs for running press office services for years 2000–01 to 2004–05;

and the costs for web services, employing PR agencies and for setting up phone lines as part of advertising campaigns for the year 2004–05. The Cabinet Office does not hold central records for this activity before 1 April 2004, and to provide that information would result in disproportionate costs.

Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill

Mr. Harper: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether the powers proposed to be given to Ministers under the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill will enable the alteration of the rights of *(a)* freeminers and *(b)* commoners in the Forest of Dean. [50579]

Mr. Jim Murphy: The Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill will enable the reform of legislation—including both public general Acts and local Acts—by order. It will also enable reform of the common law by order but only where this is for the purpose of implementing a recommendation of one of the UK Law Commissions. The power to make such orders is subject to a number of conditions, including that the provision made by the order does not remove any necessary protection and does not prevent any person from continuing to exercise any right or freedom he might reasonably expect to continue exercising. Orders are also subject to procedural safeguards including public consultation and scrutiny and veto by parliamentary committees. The Government currently have no plans to reform the legislation which may affect the right of freemining, or to reform any rights of common which might exist in the Forest of Dean.

Trident

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will commission a report from the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit on the Trident nuclear deterrent; and if he will make a statement. [48033]

Mr. Jim Murphy: There are no plans for the Strategy Unit to undertake any work on the Trident nuclear deterrent.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Commonhold Tenures

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* households and *(b)* developments have adopted commonhold tenures since the introduction of commonhold. [46948]

Ms Harman: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for North East Hertfordshire (Mr. Heald) on 13 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1590W.

Council Tax Valuations

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Meriden of 24 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1943W, on council tax valuations, if she will list the property attribute that the Land Registry provides to the Valuation Office Agency. [50952]

Bridget Prentice: HM Land Registry provided property data to the Valuation Office Agency during 2005 for the reasons given in my answer to the hon. Member for Meriden on 24 January 2006. The data items supplied were as follows:

title number of property or land

the tenure (freehold or leasehold)

the price paid (where available)

the name of the registered proprietor(s)

lease details (deed date, term, rent)

property address, including town name

property description (detached, flat etc)

local authority name.

Land Registry does not currently provide property data to the Valuation Office Agency.

Freedom of Information

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the *(a)* Information Commissioner's Office and *(b)* others on the 100 year closure rule and the Freedom of Information Act 2000; and if she will make a statement. [51124]

Ms Harman: Ministers and officials in my Department meet regularly with the Information Commissioner's Office. These meetings cover a range of issues including the operation of the Freedom of Information Act. There have been no recent discussions specifically relating to the 100 year closure period.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will take steps to ensure that the minutes of the board meetings of external organisations operating public services on behalf of local authorities are made available for public scrutiny. [51135]

Ms Harman: Under section 5 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the FoI Act), external organisations operating public services on behalf of local authorities can be brought within the FoI Act. This would give the public a right to request the board meeting minutes where they related to the provision of the public services.

Information relating to the provision of public services by local authority contractors is already available for public scrutiny. For example, the terms of the contract and performance of the contractor are open to inspection and inquiry by those authorities' overview and scrutiny committees. Meetings of, and documents considered by, a local authority committee are open to public access by virtue of provisions of the Local Government Act 1972. All information held by a local authority, including that provided by a contractor, is subject to the provisions of the FoI Act.

No organisations have yet been brought within the FoI Act using section 5 of the FoI Act. We will assess whether the current levels of accountability enable sufficient public scrutiny of local authority contractors before considering whether a legislative approach is appropriate.

Bob Spink: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment she has made of the implications of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 for the release of the *(a)* 1911 and *(b)* 1921 census data; and if she will make a statement. [51732]

Ms Harman: The implementation of the Freedom of Information Act has not altered government policy to make the decennial census returns publicly available after a period of 100 years. In line with this policy, the National Archives is developing plans to make the 1911 census available online to the widest possible audience in 2012. The 1921 census remains in the custody of the Office for National Statistics.

Bob Spink: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what total sum has been received by her Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48474]

Ms Harman: None. My Department has not charged for information released under the Freedom of Information Act.

In-house Legal Services

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs which proposals in the Compensation Bill will apply to in-house legal services provided by trades unions. [48631]

Bridget Prentice: Part 2 of the Compensation Bill provides the legislative base for introducing statutory regulation of claims management services. The primary aim is to regulate the activities of commercial claims management companies in certain sectors, to tackle bad practices and improve consumer safeguards. Where trades unions provide claims management services within a regulated sector, for example personal injury, they would be subject to regulation unless explicitly exempted—achieved by secondary legislation. The Government have indicated the intention to exempt trade unions, subject to the views of both Houses during the Bill's passage. We will take full account of concerns and other comments made in coming to a final decision on this issue.

Justice for All

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if she will make a statement on progress towards meeting the target set out in the Justice for All White Paper 2002 to establish a secure portal to enable victims to track their cases online by 31 December 2005; when she expects such a portal to be available in every criminal justice area; and what assessment she has made of the reasons for the delay in meeting the target. [47532]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I have been asked to reply.

Following the concerns expressed by organisations representing victims and witnesses, and after victims and witnesses individually expressed a preference for dealing with trained intermediaries, it was considered inappropriate to deliver a secure internet service to enable victims to track their own case online, as defined in the Justice for All White Paper 2002. Instead, with Ministerial approval, an alternative solution was

implemented. Following a successful pilot exercise, the "No Witness No Justice" initiative was set up to provide Witness Care Units across England and Wales staffed by trained intermediaries, who understand the needs of victims and witnesses and are more responsive to their individual requirements.

To support these Witness Care Units a new witness care management tool, called the Witness Management System, has been created. This provides trained Witness Care Unit officers with access to existing case data stored on the Crown Prosecution Service Case Management System, as well as the ability to search the system by witnesses and to add/amend case details relating to victims and witnesses. These officers can, therefore, provide both victims and witnesses with key information, not only about the progress of their case but also about how the CJS works and what the next steps are likely to be.

The Witness Management System in use in 100 out of the 170 Witness Care Units in England and Wales and is already playing a key role in providing first class care for victims and witnesses. The roll-out to all Witness Care Units will be completed during the spring of 2006.

Land Registry

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Minister of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the Land Registry records whether a property purchaser is a first time buyer. [50884]

Bridget Prentice: Land Registry does not record this information.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

British Library

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the British Library spent on purchasing *(a)* books, *(b)* stamps and *(c)* other items for collections in each of the last 10 years. [52313]

Mr. Lammy: The British Library's expenditure on purchasing items for its collections over the last ten years was as follows:

Expenditure[1]

£ million

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*
Books	2.82	2.54	3.24	3.02	3.22
Serials	7.66	5.98	7.85	7.93	8.71
Stamps	0	0	0	0	0
Other collection items	1.09	1.14	2.67	1.11	1.42
Total	11.57	9.66	13.75	12.06	13.34

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*[2]
Books	3.21	3.03	3.01	3.01
Serials	9.31	9.89	10.06	10.50
Stamps	0	0	0	0
Other collection items	1.76	2.29	2.72	2.49
Total	14.28	15.22	15.80	16.00

[1] These figures have been rounded to the nearest 10,000.
[2] Forecast.

Notes:
1. Other collection items" include manuscripts, music scores, maps, newspapers, patents, sound recordings, theses and print and drawings.
2. Figures include both revenue and capital expenditure on acquisitions. Acquisitions expenditure arising from donations for purchase of major items is excluded due to its distorting effect on the figures.
3. In 1998–99 budgetary pressures meant the library had to undertake a large programme of journal cancellations and stop buying books that were regarded of low-use or lesser research significance.
4. In 1999–2000 the library was able to allocate more resources to acquisitions due to increased funding.
5. Expenditure on stamps was zero because the library acquires philatelic material by donation, bequest, transfer from other organisations or by loan.
6. A breakdown of expenditure in 1996–97 has not been provided because the information is only held in paper records which, if retrieved, would be unlikely to give the details requested. The total acquisitions expenditure for 1996–97 (excepting donations, as explained in note 2) is £13.7 million.

British Museum

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been spent on acquisitions at the British Museum in each of the last five years. [52451]

Mr. Lammy: The British Museum has spent the following amounts on acquisitions in the last five years.

	£ million
2000–01	9.275
2001–02	17.847
2002–03	2.238
2003–04	6.578
2004–05	1.163

This includes items purchased using the museum's funds, items given in lieu of inheritance tax, items purchased with the help of donations and items donated to the museum.

Burma

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what advice her Department has given to the Heritage Lottery Fund regarding sourcing timber from Burma. [52219]

Mr. Lammy: My Department has not issued the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) with advice regarding the sourcing of timber from Burma, but has encouraged it to develop a policy on timber procurement with the assistance of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. This is set out in guidance published by the HLF in January 2005.

Creative Partnerships Scheme

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what proportion of schools in England have received funding for arts education under her Department's Creative Partnership scheme in each year since the scheme began. [52380]

Mr. Lammy: Creative Partnerships does not provide direct funding for arts education in schools. Creative Partnerships works with schools to provide children

with the opportunity to explore their creativity, working with creative organisations and individuals. The proportion of schools that have benefited from Creative Partnerships up to 2004–05 is set out in the table:

		Proportion of schools[1] (%)
2002–03	1st Phase roll out—16 areas	1
2003–04		2
2004–05	2nd Phase roll out—9 further areas	3

[1] LEA maintained and non-maintained specialist schools.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the cost of administering the Creative Partnerships scheme has been in each year since the scheme began. [52381]

Mr. Lammy: Creative Partnerships was established in 2002 in 16 areas and was expanded in a phased approach working in a total of 36 areas by September 2005.

The administration costs of Creative Partnerships are set out in the table:

	Costs including National Office (£ million)
2001–02	0.24
2002–03	2
2003–04	4.52
2004/-05	6.77

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people are working on the Creative Partnerships scheme. [52382]

Mr. Lammy: The number of staff currently employed to work directly on Creative Partnerships is 149.

Gambling Addiction

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps her Department is taking to increase awareness of the dangers of gambling addiction in *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering and *(c)* England. [52408]

Mr. Caborn: My Department is working closely with the Gambling Commission, the Responsibility in Gambling Trust, the Department of Health and others to address problem gambling through research, education and treatment.

The Gambling Act 2005 places a duty on gambling operators to behave in a socially responsible manner. 'Social responsibility' will be an explicit licence condition, and operators will be expected to contribute to work on the prevention, identification and treatment of problem gambling through their own policies and practices and through their support for other bodies working on research, education and treatment.

We plan to bring the Act fully into force with effect from September 2007.

International Sporting Events

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people from *(a)* her Department, *(b)* UK Sport, *(c)* Sport England and *(d)* the English Institute of Sport (i) have attended and (ii) are planning to attend the Turin Winter Olympics for (A) all and (B) part of the Games. [52628]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is set out in the tables.

Number of people from each organisation who have either attended, or are planning to attend, the entirety of the Turin Winter Olympics to carry out their professional duties

Organisation	*Number of attendees*
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	0
UK Sport	1
Sport England	0
English Institute of Sport	7

Number of people from each organisation who have either attended, or are planning to attend, part of the Turin Winter Olympics to carry out their professional duties

Organisation	*Number of attendees*
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	6
UK Sport	4
Sport England	0
English Institute of Sport	2

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people from *(a)* her Department, *(b)* UK Sport, *(c)* Sport England and *(d)* the English Institute of Sport will attend all or part of the Commonwealth Games. [52629]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is set out in the tables.

Number of people from each organisation who have either attended, or are planning to attend, the entirety of the Commonwealth Games to carry out their professional duties

Organisation	*Number of attendees*
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	0
UK Sport	3
Sport England	0
English Institute of Sport	24

Number of people from each organisation who have either attended, or are planning to attend, part of the Commonwealth Games to carry out their professional duties

Organisation	*Number of attendees*
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	6
UK Sport	4
Sport England	6
English Institute of Sport	5

Libraries

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the overall level of library books stocked in England was at 1 January in each of the past 10 years. [52124]

Mr. Lammy: The Public Library Statistics, published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy for the past 10 financial years shows the following level of public library book stock held over the last 10 years:

	Public Library Book Stock (England)
1995–96	105,384,000
1996–97	103,305,000
1997–98	99,576,000
1998–99	98,101,000
1999–2000	96,644,000
2000–01	94,372,000
2001–02	92,434,000
2002–03	90,637,000
2003–04	87,091,000
2004–05	84,546,000

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many library books have been purchased in England in each of the past 10 years. [52125]

Mr. Lammy: The Public Library Statistics, published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy for the past 10 financial years shows the following level of public library book acquisitions in England over the last 10 years:

	Public Library Books Purchased (England)
1995–96	9,527,757
1996–97	8,814,444
1997–98	8,503,131
1998–99	8,965,849
1999–2000	8,936,896
2000–01	9,184,597
2001–02	9,193,571
2002–03	9,943,280
2003–04	9,943,384
2004–05	9,931,344

The figures show that public libraries are acquiring more books than they were 10 years ago with, as more factual and reference material becomes available on the internet, a bias towards more fiction works. There was a significant increase in acquisitions from 2002–03 onwards coinciding with the introduction of the public library standards in England.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she is taking to assist local authorities in maintaining library assets. [52126]

Mr. Lammy: Library assets are part of an authority's estate in the same way as any other council service. DCMS has no special funding available for maintaining such assets.

Nevertheless, in recent years, around £130 million of Government PFI credits have been allocated to projects that are wholly or partly public library based. These will help to create assets of real community value.

I also welcome the Big Lottery Fund's £80 million public library strand of its new community learning programme that will create new and improved libraries for local people to enjoy and to become involved with.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent guidance her Department has issued to local authorities on the management and running of local libraries. [52127]

Mr. Lammy: Framework for the Future, published by DCMS in February 2003, was the first ever national public library strategy document. It aimed to encourage public libraries geared to the needs of 21st century users.

In September 2003, the Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) published a three-year action plan intended to address some of the issues identified in the "Framework" document. MLA issues detailed guidance material on public library matters as and when it thinks it appropriate.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what targets her Department set for local authorities for the management of local libraries in 2005–06. [52128]

Mr. Lammy: In 2005–06 the 149 public library authorities are being asked to report on their conformity with, or on their progress to meet, the 10 Public Library Service Standards. Coinciding with the introduction of the standards, we have seen significant improvements in core library provision particularly in the areas of opening hours, material acquisitions and ICT provision.

The standards form part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment's Culture Block along with four additional library indicators on the number of active borrowers; resident satisfaction with the library service; stock level/stock-turn, and cost per visit.

In addition, for the first time in 2005–06, those authorities are being asked to report on their position against 16 indicators which make up the Public Library Impact Measures. This baseline information will be used to set targets for 2006–07 for those indicators that prove to be robust. The Impact Measures help to highlight libraries' contribution to wider community agendas as reflected in the shared priorities of central and local government.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether her Department has issued best value targets to local authorities on the management of local libraries. [52129]

Mr. Lammy: The Public Library Service Standards have been adopted as part of the suite of Best Value Performance Indicators. Authorities were asked to work towards a score of 18 or more points out of 20 to move into the "four" category.

Previously issued BVPIs relate to the numbers of library visits; satisfaction with finding or reserving a particular item or piece of information and, general satisfaction with a library service as part of an authority's overall cultural and recreational activities. The aim of these BVPIs is to encourage year on year performance improvement.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what best value performance indicators her Department uses for local authorities with regard to local libraries. [52130]

Mr. Lammy: DCMS's primary assessment of the performance of the 149 library authorities in England is through the Public Library Service Standards. The standards have now been incorporated into a Best Value Performance Indicator within the national suite of BVPIs as well as becoming part of the libraries data feeding into the Comprehensive Performance Assessment Framework.

Lost Property (Royal Parks)

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the *(a)* level and *(b)* source was of departmental income arising from unclaimed lost property in the Royal parks in the last period for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [52577]

Mr. Lammy: When the Royal parks constabulary policed the Royal parks, unclaimed lost property was auctioned off periodically and the income from sales went to the Royal parks. Income from lost property for 2003–04, the last year that the Royal parks constabulary policed the parks, amounted to £2,574. The income for 2003–04 came from two sources, Lloyds International Auction Galleries (£2,282) and cash found in the parks (£292).

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) took over policing the Royal parks in April 2004. Since then unclaimed lost property has been dealt with centrally and that which is saleable is eventually auctioned off, with the proceeds going to the Police Benevolent Fund.

Monuments and Statues

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much central Government funding has been used to establish new monuments and statues in *(a)* Romford, *(b)* Havering and *(c)* Greater London in each of the last seven years. [52477]

Mr. Lammy: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is not aware of any central Government funding used to establish new monuments and statues in *(a)* Romford and *(b)* Havering between 1999 and the present.

During the period from 1999 to the present, the following monuments and statues, all of which have been, or are planned to be erected in Greater London, have been funded either directly or indirectly by central Government:

DCMS contributed £611,502 towards the cost of the 11 September Memorial Gardens in Grosvenor Square, opened on 11 September 2003;

DCMS contributed £3,862,800 and The Royal Parks Agency £1,384,566 towards the cost of the Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Fountain, opened in July 2004;

Arts Council England contributed £80,000 towards the statue of Alison Lapper on the Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square in 2004–05;

The Women of World War II Memorial Fund secured a grant of £934,115 from the National Heritage Memorial Fund for the erection of the memorial, which was unveiled in 2005;

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has committed £266,000 towards the cost of a memorial to the victims of the Bali bombings. £10,000 has been spent to date;

HM Treasury has allocated £2 million to finance the proposed statue of the Queen Mother statue, which will be funded by the proceeds of a £5 coin being issued by the Royal Mint in 2006 to commemorate the 80th birthday of Her Majesty The Queen;

HM Treasury announced on 13 February 2006 that they stand ready to play a part in funding a memorial to those who lost their lives in the 7 July attacks on London, but funding will be finalised following consultation with the bereaved families and decisions on the style and location of the memorial.

Furthermore, in March 2005 the Chancellor announced the Memorials Grants scheme, which returns to charities and faith groups the equivalent of the VAT incurred in erecting and maintaining memorial structures. The scheme has been operational since November and funding of £5 million p.a. is available until 2008. On 16 December 2005, £3,325.90 was paid towards the construction of a memorial to the Siege of Malta in Tower Place, Tower Hill, City of London. Currently, no payments have been made for structures in Romford or Havering under this scheme.

National Gallery

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much funding was provided by her Department to the National Gallery in each of the past seven years. [52460]

Mr. Lammy: Grant in Aid allocated by DCMS to the National Gallery over the past seven years was:

	£ million
1998–99	18.69
1999–2000	19.48
2000–01	19.21
2001–02	19.95
2002–03	20.45
2003–04	20.45
2004–05	21.23
2005–06	21.99

Funds are also available to DCMS sponsored museums through specific project funding streams. The National Gallery has received Strategic Commissioning funding to promote partnerships with regional museums as follows:

	£
2003–04	300,000
2004–05	80,000
2005–06	160,000

In 2004–05 the National Gallery was also awarded £296,300 from the DCMS/Wolfson Foundation Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund.

Olympic Funding

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what public funding she expects will be needed to establish each sporting arena for the 2012 Olympics. [52401]

Mr. Caborn: The most up to date breakdown of the costs of the sporting arenas needed for the 2012 Olympic games and Paralympic games was published in table 6.6.2b of London 2012's candidate file which was submitted to the International Olympic Committee in November 2004. This is available on the website of the London Organising Committee for the Olympic games: www.london2012.com/en/news/publications/Candidatefile/.

Figures shown in the candidate file are given at 2004 prices. The funding package for the games allows for inflation in venue costs of 37.18 percent.

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what public funds have been allocated to the British Olympic ski team in each of the last seven years. [52312]

Mr. Caborn: Since 1999, the Government and national lottery distributors have allocated a total of £2,743,502 to the British ski team, which includes snowboarding.

The funding has been allocated to individual athletes directly, and to Snowsport Scotland and Snowsport GB, the National Governing Bodies for skiing and snowboarding.

The precise allocation of Exchequer and lottery funding for the British ski team, through UK Sport and SportScotland, is set out in the two tables.

UK Sport

£

	Lottery	*Exchequer*	*Total*
1999–2000	Nil	186,000	186,000
2000–01	56,722	160,000	216,722
2001–02	140,170	160,000	300,170
2002–03	205,554	160,000	365,554
2003–04	254,850	169,998	424,848
2004–05	236,368	126,668	363,036
2005–06	262,116	160,000	422,116

SportScotland

£

	Lottery	*Exchequer*	*Total*
19992000	59,902	Nil	59,902
2000–01	51,792	Nil	51,792
2001–02	40,554	Nil	40,554
2002–03	37,731	Nil	37,731
2003–04[1]	52,000	Nil	52,000
2004–05	108,447	Nil	108,447
2005–06	114,630	Nil	114,630

[1] From 2003–04 onwards, the total figure includes funding for a national coaching post. The amount given for this post was £27,247 in 2003–04, £40,000 in 2004–05 and £56,000 in 2005–06.

Sports Facilities (Havering)

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the provision of sports facilities in Havering; and what improvements are planned over the next five years. [52265]

Mr. Caborn: Sport England's active places database shows there are 10 swimming facilities and 15 sports halls in Havering—this includes public, private and school facilities.

Since 1994, this Department and lottery distributing bodies have invested over £5.5 million in sports facilities in Havering.

We are unable to predict what investment will be given to Havering over the next five years but all funding requests for sports facilities will be given due consideration and assessed in line with the priorities outlined in the Regional Sports Board plan.

Swimming

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what action she is taking to support the provision of public swimming baths in *(a)* Swindon and *(b)* England. [52287]

Mr. Caborn: Access to good quality sporting provision, including swimming pools, is an essential part of enabling people to lead healthier lives and to participate in sport. There are currently over 4,400 swimming facilities across England which are open to the public. Since 1997 Government and Lottery distributing bodies between them have invested over £3 billion in physical activity and sport, and in that time £249 million of Lottery investment has gone to swimming—the largest amount given to any sport. Sport England has a swimming strategy in place and is working with local authorities to help them implement it. I understand that Sport England are in discussion with Swindon Council about the needs assessment that the Council is undertaking which includes examining its swimming provision.

Tour de France

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the benefits to the UK of staging the grand depart of the 2007 Tour de France. [52402]

Mr. Caborn: The Tour de France is the world's largest annual sporting event. Transport for London who have been leading this project on behalf of the Mayor of London assess that there will be a number of benefits to the UK as a result of London winning the right to host the 2007 grand depart. These include a range of sporting benefits, such as a nationwide increase in cycling participation, an improvement in the health of the nation to help to combat obesity and enhancing the UK's reputation as a host of major international sporting events.

It is also expected the tour will generate an immediate economic benefit of an estimated £70 million through increased visitor numbers over the three day period.

Union Flag

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport under what authority the Department issues rules for flying the Union Flag on Government buildings; why such displays are limited to 18 days a year; and if she will make a statement. [52304]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is responsible for issuing the rules for hoisting the Union Flag on Government buildings. The rules are approved by the Queen on advice from the Department.

The Union Flag is flown on Government buildings to mark the Birthdays of members of the Royal Family undertaking official duties and specific national events including Remembrance Day, Europe Day, St. George's Day, Her Majesty's Accession and Wedding Day. The Union Flag is also flown on other occasions not listed in the rules, for example for State Visits, by special command from Her Majesty.

There are no plans at present to change this. However individuals and local authorities and other organisations can fly the Union Flag whenever they wish, subject to compliance with local planning requirements.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* nurses, *(b)* doctors and *(c)* dentists will accompany the deployment to Afghanistan. [50359]

Mr. Ingram: The medical element of the deployment to Afghanistan has been structured to satisfy the operational requirement. On current plans it will include 70 nurses, 21 doctors and three dentists. These will be supported by a further 79 medical staff and 107 support personnel. This requirement will be kept under review.

UK forces will also have access to multinational medical facilities based in Afghanistan.

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with the authorities in *(a)* Iran and *(b)* Pakistan on reducing the flow of (i) drugs, (ii) arms and (iii) unauthorised people from Pakistan to Afghanistan. [50360]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

We have an ongoing dialogue with Iran and Pakistan on such issues. Our ambassador in Kabul most recently discussed these issues during a visit to Islamabad in February 2006. In May 2005 Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials met representatives of the Afghan and Iranian Ministries of Foreign Affairs in Kabul for trilateral consultations on counter-narcotics co-operation and regional economic co-operation. The Afghanistan/Pakistan/US Tripartite Commission regularly addresses a range of common security issues. Over 3.5 million refugees have returned to Afghanistan since 2001, the huge majority from Iran and Pakistan.

Aircraft Cannibalisation

Dr. Fox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 30 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 29W, on aircraft cannibalisation, how many *(a)* C-130 Hercules, *(b)* Tristars, *(c)* VC-10s and *(d)* C-17A Globemaster aircraft have been taken out of service as a consequence of cannibalisations in each of the last three years. [51789]

Mr. Ingram: Cannibalisation is a recognised method of the removal of serviceable part(s) from an aircraft which is already unserviceable or due to enter scheduled engineering servicing, during which time the cannibalised parts will not be required. Only in exceptional circumstances would a serviceable aircraft be cannibalised.

In 2005, there were five instances where serviceable C130J Mk 5 aircraft were cannibalised to satisfy an immediate spares requirement for a C130J Mk 4 (stretched) aircraft as these were more appropriate for the operational task required at the time. For the C130K there were no instances of cannibalisation of serviceable aircraft in 2005. Records for both C130 J and K aircraft are not held for 2003 and 2004. Although information is held on the number of cannibalisation occurrences for Tristars, VC-10s and C-17A Globemaster aircraft, it does not record whether the losing aircraft was serviceable, unserviceable or in scheduled maintenance.

Ammunition

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many rounds of ammunition were dumped because of quality issues in the last 12 months and from which *(a)* country of origin and *(b)* company such ordnance was supplied. [49175]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2129W.

Disability (Armed Forces)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps the Government are taking to ensure the housing needs of former members of the armed forces who are disabled are met; and if he will make a statement. [49146]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

Members of the armed forces who are disabled may apply for housing to any local authority, and may also seek accommodation from a Registered Social Landlord. Housing authorities are responsible for setting their own allocation policies and procedures. However, they must ensure that their allocation scheme is framed so as to give reasonable preference to certain categories of persons, including people who need to move on medical and welfare grounds. Legislation has recently been amended to make clear that "medical and welfare" includes grounds relating to a disability. In addition, some Registered Social Landlords specialise in housing people with disabilities; while others have been set up with the intention of housing ex-forces personnel.

Local authorities also provide a wide range of support services to help disabled people maintain independent lives in their own homes providing care services, aids, equipment and adaptations. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister contributes to the funding of these services through the payment of Supporting People programme grant to local authorities, which may be spent by the local authority on a range of housing related support services, and under the Disabled Facilities Grant scheme.

There is provision within the War Pensions Scheme to pay grants towards the cost of adapting the home of a severely disabled war pensioner where the need arises

because of the pensioned disablement. This payment may be paid in addition to any local authority grant which might be made.

Service Leavers receive comprehensive briefings on housing and financial matters before returning to civilian life, including, if appropriate, advice from the Joint Service Housing Advice Office. In addition, the Veterans Agency provides a single point of contact within the MoD for veterans and their dependants seeking help and advice on a range of issues including housing.

Drug Seizures (Royal Navy)

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the major incidents of drug seizures by Royal Navy warships in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [50576]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 February 2006]:* Details of major drugs seizures carried out by the Royal Navy and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary since 1997 are outlined in the table:

Date		*Drug seizures*
April 1997	HMS York	4 tonnes cannabis
June 1997	HMS Edinburgh	3 tonnes cannabis
June 1998	HMS Monmouth	2 tonnes cannabis
1999	—	
2000	—	
September 2001	HMS Coventry	1 tonne cocaine
2002	—	
May 2003	HMS Cumberland	3.6 tonnes cocaine
July 2003	HMS Iron Duke	1.3 tonnes cocaine
October 2003	HMS Manchester RFA Wave Knight	1.1 tonnes cocaine
November 2004	RFA Wave Ruler	1.8 tonnes cocaine
January 2005	RFA Wave Ruler	1.8 tonnes cocaine
January 2005	RFA Wave Ruler	1.7 tonnes cocaine
October 2005	HMS Cumberland	1.9 tonnes cocaine
October 2005	HMS Cumberland RFA Wave Knight	1.3 tonnes cocaine
February 2006	HMS Southampton RFA Grey Rover	3 tonnes cocaine

This list includes only seizures over 1 tonne in weight. It does not include seizures in the Caribbean before 2000, for which data is not available. It also does not include drugs jettisoned by traffickers as a result of Royal Navy intervention.

Halal Meat

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he is taking to ensure that serving members of the *(a)* Army, *(b)* Navy and *(c)* Royal Air Force who are Muslim are offered halal meat. [52035]

Mr. Touhig: In accordance with the United Kingdom legislation and Government guidelines, HM forces cater for all personnel irrespective of gender, race, religious belief, medical requirements and committed lifestyle choices.

Halal meat is purchased from approved sources, as and when there is an identified need. Additionally, to ensure that serving Muslims are appropriately fed when on operations, the Ministry of Defence provides a halal variant of its Operational Ration Pack.

Merchant Fleet

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent assessment he has made of the number of merchant *(a)* ships and *(b)* seafarers available to provide strategic support at times of national emergency. [51299]

Mr. Ingram: Historically, the number of merchant ships, including militarily useful vessels, and seafarers is monitored by the Department for Transport. Currently, for movement by sea, strategic support is provided to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) through the Private Finance Initiative Strategic Sealift Service, which comprises up to six British flagged Roll-On/Roll-Off vessels, manned by British officers and crews.

Should, during a national emergency or on any other occasion, demand for sealift exceed the capacity of the Strategic Sealift Service, suitable merchant ships would be chartered from the commercial market to fulfil the requirement. Over the past five years experience has shown that there is sufficient merchant shipping available to meet the needs of the MOD.

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the *(a)* names and *(b)* flags of merchant shipping chartered or used by his Department in each year since 2000. [51300]

Mr. Ingram: The information requested has been placed in the Library of the House. The list mainly comprises dry cargo and Roll-On/Roll-Off vessels, however, information on specialist ships chartered during financial years (FY) 2004–05 and 2005–06 (to date) is included. Information on specialist ships chartered during earlier years is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Military Explosive

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence from what source tri amino trinitro benzene will be obtained following the planned closure of the Royal Ordnance Factory, Bridgwater. [51582]

Mr. Ingram: Decisions on sourcing tri amino trinitro benzene are principally a commercial matter for BAE Systems Land Systems.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what sales of military explosive from the Royal Ordnance Factory, Bridgwater have been made to the United States in each of the last five years; and what representations have been made to his Department by the United States concerning the future of the factory. [51583]

Mr. Ingram: The sale of military explosives by BAE Systems Land Systems to the USA is a commercial matter for the company. No representations have been made by the United States Government to the MOD concerning the future of BAE Systems Land Systems' Bridgwater facility.

Residual Vapour Detectors

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which company manufactured the 4,000 sets of residual vapour detectors used in Operation Telic. [52436]

Mr. Ingram: Records are no longer held of which manufacturer originally supplied the 4,000 Residual Vapour Detector kits held in central stock for Operation TELIC. However, all 4,000 kits were refurbished by Richmond Packaging Limited under a contract awarded in February 2003.

RFA Argus

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 8 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1240W on the Joint Casualty Treatment Ship, whether the possibility of not replacing RFA Argus has been ruled out. [51586]

Mr. Ingram: No decisions on the future provision of a deployed maritime medical capability will be made until the review of the Joint Casualty Treatment Ship programme has been completed, and the results considered in the Ministry of Defence's next planning round.

Royal Navy

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what average number of days was spent at sea by Royal Navy service personnel in *(a)* 2005, *(b)* 1995 and *(c)* 1985. [51412]

Mr. Touhig: This information is not held centrally in the format requested. I will write to the hon. Member with the information that is available and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Senior Officers

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* air commodores and *(b)* air marshals were on the active list in the RAF in each year since 1997; and what the total strength of the RAF was in each year. [50182]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The numbers of Air Commodores and Air Marshals on the active list in the Royal Air Force each year since 1997 and the strength of the RAF in each year are shown in the following table.

	Air Commodores	*Air Marshals*	*Trained strength*	*Untrained strength*	*Total strength*
April 1997	90	50	54,200	2,670	56,870
April 1998	90	50	52,680	3,170	55,840
April 1999	80	40	51,760	3,450	55,210
April 2000	80	50	50,990	3,720	54,720
April 2001	90	50	49,850	3,850	53,700
April 2002	80	40	48,910	4,090	53,000
April 2003	80	50	48,540	4,700	53,240
April 2004	80	50	48,740	4,650	53,390
April 2005	80	40	48,850	3,020	51,870
December 2005	70	40	47,470	2,180	49,640

Notes:
1. Personnel on the active list of the RAF are those currently serving who have completed phase one training. Additionally, former Marshals of the RAF, Chiefs of Air Staff and Vice-Chiefs of Defence Staff who have retired are included on the active list. This accounts for between five and 10 over the period.
2. Air Marshals includes the ranks of Air Vice-Marshal, Air Marshal and Air Chief Marshal.
3. Regular Strengths exclude full-time reserve service and Mobilised Reservist.
4. All figures have been rounded to the nearest 10. Figures ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20.

Shipbuilding

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his estimate is of the number of ships to be built under the Military Afloat Reach and Sustainability programme; and if he will make a statement. [50578]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 February 2006]:* I refer the hon. Member to the Written Ministerial Statement I gave on 14 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 74WS. The Military Afloat Reach and Sustainability project is still in the early stages of its Assessment Phase and it is therefore too early to say how many ships will be built or what the final designs and specifications for these vessels might be. We will use the assessment phase to look into the potential options before any decisions are made at the main gate investment point.

Territorial Army

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the Territorial Army *(a)* establishment and *(b)* strength is for (i) 2nd lieutenants, (ii) lieutenants, (iii) captains, (iv) majors and (v) lieutenant colonels. [50933]

Mr. Touhig: The strengths of the requested Territorial Army (TA) Officer ranks are shown in the following table. The TA establishment is not defined by individual rank.

Strength of TA Officers as at 1 January 2006

Rank	*Total*
2nd Lieutenants	590
Lieutenants	800
Captains	1,980
Majors	1,640
Lieutenant Colonels	350

Notes:
1. Figures include TA and Mobilised TA.
2. Figures exclude non-regular permanent staff (NRPS) and full-time reserve service (FTRS).
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Trident

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions his Department has had with counterparts in the United States on United Kingdom participation in the US Navy's life-extension plan for Trident missiles. [51584]

John Reid: I refer the hon. Member to the replies I gave to him on 21 November 2005, *Official Report*, column 1566W and to the hon. Member for Newport West (Paul Flynn) on 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1197W.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Accessibility Planning Indicators

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress has been made in developing accessibility planning indicators since July 2004. [50196]

Yvette Cooper: Local planning authorities are required to prepare annual monitoring reports that include core output indicators, which are submitted to the Secretary of State by the end of December each year. Regional planning bodies assess these reports to enable them to prepare regional annual monitoring reports which are submitted to the Secretary of State annually on 28 February.

Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice guide was published in March 2005 and contains a number of core output indicators which local planning authorities are required to monitor. An update on the core indicators was published in October 2005.

Core output indicator 3b specifically requires authorities to monitor the accessibility of new residential development that is built within 30 minutes public transport time of a number of key services, (including GPs, hospitals, primary and secondary schools, areas of employment and major retail centres).

Advanced Corporation Tax Relief

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the *(a)* cost to and *(b)* effect on the local government pension scheme of the abolition of advanced corporation tax relief. [51086]

Mr. Woolas: Since 1998, each local government financial settlement has provided an additional indexed sum of £130 million per annum to mitigate the effect on their pension funds of the abolition of advanced corporation tax relief. This amount was determined with the full support of the local government association. Successive actuarial valuations for each local government pension scheme pension fund, in 2001 and 2004, will also have taken full account of this change.

Allotment Land

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his Department's estimate is of *(a)* the land available for allotments in Greater London in each of the last five years and *(b)* the likely amount of such land in each London borough in 2006–07. [44575]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Wills: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he plans to take to tackle antisocial behaviour in social housing in Swindon. [50611]

Yvette Cooper: The Respect Action Plan, launched by the Prime Minister in Swindon last month, recognises the important role social landlords play in tackling antisocial behaviour. In delivering the plan we will work with landlords to build on their success in delivering preventative approaches, support provision and taking enforcement action. This will include engaging the sector in developing a new 'Respect Standard' for housing management.

We have provided landlords with a wide range of tools to tackle ASB and I know these have been used effectively in Swindon, where family support provision is also in place to help turn around the lives of challenging families. Much has been achieved by landlords and their partner agencies but we must sustain momentum and intensify this activity as a key factor in delivering sustainable communities.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Tim Loughton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on how many planning decisions he has given a ruling in each of the last four years involving developments on areas of outstanding natural beauty; and if he will list them. [48071]

Yvette Cooper: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has decided 27 planning cases in the last four years involving development on Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These are tabled as follows.

Case name	*Description of development*	*Decision*	*Date of decision*
Hartland and Stoke, Torridge DC	Residential	Refuse	2 July 2002
Finnamore Wood (former Young Offenders Institution), near Marlow, Bucks	Residential	Refuse	25 October 2002
West House, Wrotham	Alterations to listed building (4 appeals)	Allow	30 October 2002
Hawkinge Aerodrome Folkestone	Residential (2 applications)	Refuse	16 December 2002
Cedars, Westonbirt School, Gloucestershire	Replace windows in listed building	Refuse	5 February 2003
Shoreham Quarry [Shoreham Cement]	Mixed use residential, office and industrial (1 application, 1 appeal)	Refuse	10 September 2003
Ribblesdale Park, Ascot	New country house	Refuse	27 October 2003
Halwyn St. Keverne, Cornwall	Temporary mobile home	Refuse	27 October 2003
Locks and Tracey Down Quarry, Combe Martin	Retention of dwelling (1 appeal 2 enforcement appeals)	Allow	27 November 2003
Crystal Palace and New Zealand Farms Chute	Grain dryer and storage facility (2 applications)	Allow one, refuse one	19 December 2003
Little Densole Farm Former Douai School, Woolhampton	Residential Residential	Refuse Allow	20 January 2004 7 May 2004
Nizels Golf Club, Tonbridge	Residential (2 applications)	Refuse	12 May 2004
Middleton Hospital, Ilkley	Residential	Refuse	12 May 2004
Chase Fields, Lower Farringdon, Hampshire	Residential (4 applications)	Refuse three, allow one	7 July 2004
Cemetery Lane, Bourton-on-the-Water	Extension to cemetery	Refuse	8 July 2004
Witley Park, Surrey	New country house	Allow	28 July 2004

Case name	Description of development	Decision	Date of decision
Coronation House, Lyme Regis	2 storey extension to listed building (2 appeals)	Allow	7 October 2004
Ticehurst House, East Sussex	Residential and healthcare facilities (2 applications)	Refuse	13 January 2005
Bentham Works, Cheltenham	Residential (2 appeals)	Refuse	31 January 2005
Quarry filling station, Bourton-on-the-Hill	Residential	Refuse	7 June 2005
Plot 29, Upper Swainswick, Avon	Gypsy Caravan site	Refuse	21 June 2005
Borough Green Road, Kent	Residential	Refuse	28 June 2005
St. Piers Lane, Lingfield, Surrey	Residential, education, healthcare facilities (2 appeals)	Refuse	2 August 2005
Shearbarn Caravan Park, East Sussex	Caravan park (2 appeals)	Allow one, refuse one	17 August 2005
Hilltop Farm, Dartford	Gypsy Caravan site	Refuse	26 October 2005
Brighton and Hove FC, Falmer	Football Stadium and coach interchange (4 applications)	Allow	27 October 2005

Arson

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many incidents of arson there were in *(a)* Peterborough and *(b)* Cambridgeshire in each year since January 1997. [52448]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The following table shows the number of fires which were started deliberately and attended by Cambridgeshire fire and rescue service since 1997. Separate data are only available centrally for Peterborough for 2002 and 2003.

	Number of deliberate fires	
	Cambridgeshire[1]	Peterborough[2]
1997	890	—
1998	940	—
1999	1,188	—
2000	1,293	—
2001	1,199	—
2002	1,406	657
2003	1,387	588
2004	1,109	—

Sources:

[1] Fire and Rescue Service FDR1 returns to ODPM.
Includes estimates for incidents not recorded during periods of industrial action in 2002 and 2003.
Includes Peterborough.

[2] Neighbourhood Statistics derived from Fire and Rescue Service FDR1 returns to ODPM.
Excludes periods of industrial action.

Asset Register

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the top 150 most valuable assets held on his asset register; and what their financial value is in each case. [49328]

Jim Fitzpatrick: A list of the 150 most valuable assets held on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Asset Register as at 31 December 2005 has been made available in the Library of the House.

Building Regulations

Dr. Whitehead: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will lay the statutory instrument to bring Part L of the building regulations into force. [50936]

Yvette Cooper: In the press release of 13 September 2005 I announced that changes to Part L of the building regulations were being introduced two years early in April 2006. The statutory instrument will be laid in sufficient time to allow this to happen.

Building Standards

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will reassess the *(a)* Building Regulations and *(b)* Structural Engineering Requirements for proposed new buildings using design methods and materials similar to those in the building which collapsed in Katowice, Poland, on 28 January; and if he will make a statement; [47777]

(2) if he will require local authorities to reassess the structural strength of new buildings which have been erected in England using design methods and materials similar to those in the building which collapsed in Katowice, Poland, on 28 January; and if he will make a statement. [47778]

Yvette Cooper: The cause of the recent collapse of the Polish exhibition centre roof is not yet known, although early reports indicate that snow loading was probably a contributory factor. While the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister remains vigilant to any reported building collapses so as to ensure a low probability of such an incident occurring in the UK, adequate safeguards on achieving minimum requirements for stability and robustness are provided in the Building Regulations Approved Document Part A and the relevant British Standards codes of practice which they reference. Based on the current evidence there is no need to instigate any checks on buildings here in the UK arising from the Polish building collapse.

Business Rates

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the average business rates bill in England in 2005–06. [51080]

Mr. Woolas: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on the 13 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1630W.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will provide additional funding to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough fire authority to take account of the additional service requirement resulting from Peterborough's increase in size. [49286]

Mr. Woolas: The local government finance settlements for 2006–07 and 2007–08 laid before the House on the 31 January 2006 include the use of

population projections as the dominant data drivers of population in the settlements. The population projections used are Office for National Statistics (ONS) trend based projections based on the ONS mid-2003 population estimates. This will make the settlement more forward looking as the projections reflect demographic trends seen in an area.

These projections do not take into account events that have not yet occurred, such as population change as a result of proposed housing expansion, as these are affected by future policy changes or local decisions. As part of its response to the independent review of housing supply produced by Kate Barker, the Government have announced a cross-cutting review within the 2007 comprehensive spending review to ensure that appropriate infrastructure will be provided to support housing and population growth. The review will: determine the social, transport and environmental infrastructure implications of housing growth in different spatial forms and locations; establish a framework for sustainable and cost-effective patterns of growth, including be examining the use of targeted investment through the community infrastructure fund and growth areas funding to support the fastest growing areas; and ensure that departmental resources across government are targeted appropriately for providing the national, regional and local infrastructure necessary to support future housing and population growth.

Correspondence

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice and guidance he has given to *(a)* local councils and *(b)* the Audit Commission on the way in which local councils should deal with hon. Members' correspondence on behalf of constituents regarding planning applications. [42217]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not provided any advice in this area.

Council Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will institute an inquiry into the conduct of Sefton council in relation to each of the two ballots of tenants on the transfer of council housing held by the council. [39421]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 9 January 2006]:* Sefton council has not yet applied for consent to transfer its housing stock. When it does so the council will need to demonstrate to the Secretary of State that a majority of its tenants are not opposed to the transfer going ahead, including providing information about the two ballots.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria he applies in considering the results of multiple ballots of the same tenants on a single large scale voluntary transfer of council housing; and how he intends to deal with those circumstances in Sefton in August and November. [39423]

Yvette Cooper: When a local authority applies for consent to transfer its housing stock it is for the authority to satisfy the Secretary of State on the range of criteria set out in section 16.2 of the "Housing Transfer Manual 2005"—a copy is available in the Library. The application for consent should be received by the office at least six weeks before the transfer is due to be completed.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether *(a)* his Department, *(b)* his housing action team and *(c)* the Regional Housing Board was consulted by Sefton council about a second tenants' ballot on the large scale voluntary transfer proposal. [39431]

Yvette Cooper: Sefton council informed the Office and the Community Housing Task Force of their decision to re-ballot tenants on their large scale voluntary transfer proposal. Sefton council did not inform the Regional Housing Board of their decision.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authorities have been authorised to build new council housing in the last five years; and how this new housing will be financed. [41148]

Yvette Cooper: Local authorities continue to have the powers to build houses and indeed are doing so under the housing private finance initiative. It has also proved possible for local authorities to use council tax revenue to finance specific housing projects.

Council Tax Benefit

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the *(a)* incentives and *(b)* disincentives to save arising from the fixing since 1999 of the savings threshold for ineligibility for (i) council tax benefit at £16,000 and (ii) reductions of council tax benefit at £3,000. [51563]

Mr. Plaskitt: I have been asked to reply.

No such assessments have been made. The treatment of capital in council tax benefit is kept under review to ensure that it strikes a sensible balance between providing targeted support and not penalising those who have saved.

The lower capital limit is £6,000 for pensioners, and will be raised to £6,000 for other people from April 2006. There is no upper capital limit in council tax benefit for people who receive the guarantee element of pension credit.

Departmental Staff

Kate Hoey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans his Office has to change the London allowance of its staff; and if he will make a statement. [50006]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The office does not pay a London allowance to its staff. For staff below the senior civil service (SCS), London weighting was consolidated into salaries some years ago. The SCS does not distinguish between London and other pay.

Development (Brownfield Land)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of new housing development in *(a)* each borough council in Hampshire, *(b)* Portsmouth and *(c)* Southampton has been on brownfield land in each year since 1997. [50573]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The estimates available centrally are from Land Use Change Statistics, are shown in the following table. The percentages for individual local authorities tend to be highly variable from one year to another as they can be affected by the characteristics of just one or two large developments. The table also shows the averages over four years.

New dwellings on previously developed land, Hampshire 1997 to 2004

Percentage

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average 1997–2000	Average 2001–04
Basingstoke and Deane	12	59	47	28	54	27	43	34	36	40
East Hampshire	46	55	61	44	63	58	73	79	51	69
Eastleigh	62	36	60	56	74	60	84	88	55	82
Fareham	62	33	33	56	49	66	85	94	47	76
Gosport	80	91	89	87	48	32	17	60	86	41
Hart	74	27	89	37	18	36	47	39	52	36
Havant	32	31	24	69	74	96	56	97	33	78
New Forest	69	54	55	76	81	52	68	85	64	68
Rushmoor	42	93	99	92	91	100	87	100	75	95
Test Valley	10	21	27	35	41	44	63	82	19	53
Winchester	80	46	68	60	91	59	68	74	66	69
Portsmouth	63	92	94	61	98	93	100	90	75	94
Southampton	90	74	85	45	89	67	95	99	75	90
Hampshire	52	52	59	57	64	55	66	78	54	66

Domestic Violence

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many refuge places for victims of domestic violence there were in England in each year since 1997; and how much central Government funding has been made available to such refuges in each year. [51348]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* It is not possible to provide information in the form requested.

At April 2003, there were around 5,800 units of support for women at risk of domestic violence. More recent data suggests that there were around 6,000 units of support at April 2005. These figures include both accommodation in refuges and other forms of provision including floating support services where victims are supported to remain in their own accommodation where appropriate.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister annually provides Supporting People funding to enable top-tier English local authorities to provide housing-related support. In doing so, however, ODPM does not specify or earmark amounts to be spent on either specific forms of provision or specific vulnerable groups. However, most recent data suggests that local authorities spent approximately £58 million from Supporting People funding on services for women at risk of domestic violence in 2004–05.

In April 2003 further measures were announced to support refuge provision through capital programmes over a three-year period. In 2003–04 a total of £18.8 million funding was provided for new refuge provision and refurbishment of existing refuge schemes. The Government have also committed a further £7.5 million nationally in 2004–05 and 2005–06 with an additional £5.8 million provided through the Housing Corporation. Priority is being given to projects arising from local authority housing and homelessness strategy reviews to meet gaps in service provision. 427 new units of accommodation will be provided.

East of England Regional Assembly

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost to public funds was of the East of England Regional Assembly in 2004–05. [51163]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister made a grant of £2,112,000 to the East of England Regional Assembly in 2004–05.

The grant supports the Assembly in the performance of its designated functions to scrutinise the work of East of England Regional Development Agency; fulfil its regional planning responsibilities; and for the development of its strategic regional role.

The Regional Assembly may have derived additional revenue from other sources including members' subscription.

Empty Homes

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the Government's policy is on the use of empty dwelling management orders in relation to seizing properties which are empty due to the death of the owner. [49687]

Yvette Cooper: Where a dwelling is unoccupied following the death of the owner, it will be excepted from the making of an interim empty dwelling management order for a period of six months following grant of representation. The dwelling will continue to be excepted after this period if the new owner plans to bring it back into occupation or put it on the market.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate his Department has made of the cost of residential property tribunals to assist the imposition of empty dwelling management orders. [49822]

Yvette Cooper: An additional £1 million is being made available annually to the Residential Property Tribunal Service to cover its new jurisdictions under the Housing Act 2004. Currently the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister estimates that up to 15 per cent. of its new cases

will comprise of considering applications from local housing authorities for approval to make interim Empty Dwelling Management Orders and dealing with related appeals.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many empty homes there have been in *(a)* Peterborough constituency and *(b)* Peterborough city council area in each year since 1997. [50340]

Yvette Cooper: Information on empty homes in the parliamentary constituency of Peterborough is not available because the data are not collected below district level. For *(b)* , the number of vacant dwellings in Peterborough unitary authority from 1997 to 2004, is tabled as follows:

	Snapshot date	*Vacant dwellings*
1997	1 April	4,040
1998	1 April	3,990
1999	1 April	2,667
2000	1 April	2,659
2001	1 April	2,517
2002	1 November	2,080
2003	3 November	1,497
2004	1 November	1,809

Source:

The figures for 1997 to 2001 are based on a combination of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA) return, and the Housing Corporation's Regulatory Statistical Return (RSR). For the years 2002 to 2004 the figures are based on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Council Tax Base 1 (CTB1) return.

These figures are for all vacant dwellings, including dwellings that have been empty for fewer than six months, some for less than one month. The Government are introducing new powers from April 2006 for local authorities to reduce the number of long-term empty homes in their area.

Energy Saving

Mr. Evans: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department has made of the potential for energy-saving from well-installed double-glazing. [51039]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* Regulatory impact assessment completed by the former Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions (DETR) in October 2001 supported the introduction of better thermal standards for new and replacement windows in part L of the building regulations from April 2002. This regulatory impact assessment can be seen on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website.

English Partnerships (Peterborough)

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been raised by English Partnerships through the sale of assets in Peterborough in each of the last eight years. [49291]

Yvette Cooper: English Partnerships has received the following amounts through the sale of assets in Peterborough since 1997:

Financial year	*Receipts (£million)*
1997–98	3.4
1998–99	0.9
1999–2000	2
2000–01	10
2001–02	2.2
2002–03	3.7
2003–04	3.9
2004–05	10.3
2005–06[1]	1.1
Total	37.5

[1] Forecast.

Fire Safety

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the timetable is for the review of Approved Document B—Fire Safety; and when he intends to bring forward his Department's final proposals. [45140]

Yvette Cooper: The public consultation on the proposed changes to Part B (Fire safety) of the Building Regulations and the accompanying guidance in Approved Document B ended on 18 November 2005. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently considering the responses and other supporting evidence received and will be consulting the Building Regulations Advisory Committee in due course. The ODPM aims to publish a revised version towards the end of this year which would come into force in April 2007.

Flag Poles

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the planning process is for *(a)* erecting flag poles and *(b)* placing non-national flags on an existing flag pole. [42656]

Yvette Cooper: Planning permission is required before a flag pole is erected. The exceptions are vertical flag poles flying a national flag, or flagpoles flying flags as advertisements under Class 7 of Schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992. The flying of all other flags requires the express consent of the local planning authority. Provided they have the necessary consent, no further planning permission is required for the flag pole.

Free Bus Travel

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what alternative methods were considered by his Department to distribute the sum of money allocated to cover the cost of the free bus travel policy announced in the Budget. [51464]

Mr. Woolas: My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, added £350 million to revenue Support grant for England in 2006–07 to cover the cost of the free bus travel policy announced as part of his Budget on 16 March. For the purposes of grant distribution,

consideration was given to using the existing formula for the lower tier Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services (EPCS) relative needs formula and a number of variants of that. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister consulted on and have now adopted a variant of that formula that is reweighted to reflect factors that reflect support for the disabled and the needs of areas where take-up is likely to be highest.

Home Improvement Packs

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the likely impact of home improvement packs on the number of properties which will be available for sale. [50906]

Yvette Cooper: The number of properties available for sale at any one time will depend on a range of factors, principally interest rates and the strength of the economy. Home Information Packs are not expected to have a significant impact in their own right, but we are in discussion with the industry as to how to ensure a smooth transition when they come into effect in June 2007.

Home Information Packs

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he plans to meet the National Association of Estate Agents to discuss the introduction of home information packs. [44200]

Yvette Cooper: I will be meeting with the president of the National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA) on 27 February.

Mr. Walker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how long the information contained in homebuyers information packs will remain valid before a new survey is required; and if he will make a statement. [51719]

Yvette Cooper: The home condition report in the home information pack should be not more than three months old when the home is first put on the market. There will be no requirement to update a report while the home is on the market. In the normal course, the condition of a property is unlikely to change rapidly unless there is an intervening event, such as fire or flood. Sellers and buyers may commission an updated report where they consider this necessary, and the industry is developing cost-effective solutions to facilitate this.

Home Inspections

Mr. Maples: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998 of the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 relating to home inspections. [51645]

Mr. Woolas: The Local Government Finance Act does not provide powers for Valuation Office Agency (VOA) staff or any other persons to enter properties forcibly for the purposes of compiling or maintaining the council tax valuation list. Inspectors from the VOA will only ask to undertake internal inspections of properties where information cannot be gathered by an external inspection or through other sources and will make every effort to arrange appointments with occupiers in advance and confirm these by letter. If a request to enter a property is declined, the VOA will normally make a best judgement about the correct band for the property. There will, of course, be a right of appeal against any banding that is made. These procedures do not breach the Human Rights Act 1998 and in particular Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Homebuy Schemes

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the interest rate to be charged by mortgage lenders to participants in the Open Market HomeBuy scheme; and whether this will be a different rate from the prevailing market rate. [39488]

Yvette Cooper: Discussions are continuing with lenders on the details of the core proposition for the private financing of Open Market HomeBuy equity loans which was announced on 5 December. Lenders are likely to charge a small premium on the interest rate of the standard mortgage, but the aim of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is to ensure that the products are comparable with current shared equity schemes and affordable for our client groups.

Homelessness

Justine Greening: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what grant funding for homelessness was provided to each London borough in 2004–05; how much is being provided in 2005–06; how much is projected for 2006–07; and if he will make a statement. [50332]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* Homelessness grants from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister supplement other sources of Government funding that help to tackle homelessness, including housing capital investment, Supporting People and Revenue Support Grant.

In 2004–05 and 2005–06 a total of £71,658 million (revenue and capital) in homelessness grants was allocated to local authorities in London by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The table provides details of homelessness grant allocations made by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2004–05 and 2005–06 to each local authority in London. Indicative allocations for 2006–07 are also included this table.

Funding provided by the Directorate has supported action to successfully reduce rough sleeping by more than 70 per cent. since 1998, end the use of B and B hotels as long-term accommodation for families with children, and develop homelessness strategies and preventative approaches which have resulted in the first sustained fall in new cases of homelessness for nearly a decade.

£

Local authority	Allocation 2006–07		Allocation 2004–05		Indicative allocation 2005–06		
London region	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue		Capital (indicative)
Barking and Dagenham	28,000.00	—	28,000	—	60,000	50,000	—
Barnet	165,000.00	—	210,000	—	160,000	—	—
Bexley	58,000.00	—	58,000	—	58,000	50,000	—
Brent	783,000.00	—	740,000	2,865,000	740,000	50,000	—
Bromley	100,000.00	—	100,000	—	100,000	—	—
Camden	1,800,000.00	—	1,650,000	3,172,000	1,600,000	50,000	7,320,000
City of London	515,000.00	—	265,000	650,000	265,000	—	—
Croydon Council	600,000.00	—	575,000	—	500,000	—	—
Ealing	600,000.00	—	600,000	—	600,000	—	—
Enfield	250,000.00	—	300,000	—	250,000	50,000	—
Greenwich	100,000	—	63,000	—	63,000	20,000	—
Hackney	640,000	—	550,000	95,000	550,000	—	—
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,500,000	470,000	1,400,000	385,000	1,450,000	—	742,000
Haringey	200,000	—	200,000	—	200,000	—	—
Harrow	283,000	—	290,000	—	190,000	—	—
Havering	27,000.00	—	27,000	—	60,000	50,000	—
Hillingdon	80,000.00	—	80,000	—	80,000	50,000	—
Hounslow	180,000.00	—	165,000	—	165,000	—	—
Islington	357,000.00	—	325,000	—	325,000	—	290,000
Kensington and Chelsea	943,000.00	—	875,000	250,00	875,000	—	300,000
Kingston upon Thames	90,000.00	—	90,000	—	90,000	50,000	—
Lambeth	2,100,000.00	—	2,000,000	—	2,020,000	—	1,521,000
Lewisham	100,000.00	474,000	100,000	4,000,000	100,000	20,000	—
Merton	130,000.00	—	130,000	—	85,000	—	—
Newham	250,000.00	—	212,000	—	200,000	—	—
Redbridge	105,000.00	—	100,000	—	100,000	50,000	—
Richmond	295,000.00	—	295,000	—	315,000	50,000	—
Southwark	1,100,000.00	353,000	1,063,000	600,000	1,063,000	50,000	—
Sutton	200,000	—	165,000	—	130,000	—	—
Tower Hamlets	800,000	—	810,000	1,090,000	800,000	—	140,000
Waltham Forest	200,000	—	200,000	—	200,000	75,000	—
Wandsworth	300,000	—	300,000	—	250,000	50,000	—
Westminster	7,366,000	9,480,000	6,700,000	5,113,000	6,500,000	—	—
Total funding	22,245,000	10,777,000	20,666,000	17,970,000	20,144,000	715,000	10,313,000

Ms Keeble: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homeless acceptances there have been in each local authority in the East Midlands region in each of the last four quarters. [50907]

Yvette Cooper: The following table presents information reported by each local authority in East Midlands for the past four quarters on the number of households under homelessness legislation which were accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need, and consequently owed a main homelessness duty.

The duty owed by the local authority is to secure suitable accommodation. If a settled home is not immediately available, the authority may secure temporary accommodation until a settled home becomes available. As an alternative to the provision of temporary accommodation some authorities arrange for households to remain in their current accommodation (homeless at home), until a settled solution becomes available.

Households accepted[1] as homeless by local authorities within the East Midlands Government Office Region

Local authority	October to December 2004	January to March 2005	April to June 2005	July to September 2005
Amber Valley	68	71	61	55
Ashfield	23	22	25	16
Bassetlaw	29	30	62	34
Blaby	16	6	8	6
Bolsover	26	31	[2]—	[2]—
Boston	21	17	26	19
Broxtowe	17	21	35	16
Charnwood	43	28	52	49
Chesterfield	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Corby	12	10	4	15
Daventry	14	22	20	19
Derby	222	226	279	189
Derbyshire Dales	18	31	31	18
East Lindsey	50	58	48	17
East Northamptonshire	16	22	17	24
Erewash	45	53	74	44
Gedling	43	31	19	3
Harborough	13	10	11	4
High Peak	37	49	62	63
Hinckley and Bosworth	31	34	45	[2]—
Kettering	25	29	27	31
Leicester	218	182	151	57
Lincoln	66	49	50	34
Mansfield	75	80	115	91
Melton	6	13	13	19
Newark and Sherwood	47	78	77	37
North East Derbyshire	10	31	34	21
North Kesteven	26	23	18	26
North West Leicestershire	52	48	30	80
Northampton	135	131	126	115
Nottingham City	458	319	313	329
Oadby and Wigston	17	24	6	12

Households accepted[1] as homeless by local authorities within the East Midlands Government Office Region

Local authority	*October to December 2004*	*January to March 2005*	*April to June 2005*	*July to September 2005*
Rushcliffe	18	20	29	31
Rutland	1	7	10	15
South Derbyshire	24	19	18	21
South Holland	29	[2]...	36	12
South Kesteven	66	85	67	67
South Northamptonshire	12	21	14	19
Wellingborough	[2]...	60	61	54
West Lindsey	20	27	36	8

[1] Households found to be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in a priority need category and, under 1996 Housing Act provisions, consequently owed a main homelessness duty.

[2] Authority failed to provide a return for that particular quarter.

Note:

Data shown as reported.

Source:

ODPM PIE Homelessness returns (quarterly).

Ms Keeble: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance his Department has issued in the last 12 months to local authorities on handling homelessness cases. [50908]

Yvette Cooper: In the last 12 months the Office of the Deputy Prime Minster has made the following guidance available to local authorities and other agencies in relation to homelessness:

Tackling Homelessness Amongst Ethnic Minority Households—A Development Guide—Published September 2005 and;

Hostels Review Toolkit—Published March 2005.

In addition, the ODPM published the following documents:

Policy Brief 13: Survey of English Local Authorities about Homelessness—Published December 2005;

Policy Brief 12: Hostels Capital Improvement Programme—Published September 2005;

Guidance on Best Value Performance Indicator 213: on prevention of homelessness through housing advice—Published July 2005;

Policy Brief 11: Providing More Settled Homes—Published June 2005 and;

Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes; Changing Lives—Published March 2005.

All of these publications are available on the ODPM website at: www.odpm.gov.uk

Ms Keeble: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions his Department has had in the last 12 months with housing authorities on the handling of homelessness cases. [50913]

Yvette Cooper: Officials in the Homelessness and Housing Support Directorate in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have an on-going programme of work with local authorities to discuss good practice in the delivery of homelessness services. In the past 12 months this has included visits, meetings, regional seminars and telephone conversations. As part of this work meetings were held in the autumn with approximately 150 local authorities to specifically discuss their action plans to reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation.

Richard Burden: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria he is using for the allocation of the £88 million funding announced by the Minister for Housing in December 2005 for local authorities to reduce or prevent homelessness. [51644]

Yvette Cooper: The £88 million funding announced on 13 December 2005 has been allocated to local authorities over two years (2006–07 and 2007–08) to assist them in delivering their homelessness service and reflects the Government's continued commitment to tackle and prevent homelessness. As part of the allocation process every local authority was asked to complete a short survey about their homelessness service. In allocating the funding the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister took account of local homelessness pressures and evidence from the survey returns of local commitment to prevent homelessness and reduce the use of temporary accommodation in line with our homelessness strategy "Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives". A summary of the survey returns is included in "Survey of English Local Authorities About Homelessness. Policy Briefing 13" which is available on the ODPM website.

Homelessness grants from ODPM are intended to supplement main sources of expenditure on homelessness (for example, local authority general fund expenditure and housing investment) to fund innovative services that tackle and prevent homelessness more effectively.

Anne Main: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* homeless people and *(b)* people in temporary accommodation there are in (i) St. Albans and (ii) Hertfordshire; and if he will make a statement. [51155]

Yvette Cooper: Information about English local authorities' actions under homelessness legislation is collected quarterly and is in respect of households rather than people. The number of households accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need during 2004–05 and April to September 2005–06, and the number of households in temporary accommodation arranged by local authorities under homelessness legislation as at 31 March and 30 September 2005, is tabled as follows for St. Albans and Hertfordshire.

After being accepted as homeless, a household will be placed in some form of accommodation. They may be placed in temporary accommodation, until a settled solution becomes available, or they may be given a settled solution straight away depending on the accommodation available to the local authority. As an alternative to temporary accommodation an authority may arrange for a household to remain in their current accommodation (homeless at home), until a settled solution becomes available.

Information is also collected on the number of people who sleep rough, that is, those who are literally roofless on a single night. The table below also shows the number of persons sleeping rough on a single night of each year.

Households accepted as homeless during the year, households in temporary accommodation at the end of the period, and numbers of rough sleepers

	Local authority	
	St. Albans	Hertfordshire
Households accepted[1] as homeless		
2004–05	*141*	*1,578*
April to September 2005–06	*76*	*752*
Households in temporary accommodation2 as at:		
31 March 2005	105	1,518
30 September 2005	92	1,465
Rough sleepers3 (number of persons)		
2004	0	5
2005	0	0

[1] Households found to be eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in a priority need category and, under 1996 Housing Act provisions, consequently owed a main homelessness duty.
[2] Households in accommodation either pending a decision on their homelessness application or awaiting allocation of a settled home following acceptance. Excludes those households designated as "homeless at home" that have remained in their existing accommodation and have the same rights to suitable alternative accommodation as those in accommodation arranged by the authority.
[3] Number of persons sleeping rough, based on local authority mid-year counts or estimates.
Source:
ODPM PIE Homelessness returns (quarterly)

Mr. Khan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to publish *(a)* the external evaluation of the range of approaches which have been developed with homelessness grants since 2002 and *(b)* the good practice guidance based on this study. [42904]

Yvette Cooper: It is planned to publish the good practice guidance on homelessness prevention and a summary of the research in March 2006. It is also planned to publish the full research report on the evaluation of homelessness prevention initiatives in the summer of 2006. When available copies of the guidance and research will be available free of charge from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at: www.odpm.gov.uk/homelessness.

Homes for Islington

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much funding has been made available to Homes for Islington by his Department; what proportion of it is a loan; what the interest rate is on the loan; and what the repayment terms are. [44465]

Yvette Cooper: The London borough of Islington has been allocated funding totalling £24.9 million by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) for its Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO), "Homes for Islington", for the financial years 2004–05 and 2005–06. Allocations for 2006–07 and 2007–08 will be made shortly. The borough also received a mainstream housing capital allowance from ODPM of £10.888 million in 2004–05 and £11.317 million in 2005–06.

ODPM's financial support for local authorities for capital investment takes the form of supported borrowing approvals. These give permission for a local authority to borrow money to fund capital expenditure on its stock. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Subsidy is paid to local authorities by ODPM to cover the interest payments that a local authority must make on this borrowing. The terms of the loans taken out by local authorities such as Islington are a matter for the individual local authorities.

Households (Statistics)

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average number of households is in *(a)* district council area, *(b)* county council area, *(c)* English unitary council area, *(d)* metropolitan council area and *(e)* London borough area. [49818]

Yvette Cooper: The average number of households in England are as follows:

(a) District council	*Number*
Households accepted[1] as homeless	
All local authorities excluding unitary local authorities, metropolitan councils and London boroughs	*41,000*
(b) County council	
All county councils excluding metropolitan councils	288,000
(c) Unitary authorities	
All unitary local authorities in England excluding London boroughs and metropolitan councils	76,000
(d) Metropolitan council	
All metropolitan council areas	127,000
(e) London borough	
All London boroughs including City of London	98,000

Source:
2003 ODPM Mid-year Household estimates (http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1156404

Housing

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many council houses in each London borough have been brought up to the Decent Homes Standard; how many remain to be brought up to the Decent Homes Standard; and if he will make a statement. [47407]

Yvette Cooper: The following table shows the reported number of local authority owned non-decent dwellings every year for each London borough since 2001.

Local authority	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Barking and Dagenham	[1]—	13,254	12,613	11,091	9,618
Barnet	5,467	4,208	4,881	6,047	6,903
Bexley	LSVT	LSVT	LSVT	LSVT	LSVT
Brent	6,191	6,106	5,211	4,657	2,725
Bromley	LSVT	LSVT	LSVT	LSVT	LSVT
Camden	20,800	18,800	16,327	19,534	18,839
City of London	[2]—	1,329	1,093	1,015	959
Croydon	15,233	6,299	5,617	3,325	2,836
Ealing	3,187	4,487	4,474	5,598	5,115
Enfield	3,911	4,195	3,938	3,710	3,242
Greenwich	[1]—	22,744	21,919	17,693	15,708
Hackney	26,649	20,080	19,198	17,301	14,899
Hammersmith and Fulham	5,383	4,773	4,189	3,548	5,089
Haringey	[1]—	5,690	10,493	9,389	8,487
Harrow	1,603	2,838	2,710	2,887	2,698

Local authority	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Havering	[1]—	3,888	3,747	2,391	3,249
Hillingdon	4,437	3,774	3,465	3,402	3,116
Hounslow	10,500	10,499	9,243	5,258	2,508
Islington	[1]—	18,911	19,093	16,829	15,213
Kensington and Chelsea	4,462	4,150	4,203	3,036	2,496
Kingston upon Thames	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	1,423	1,318
Lambeth	[1]—	15,483	14,696	12,747	12,300
Lewisham	[1]—	19,730	17,436	16,259	14,742
Merton	[1]—	2,819	2,242	1,852	2,138
Newham	11,720	11,000	10,565	9,812	10,068
Redbridge	1,554	1,194	1,327	1,716	1,696
Richmond upon Thames	LSVT	LSVT	LSVT	LSVT	LSVT
Southwark	[1]—	24,982	22,245	19,481	17,427
Sutton	4,014	3,912	3,471	3,506	5,832
Tower Hamlets	22,791	20,660	18,628	18,218	14,984
Waltham Forest	[1]—	10,311	10,039	9,226	7,966
Wandsworth	3,003	3,212	2,173	1,425	588
Westminster	[1]—	10,847	8,834	4,272	2,413

LSVT = Large Scale Voluntary Transfer
[1] No data submitted by London borough.
[2] No data.
Source:
Business Plan Statistical Appendices.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate the Government have made of the number of new domestic dwellings to be planned for construction in each of the next 20 years. [47877]

Yvette Cooper: The Government responded to Kate Barker's review of Housing Supply on 5 December, outlining their ambition to increase housing delivery in England over the next decade to 200,000 net additions per year, from current delivery of around 150,000 net additions per year.

The numbers set out in the response represent Government's ambition nationally. The actual housing numbers planned for delivery are determined at a regional and local level through statutory planning processes.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had with Tameside and Stockport councils to ensure that the efforts to stabilise the housing market in East Manchester do not displace problems to adjacent areas in Tameside and Stockport. [51136]

Yvette Cooper: The future investment plans of Manchester Salford Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder are currently being evaluated by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to ensure that they continue to make the maximum positive impact for the significant investment we are making in the area. These will be tested against a set of criteria including strategic fit, evidence of need and opportunity and value for money but also ensure that impact on adjacent areas is properly addressed. The plans represent the culmination of many months of work by the board of Manchester Salford Partnership—Tameside have a place as observers on this board.

The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities in partnership with the North West Regional Housing board have recently commissioned work to extend Manchester Salford Housing Market Renewal's Research, Foresight and Intelligence project. This will look at changes in the Greater Manchester housing market areas outside of the existing Housing Market Renewal Programme and advise on how best the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister can intervene to complement HMR investment and to ensure that housing continues to play a strong role in supporting sub-regional economic growth whilst protecting existing green belt provision.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the density rate target is for new housing projects in Shropshire. [51380]

Yvette Cooper: National policy set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: "Housing" (March 2000) is for local planning authorities to avoid developments which will make inefficient use of land (those less than 30 dwellings per hectare net) and to encourage housing developments which makes more efficient use of land (those between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare net). Local planning authorities may also have regard to local housing density policies in their adopted development plans and emerging local development frameworks. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently consulting on draft Planning Policy Statement 3: "Planning for Housing" which proposes a new approach for local planning authorities to establish density policies in their areas, but with the presumption remaining that in developing density policies, the minimum density should be no less than 30 dwellings per hectare.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of new homes in Shropshire he expects will be built on brownfield sites. [51381]

Yvette Cooper: Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: "Housing" which the Government issued in March 2000 sets a target for 60 per cent. of additional housing to be provided nationally on previously developed land and through conversions of existing buildings by 2008. The regional spatial strategy for the West Midlands sets a target for Shropshire of 59 per cent. of all development to be provided on previously developed land and for this target to be reflected in new local development frameworks. Local planning authorities in Shropshire should determine housing applications having regard to this guidance, other relevant policies in their local development plans and any other material considerations.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many new homes he expects to be built in Suffolk in *(a)* 2006–07 and *(b)* each of the next three years. [50693]

Yvette Cooper: The Suffolk County Structure Plan (adopted 2001) sets out the annual requirement for new homes to be built in the county. The average annual requirement is 2,650 until 2016. These requirements will, in due course, be superseded by those contained in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England once it is adopted. The average annual requirement currently in the draft RSS is 2,930 new homes.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of West Lancashire council housing stock has been sold under the right-to-buy scheme in each year since 1980. [45132]

Yvette Cooper: The proportion of housing stock owned by West Lancashire council, sold through the Right to Buy (RTB) scheme in each financial year since

1980–81, as reported by West Lancashire is tabulated as follows. The table shows the number of Right to Buy sales in each financial year as a percentage of the stock at the beginning of that period.

West Lancashire: right to buy sales

Financial year	*Percentage Proportion of local authority stock sold through RTB*
1980–81	1.1
1981–82	6.0
1982–83	3.6
1983–84	2.1
1984–85	0.0
1985–86	0.0
1986–87	1.8
1987–88	1.6
1988–89	2.3
1989–90	5.1
1990–91	3.1
1991–92	1.6
1992–93	1.1
1993–94	1.1
1994–95	1.5
1995–96	0.9
1996–97	0.9
1997–98	1.2
1998–99	1.2
1999–2000	2.1
2000–01	2.3
2001–02	2.3
2002–03	2.9
2003–04	5.8
2004–05	4.5

Source:
PIAB returns from local authority to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what total receipts were generated from Right to Buy sales in West Lancashire in each year since 1980. [45134]

Yvette Cooper: The value of the capital receipts generated from Right to Buy sales in West Lancashire in each financial year since 1994–95, as reported by West Lancashire is tabled as follows. Figures shown are net of discounts. Information on capital receipts prior to 1994–95 is not available.

West Lancashire

£

Financial year	*Capital receipts*
1994–95	2,334,000
1995–96	1,401,000
1996–97	1,484,000
1997–98	1,775,000
1998–99	1,849,000
1999–2000	3,343,000
2000–01	3,365,000
2001–02	3,194,000
2002–03	5,127,000
2003–04	10,582,000
2004–05	9,346,000

Source:
PIAB returns from local authority to ODPM

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many applicants there are on the West Lancashire housing waiting list. [45136]

Yvette Cooper: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 17 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 811W, in which the number of households on the housing waiting list in each English local authority for each year from 1996–97 to 2005–06 was made available in the Library of the House.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many empty homes there have been in West Lancashire constituency in each year since 1997. [51120]

Yvette Cooper: The number of vacant dwellings in the local authority area of West Lancashire from 1997 to 2004, is tabled as follows:

	Snapshot date	*Vacant dwellings*
1997	1 April	1,397
1998	1 April	1,433
1999	1 April	504
2000	1 April	925
2001	1 April	1,251
2002	1 November	1,284
2003	3 November	1,444
2004	1 November	1,386

Source:
The figures for 1997 to 2001 are based on a combination of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA) return, and the Housing Corporation's Regulatory Statistical Return (RSR). For the years 2002 to 2004 the figures are based on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Council Tax Base 1 (CTB1) return.

These figures are for all vacant dwellings, including dwellings that have been empty for fewer than six months, some for less than 1 month. The Government are introducing new powers from April 2006 for local authorities to reduce the number of long-term empty homes in their area.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many council houses have been sold under the right-to-buy scheme in West Lancashire in each year since 1980. [51122]

Yvette Cooper: The number of council houses sold in West Lancashire under the right-to-buy scheme in each year since 1998/99 as reported by West Lancashire can be found on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/373/Table4StatisticsonRighttoBuyandothercouncilhousesalesExcel242Kb_idl_156373.xls.

Information is only available for the years shown.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department has made of the role of repairing existing housing stock in meeting demand for affordable housing. [51038]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The Government recognise that better use of the existing housing stock, including repairs to existing stock and bringing empty homes back into use, can help meet demand for housing.

Investment through the Housing Corporation's approved development programme (ADP) supports not only new build but also acquisition and refurbishment of housing stock securing it for use as affordable

housing. Around 1,700 social rented homes out of a total of over 16,000 social rented homes were provided through acquisition and refurbishment in 2004–05 through the ADP.

The Government encourage local authorities to procure empty homes from owners in return for grant or loans to cover the cost of repairs.

The Decent Homes Standard requires all social housing to be made decent by 2010 and to this end local authorities and registered social landlords (RSLs) have invested £21 billion in improving their stock since 1997.

The Housing Corporation's regulatory code makes clear that RSLs are expected to develop and manage good quality homes that seek to meet people's needs and preferences now and in the future, ensuring that: the homes their residents live in are well maintained and in a lettable condition; maintenance is carried out effectively and necessary investment in the future of their stock is made a key priority.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage change he expects in *(a)* council house rents and *(b)* management and maintenance grants in 2006–07. [49737]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects local authority rents to rise by an average of 4.7 per cent. in 2006–07. The Government does not expect any local authority to raise rents by more than 5 per cent. in 2006–07 and 2007–08, and the intention is that authorities which would otherwise lose out will have their Housing Revenue Account (HRA) adjusted in year.

Management and maintenance allowance will rise by 9.06 per cent. in 2006–07. This represents 2.46 per cent. for inflation and 6.6 per cent. for rebasing.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent research he has evaluated on the cost of maintaining council homes. [45299]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister keeps under review the need to spend on maintenance and management of the local authority stock. The most recent research was published in June 2003: "Estimation of the need to spend on maintenance and management in the local authority housing stock".

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much of the income from council tenants' rents in the determination for 2006–07 he estimates will be retained by councils. [45333]

Yvette Cooper: The Housing Revenue Account Subsidy Determination does not set actual rents; these are the responsibility of the individual local authorities as part of their landlord function. The annual determination sets, among other things, each authority's guideline rent. That is the rental income per dwelling assumed in calculating an authority's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) subsidy entitlement.

Nationally, rental income does not meet the costs of the aggregate need to spend on council housing, and there is an overall net payment of HRA subsidy from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to local authorities. This situation is forecast to continue for the foreseeable future.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact of the average increase in council rents resulting from his Department's final housing revenue account subsidy determinations for 2006–07 on pensioners not in receipt of housing benefit. [50547]

Yvette Cooper: No assessment is made during the annual housing revenue account subsidy determination process of the impact of average rent increases on any particular section of the community. The subsidy system is very influential in informing the decisions a council will take on rent setting, but it does not immediately impact on actual individual rents which are a matter for the authority as landlord.

Authorities retain wide discretion in the setting of rents, including a variation of plus or minus 5 per cent. on individual rents under rent restructuring. For 2006–07 we introduced a suggested additional cap of 5 per cent. on the average actual rent increase in addition to the existing cap of RPI plus ½ per cent. plus £2.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of local authority housing stock in each Government office region is *(a)* houses and bungalows, *(b)* low rise flats, *(c)* medium rise flats and *(d)* high rise flats. [51019]

Yvette Cooper: The data in the following table are derived from the audited base data returns from local authorities for stock at April 2005.

Percentage

Region	*Houses and bungalows*	*Low rise flats*	*Medium rise flats*	*High rise flats*
East Midlands	67.96	19.13	10.95	1.96
Eastern	60.95	22.20	14.05	2.80
London	22.25	12.18	43.73	21.84
North East	73.77	14.10	7.05	5.08
North West	61.65	22.61	10.13	5.60
South East	53.55	22.86	19.14	4.46
South West	57.25	23.52	15.05	4.18
West Midlands	60.56	19.67	9.63	10.14
Yorks and Humber	66.70	18.44	9.44	5.41
Total England	54.04	18.52	18.69	8.74

Mr. Evans: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department has made of the impact on *(a)* the environment and *(b)* energy efficiency of the repair and renovation of existing registered social landlord housing stock with energy saving measures. [50610]

Yvette Cooper: The 2003 English House Condition Survey (EHCS) indicates that the number of social sector homes failing to meet the decent home standard as a result of inadequate thermal comfort fell by 20 per cent. between 2001 and 2003. EHCS also indicates that, among the housing stock, that of registered social landlords has the highest average energy efficiency as assessed under the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP).

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister recognises the environmental impact of poor housing conditions and has commissioned research to establish the extent to which social housing landlords are carrying out works in excess of the requirements of the decent home standard, with particular reference to heating and insulation. It is also undertaking a review of the measures that can be taken in existing buildings, including homes, to improve sustainability and energy and water efficiency.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether individuals evicted from social housing due to antisocial behaviour *(a)* are eligible to be re-housed, *(b)* may be classed as homeless and *(c)* are eligible for (i) housing benefit and (ii) council tax benefit; whether eligibility for each will apply under the Government's Respect agenda proposals; and if he will make a statement. [46966]

Yvette Cooper: Addressing the hon. Member's questions in turn:

(a) Eligibility for re-housing:

Local authorities have the power to treat as ineligible for an allocation a person who has been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make him unsuitable to be a tenant of the authority. The only behaviour which would be regarded as unacceptable for these purposes is behaviour which would entitle an authority to an outright possession order on fault grounds, this could include antisocial behaviour.

Circular 07/04 on Tenancy Management: Eligibility and Eviction, issued by the Housing Corporation and to which all registered social landlords must have regard, states that ineligibility for housing on the ground of the applicant's antisocial behaviour should be based on evidence of the behaviour. The circular also states that previous tenancy enforcement action (including eviction) for antisocial behaviour should not be taken into account if it occurred two or more years prior to the date of application and the tenant's household has conducted a tenancy satisfactorily in the intervening period.

(b) Homelessness:

Where a person is evicted for antisocial behaviour he may decide to make a homelessness application to a local authority. If the authority has reason to believe that he may be homeless or threatened with homelessness it must make inquiries to enable it to determine his application.

When considering the application the authority would have to decide, among other things, whether the applicant had become homeless intentionally (that is, homeless as a result of a deliberate act or omission in consequence of which his accommodation ceases to be available to him). Where the applicant has been evicted from his previous accommodation because of antisocial behaviour this is likely to be regarded as a deliberate act which would mean that the applicant would be found to be intentionally homeless.

If the applicant has a priority need for housing (eg if he has dependent children) but has become homeless intentionally, the authority would have a duty to secure accommodation for them for long enough to give them a reasonable opportunity of finding their own accommodation. However, the authority will not owe the applicant a 'main homelessness duty' to continue to secure that accommodation is available for occupation by the applicant.

(c) Eligibility for benefits:

Where someone has been evicted on ASB grounds and subsequently takes up new accommodation where they are eligible for payment of council tax then any application for council tax benefit would be assessed in line with existing rules. Their previous housing record, including eviction on anti-social behaviour grounds, would not form part of this assessment.

The same principle applies to Housing benefit: liability for rent would cease on eviction, so no housing benefit would be payable. But if rent is payable at the next address, housing benefit would be freshly assessed.

Respect agenda proposals

The Respect action plan proposes no changes to code of guidance on allocations or homelessness legislation. Through the plan we have announced our intention to launch a national network of intensive family support schemes as part of a long-term cross-government strategy on problem families to improve the way public services deal with them. Family support projects will help tackle the underlying causes of ASB. For example, where appropriate, families evicted for antisocial behaviour may be referred to a support project so that anti-social behaviour can be tackled rather than displaced.

The plan commits us to considering the best way of encouraging those involved in persistent ASB to engage with family support projects. As the plan states one option would be to introduce sanctions on those people who have been evicted for antisocial behaviour and then refuse to take up offers of help. Sanctions could include financial penalties or housing benefit measures.

Housing Debt

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the interest rate charged on the housing debt of local authorities was in *(a)* 1980, *(b)* 2000 and *(c)* 2005. [49735]

Yvette Cooper: Local authorities do not borrow for specific purposes but instead manage their loans as a portfolio. The Housing Revenue Account makes a contribution to the loan charges of a local authority's debt portfolio based upon the proportion of those loans used for housing purposes and based on the average interest rate of all of the authority's borrowing, known as the Consolidated Rate of Interest (CRI).

The CRI for 1980 is only available at disproportionate cost. The average CRI for local housing authorities in England for financial year 2000–01 was 5.95 per cent., the average CRI for local housing authorities in England for financial year 2005–06 currently stands at 5.31 per cent., though it should be noted that this rate is likely to change as the financial year not yet ended.

Housing Revenue Accounts

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much central government funding was allocated to councils' housing revenue accounts in 2005–06; and what the estimate is for 2007–08. [45297]

Yvette Cooper: The net contribution made by central government to local authority housing revenue accounts in England is approximately £207.6 million for 2005–06, based upon unaudited advance claims submitted by local housing authorities.

The estimate for 2007–08 is expected to be broadly similar and it is expected that payments to deficit authorities will continue to exceed surpluses redistributed from negative subsidy authorities throughout this period.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost to central funds was of supported borrowing for local authority housing revenue accounts in each year since 1997. [45304]

Yvette Cooper: The charges for capital element of Housing Revenue Account Subsidy entitlement by local housing authorities for 1997–98 to 2004–05 (the latest year for which we have data) was as follows:

	Amount (£)
1997–98	2,205,198,847
1998–99	2,136,542,900
1999–2000	2,012,611,835
2000–01	1,923,747,474
2001–02	1,810,651,777
2002–03	1,669,557,784
2003–04	1,531,423,203
2004–05	[1]1,173,227,602

[1] Data for 2004–2005 is not yet complete.

Under the set-aside system that was in place until 2004–05, local authorities were required to set aside a proportion of their income to repay debt. So levels of housing debt (nationally) fell, leading to a fall in support required for support of that debt.

Early indications for 2005–06 are there will be an upswing (£2 million) in the value of HRAS for charges for capital, as national housing debt stops declining due to set-aside.

Key Workers (Dorset)

Annette Brooke: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what account he took of average house prices in Dorset in allocating funds to assist key workers via Homebuy loan schemes in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06. [51850]

Yvette Cooper *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* As the Key Worker Living programme only operates in London, South East and Eastern regions there are no specific Homebuy loans being offered for key workers within the South West under the Government's programme. Within Dorset funding is available for a number of Homebuy and shared ownership schemes which, depending on local priorities, key workers may be eligible to apply for. Within 2004–05 there were 120 such completions, final figures for 2005–06 are not yet available.

LACORE Database

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on implementation of the local authority lettings continuous recording (LACORE) database. [49825]

Yvette Cooper: CORE (Continuous Recording of lettings) is a system for monitoring the letting of social rented housing which has been in operation by housing associations for the last 15 years. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently in the process of extending CORE to include lettings by local authorities. Participation by local authorities is voluntary although it is hoped that all will do so. Of the 220 local authorities which own social housing stock 86 (39 per cent.) are already submitting CORE data and an additional 105 (48 per cent.) are planning to start by 1 April 2006. The remaining 29 (13 per cent.) have not yet committed to a start date.

Lifetime Homes Standards

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate his Department has made of the cost to housebuilders of making the Lifetime Homes Standards obligatory on all new house builds; and if he will make a statement. [49792]

Yvette Cooper: No estimate has been made of the cost of making the Lifetime Homes Standards obligatory on all new house builds. The Lifetime Homes Standards will be introduced as a voluntary element of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The rate of adoption of the standards will be monitored, and Government have not ruled out regulation. If regulation is required, a regulatory impact assessment will be made, as normal, to establish the cost.

Local Authority Finance

Mr. Purchase: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what arrangements he plans to make for his Department's financial support to local authorities for private sector capital investment from 1 April; and if he will make a statement. [46137]

Yvette Cooper: Our current plans are that ODPM grant for PFI projects will continue to be paid on the same basis as in 2005–06. HRA housing projects will be supported as part of Housing Revenue Account Subsidy. All other operational projects will be supported by PFI grant, for which Section 31 grant determinations will be published in March setting out the full details.

Mr. Purchase: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the likely effects on local authority planning and delivery of delaying an announcement on housing capital grants. [46139]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will announce awards of capital grant to support local authorities' housing capital investment programmes in 2006–07 shortly and in sufficient time for those authorities to make full use of that support.

Local Authority Repair Allowances

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether local authority major repairs allowances were fully spent in each of the last three years. [45298]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold this information centrally, and could provide it only at disproportionate cost. Local authorities are not required to spend their major repairs allowance (MRA) in year. They may carry the balance of their MRA forward, allowing them to build a significant resource to undertake major capital works programmes if required, rather than spreading the work out over a number of years, which may not be as efficient.

Local Government Finance

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much of the £4.8 billion referred to in his Department's press release number 0278 of 20 December 2005 for local authorities in England in 2006–07 will come from rents paid by council tenants. [50543]

Yvette Cooper: The £4.8 billion referred to in the press release which accompanied the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy Determination 2006–07 on 20 December 2005 covers allowances for management, maintenance and major repairs predominantly. In addition to expenditure in these areas, local authorities in England service debt charges amounting to some £1.2 billion annually.

Projected rental income for 2006–07 is expected to be about £5.8 billion. The shortfall of about £200 million will be made up by the Government.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* council tax and *(b)* business rate (i) banding and (ii) valuation appeals there were in each year since 1996–97; and how many were successful (A) in whole and (B) in part in each year. [51055]

Mr. Woolas: The number of council tax banding and national non-domestic rate valuation appeals in England in each year since 2000–01 is as follows:

	Council tax banding	*National non-domestic rates*
2000–01	33,764	715,104
2001–02	29,195	346,704
2002–03	25,346	144,105
2003–04	23,036	140,267
2004–05	24,422	130,410

Records held by the Valuation Tribunal Service (VTS) do not identify whether an appeal has been fully or partially upheld. The VTS does not hold information on council tax and national non-domestic rate appeals for years prior to 2000–01.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on how council tax capping will operate in London in 2006–07. [51084]

Mr. Woolas: No decisions on council tax capping in 2006–07 have been taken yet. The Deputy Prime Minister does not intend to determine capping principles until after authorities have set their budget requirements.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average council tax bill was in England in 2005–06. [51099]

Mr. Woolas: Details of the average council tax bill in England in 2005–06 are published in Table 2.2f of Local Government Financial Statistics England 2005, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House and on the web at: http ://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/stats/lgfs/2005/lgfs16/h/lgfs16/xlsfiles/lgfs16-2-2f.xls .

Local Government Restructuring

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent discussions *(a)* he has had and *(b)* Members of his Department have had with local authorities on local government restructuring. [49820]

Mr. Woolas: My right hon. Friend the Member for South Shields (Mr. Miliband) announced a comprehensive programme of engagement on local government re-organisation on 2 February. As part of this programme my right hon. Friend the Member for South Shields (Mr. Miliband) met with councillors, chief executives, public sector partners, the business sector and other key stakeholders from Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin and Herefordshire on 7 February in Shrewsbury.

Members of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have held meetings with chief executives of county and district councils to discuss local government restructuring on six separate occasions since December 2005.

Local Government Wages

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average increase in local government employee wages was in each year since 1996–97; and what the cost of the local government wage bill was in each year since 1996–97. [42605]

Mr. Woolas: Information on local government wages is not held centrally. However, the increase in the local government employee pay bill and the cost of the local government employee expenditure in each year as reported by local authorities, are shown in the following table for the years available:

	Local government employee pay[1,2]		*Local government employee expenditure*[2,3]	
	Cost (£ billion)	*% Increase*	*Cost (£ billion)*	*% Increase*
1996–97	—	—	30.237	2.9
1997–98	—	—	31.167	3.1
1998–99	25.904	—	32.395	4.4
1999–2000	28.531	10.1	35.737	9.9
2000–01	30.571	7.1	38.185	6.9
2001–02	33.083	8.2	41.283	8.1
2002–03	35.769	8.1	44.345	7.4
2003–04	38.662	8.1	48.676	9.8
2004–05	41.235	6.7	52.940	8.8

[1] This figure is for pay only, excluding National Insurance employer contributions, pensions, and employee related costs, but including overtime payments, bonuses, golden handshakes etc. It has only been collected on this basis since 1998–99. It is estimated from the Subjective Analysis Return (SAR), part of the Revenue Outturn (RO) suite of forms collected by ODPM from local authorities. The SAR is a sample survey and collects information from 121 authorities in England. The data have been grossed up to provide estimates for England as a whole.

[2] Comparisons across years may not be valid due to changes in the method of reporting the information. In particular, the outturn data for 1996–97 to 2002–03 have been calculated on a non-FRS

(Financial Reporting Standard) 17 basis while the outturn data for 2003–04 and 2004–05 have been calculated on an FRS 17 basis. Hence, figures for different years may not be directly comparable.
[3] Total net current expenditure on employees as collected by the RO forms. This includes all direct and indirect employee expenses and contributions to employee-related provisions, including national insurance contributions, pensions and employee related expenses.

Notes:
All data are as published in Local Government Financial Statistics or in National Statistics Releases as available from http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/stats/index.htm
All figures are for England only.

Local government pay can be further split by employee group for 1998–99 onwards:

Employee group		*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Teachers	£ billion	10.122	11.491	12.384	13.616	14.904	15.522	15.912
	% change	—	13.5	7.8	9.9	9.5	4.1	2.5
Police	£ billion	3.349	3.450	3.693	3.969	4.102	4.486	4.749
	% change	—	3.0	7.0	7.5	3.4	9.4	5.9
Firefighters	£ billion	0.790	0.843	0.831	0.859	0.881	0.958	1.036
	% change	—	6.7	-1.4	3.4	2.6	8.7	8.1
Police Support Staff	£ billion	0.875	0.906	0.949	0.945	1.169	1.331	1.547
	% change	—	3.5	4.7	-0.4	23.7	13.9	16.2
Other Local Government Staff [3]	£ billion	10.768	11.841	12.713	13.694	14.713	16.365	17.990
	% change	—	10.0	7.4	7.7	7.4	11.2	9.9
Total pay [1,2]	£ billion	25.904	28.531	30.571	33.083	35.769	38.662	41.235
	% change	—	10.1	7.1	8.2	8.1	8.1	6.7

[1] This figure is for pay only, excluding National Insurance employer contributions, pensions, and employee related costs, but including overtime payments, bonuses, golden handshakes etc. It has only been collected on this basis since 1998–99. It is estimated from the Subjective Analysis Return (SAR), part of the Revenue Outturn (RO) suite of forms collected by ODPM from local authorities. The SAR is a sample survey and collects information from 121 authorities in England. The data have been grossed up to provide estimates for England as a whole.
[2] Comparisons across years may not be valid due to changes in the method of reporting the information. In particular, the outturn data for 1996–97 to 2002–03 have been calculated on a non-FRS (Financial Reporting Standard) 17 basis while the outturn data for 2003–04 and 2004–05 have been calculated on an FRS 17 basis. Hence, figures for different years may not be directly comparable.
[3] Other Local Government Staff' includes Chief Executives, Chief Financial Officers, fire support staff, all non-teachers working in Education as well as all other local government employees.
Notes:
All data are as published in Local Government Financial Statistics or in National Statistics Releases as available from http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/stats/index.htm
All figures are for England only.

Milton Keynes Partnerships Committee

Mr. Lancaster: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister who the voting members of Milton Keynes Partnerships Committee are; and whether their posts are remunerated. [51030]

Yvette Cooper: The voting members of Milton Keynes Partnership, the local delivery vehicle for Milton Keynes, and the status of their remuneration, are shown in the following table.

Voting member	*Representing*	*Remunerated*
Sir Bob Reid	Independent	Yes
Anne Limb	Independent	Yes
Cllr Isobel McCall	Milton Keynes Council	Yes
Cllr Euan Henderson	Milton Keynes Council	Yes
Cllr Roger Bristow	Milton Keynes Council	Yes
Wendy Lehmann	Voluntary organisations	Yes
Malcolm Brighton	Health sector	Yes
Andrew Peck	Business community	Yes
Dr. Pauline Lane	English Partnerships	No
Dennis Hone	English Partnerships	No

Mobile Telephone Masts

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many new mobile telephone masts have been erected under permitted development rights in *(a)* Southend-on-Sea, *(b)* Southend West constituency and *(c)* Essex in each of the last 48 months for which figures are available; [50476]

(2) how many applications there have been to construct mobile telephone masts in *(a)* Southend-on-Sea, *(b)* Southend West constituency and *(c)* Essex in each year since 2000; how many of these applications have been (i) granted and (ii) refused; and what the reason for refusal was in each case. [50477]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

However, during September and October every year the mobile network operators write to every local authority with details of their network rollout for the year ahead. When they write to the local authority they also provide details of their existing sites within the local authority area. The hon. Member may want to contact the network operators for copies of their plans.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what power his Department has granted since 1997 to local authorities to refuse applications by mobile telephone companies to erect telephone masts; and if he will make a statement. [50480]

Yvette Cooper: All ground based masts are already subject to planning control so that if the local authority considers that the development will pose a serious threat to amenity, it is able to refuse approval. For masts over 15 metres in height a full planning application is required. For masts under 15 metres in height a prior approval application is required.

Since 1997, the Government have strengthened the prior approval arrangements twice. Local planning authorities can decline a mast on planning grounds in prior approval applications in the same way as a normal planning application so long as they act within eight weeks. Eight weeks is also the performance target for dealing with most planning applications for telecommunications developments.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many planning applications for new mobile phone masts have been approved in West Suffolk in each year since 1997. [50724]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

However, during September and October every year the mobile network operators write to every local authority with details of their network rollout for the year ahead. When they write to the local authority they also provide details of their existing sites within the local authority area. You may want to contact the network operators for copies of their plans.

Negative Equity

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the total value of negative equity in homes in *(a)* England and *(b)* the North West in (i) 1996 and (ii) the most recent year for which figures are available. [46535]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Oil Firing Technical Association

Graham Stringer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* criteria and *(b)* benchmarks will be used in his review of the Oil Firing Technical Association. [48804]

Yvette Cooper: The Oil Firing Technical Association (OFTEC) operates a competent person self-certification scheme for the installation of oil-fired combustion appliances and oil storage systems, authorised under the Building Act 1984. It is only this part of OFTEC's activities that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has powers to review.

Reviews of the performance of competent person schemes take place against schemes' conditions of authorisation: financial, managerial and technical ability to operate a scheme; assessment of competence of applicants to register with a scheme; periodic random monitoring of completed work to make sure it complies with the requirements of the Building Regulations; a robust system to deal fairly and speedily with complaints from customers; and certification of work to customers and the relevant local authority.

All competent person schemes, including OFTEC's are required to achieve UKAS accreditation under the conditions of authorisation. UKAS will then monitor schemes to make sure that the conditions of authorisation are being fulfilled and the scheme is delivering compliance with the requirements of the Building Regulations.

Oil-fired Central Heating

Graham Stringer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will introduce regulations to require a Declaration of Safety Certificate after the installation of an oil fired heating system. [48760]

Yvette Cooper: Provisions for such certificates to be issued are already part of the Building Regulations 2000, as amended. Such certificates attest that the installation meets the safety standards in the Regulations. Where such installation work is notified to a building control body, that body will issue a completion certificate where the installation fully complies with all relevant requirements of the Building Regulations. Where the work is carried out by an installer registered with a competent person self-certification listed in Schedule 2A of the Building Regulations, that installer will give a compliance certificate to the occupier of the premises where the installation took place with a copy to the local authority.

Open Market Homebuy Option

Michael Gove: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many households the Government estimates will be covered by the Open Market Homebuy option by the end of the two-year pilot. [48901]

Yvette Cooper: Information on the number of households that will benefit from the Open Market Homebuy product from April 2006 is not yet available. The Government are providing subsidy for all the Homebuy products via the Housing Corporation's Affordable Housing programme. A decision on the overall programme is expected in March 2006, when the amount of subsidy for Open Market Homebuy will be confirmed.

From October 2006, Government funding will be enhanced by the private financing of equity loans from three lenders. This will enable us to help an additional 20,000 households into home ownership by 2010.

Overcrowding

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will estimate how many families in *(a)* England, *(b)* the Tees Valley and *(c)* Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland are living in overcrowded conditions. [45109]

Yvette Cooper: There are two measures of overcrowding—the statutory definition and the bedroom standard.

Based on the bedroom standard, the number of overcrowded households in England during the three-year period 2002–03 to 2004–05 is estimated to have been 510,000.

Information on compliance with the statutory standard is not collected systematically but, in the autumn of 2001, an attempt was made to estimate the number of households living in conditions that breach these standards. Using data from the "Survey of English Housing" for the period 1997–98 to 1999–2000 and from the 1996 "English House Condition Survey" it was estimated that there were 25,000 households in England that were so overcrowded that the statutory standard was breached.

Reliable estimates for the Tees Valley and for Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland are not available.

Pheasant Shooting

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance his Department has issued on the planning status of pheasant rearing units. [44206]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not issued any specific guidance on the planning status of pheasant rearing units. The planning guidance for agriculture, for England, is contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 7: "Rural Areas".

Planning

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many planning applications have been processed in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England in each year between 1997 and 2005; and how many were heard by committees of local planning authorities. [50444]

Yvette Cooper: Following are the figures for Leicester and England. The "Statistics of Planning Applications, October to December 2005" is due to be published on 31 March 2006 and will appear on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister web pages under "planning statistics".

Calendar year	*Decisions in Leicester*	*Decisions not delegated to officers*[1]	*Decisions in England*	*Decisions not delegated to officers*[1]
1998	1,469	403	465,000	153,000
1999	1,449	373	472,000	139,000
2000	1,594	369	499,000	127,000
2001	1,772	400	527,000	121,000
2002	1,783	373	571,000	102,000
2003	2,084	265	620,000	89,000
2004	2,095	117	650,000	75,000

[1] Since April 1997 statistics have been collected on decisions delegated to officers without reference to councillors under a scheme of delegation. 'Undelegated' decisions therefore includes decisions taken by chairmen or sub-committees, as well as those by the entire planning committee

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to pool Planning Delivery Grant funding into local area agreements. [51075]

Mr. Woolas: Planning Delivery Grant is not ring fenced, and may be included by local authorities in their local area agreement pooling arrangements.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will be consulting on reforms to the Planning Delivery Grant as part of a wider package of incentives for housing and planning during this year. This will involve consultation on mechanisms for delivery and how the grant might be distributed.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance his Department has issued on the account which should be taken of special protection area status in assessing planning applications; and if he will make a statement. [49823]

Yvette Cooper: In August 2005 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) issued a joint Government circular: "Biodiversity and Geological Conservation—Statutory obligations and their impact within the planning system" (ODPM 06/2005, Defra 01/2005). The circular provides administrative guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation as it applies in England. It covers the requirements of the EC Habitats Regulations 1994 in respect of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the EC Birds Directive .

Planning Policy Statement 9: "Biodiversity and Geological Conservation" was published at the same time. It advises planning authorities that, in taking planning decisions affecting sites of international importance, such as SPAs, they should ensure that appropriate weight is given to their status.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what obligations local planning authorities have to consult English Nature in relation to planning applications in a special protection area. [49824]

Yvette Cooper: A planning authority is required, under the General Development Procedure Order 1995, to consult English Nature before granting planning permission within or which is likely to affect a site of special scientific interest (SSSI). All special protection areas (SPAs) on land above the mean (tidal) low water mark are also SSSIs and are thus covered by this requirement to consult. The planning regime does not extend below the low water mark.

Anne Milton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many planning decisions made by *(a)* Guildford and *(b)* Waverley borough councils were (i) referred to and (ii) overturned by the Planning Inspectorate in each of the past five years. [48710]

Yvette Cooper: The table shows the total number of planning appeals, in the areas of Guildford and Waverley borough councils, determined by the Planning Inspectorate for the calendar years 2001 to 2005 together with the number allowed and percentage of appeals allowed.

	2001	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Guilford					
Total decided	82	68	110	91	136
Total allowed	28	29	32	28	40
Percentage allowed	34	43	29	31	29
Waverley					
Total decided	87	88	145	157	184
Total allowed	38	34	41	61	71
Percentage allowed	44	39	28	39	39

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the national targets are for the Planning Inspectorate; and what the performance of offices covering Torbay are in relation to those targets. [46613]

Yvette Cooper: The Planning Inspectorates targets for 2006–06 (revised December 2005) are:

Timeliness—cases determined by the written representations method

1. Planning appeals: By the end of 2005–06, 50 per cent. of all planning appeals decided by written representations to be determined in 16 weeks.

2. Enforcement appeals: 80 per cent. of all enforcement appeals decided by written representations to be determined in 32 weeks.

Timeliness—cases determined by the hearings method

3. Planning appeals: By the end of 2005–06, 50 per cent. of all planning appeals decided by hearings to be determined in 30 weeks.

4. Planning appeals—proposals for 10 or more dwellings: to open the hearing within 20 weeks of the start date of the case and, in 80 per cent. of the cases, to issue a decision within 10 weeks of the close of the hearing.

5. Enforcement appeals: 80 per cent. of all enforcement appeals decided by hearings to be determined in 33 weeks.

Timeliness—cases determined by the inquiry method

6. Recovered planning appeals and called-in applications: to meet the individual timetable set for the issue of the decision.

7. Planning appeals: By the end of 2005–06, 50 per cent. of all planning appeals decided by inquiry to be determined in 30 weeks.

8. Proposals for 10 or more dwellings: to open the inquiry within 20 weeks of the start date of the case and, in 80 per cent. of the cases, to issue a decision within 10 weeks of the close of the inquiry.

9. Enforcement appeals: 80 per cent. of all enforcement appeals decided by inquiry to be determined in 43 weeks.

Timeliness—development plans

10. To provide an Inspector for development plan inquiries in at least 90 per cent. of cases on the date requested by the local authority, provided that the objection period has ended and at least six months' notice has been given.

11. To deliver 90 per cent. of Inspectors' reports on development plan inquiries to local authorities according to timescales agreed under service agreements.

Quality

12. To satisfy the Advisory Panel on Standards, and thus the Secretary of State and the Welsh Assembly Government, annually and following rigorous monitoring, that the quality of all the Inspectorate's work is being maintained at a high standard, with 99 per cent. of its casework free from justified complaint.

Information

13. To survey customer satisfaction with the Inspectorate's performance and to act upon the results.

Performance in Torbay against planning appeals target

Procedure	*2003–04 Percentage in target*	*2004–05 Number of appeals*	*2005–06 Percentage in target*	*Number of appeals*	*Percentage in target*	*Number of appeals*
Written representations	78.67	75	9.88	81	37.29	59
Hearing	30.00	10	0.00	12	0.00	9
Local inquiry	100.00	1	0.00	1	[1]—	—

[1] No appeals were decided.

Performance in Torbay for enforcement appeals

Procedure	*2003–04 Percentage in target*	*2004–05 Number of appeals*	*2005–06 Percentage in target*	*Number of appeals*	*Percentage in target*	*Number of appeals*
Written Representations	100.00	1	100.00	1	100.00	2
Hearing	100.00	1	100.00	1	100.00	1
Local inquiry	100.00	1	[1]—	—	[1]—	—

[1] No appeals were decided.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library of the House a copy of the national planning guidance relating to housing that was in force before the publication of Planning Policy Guidance 3 in 2000. [48056]

Yvette Cooper: A copy of the Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: "Housing" published in March 1992 has been made available in the Library of the House.

Polytunnels

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Planning Inspectorate has issued on planning policy on polytunnels. [46975]

Yvette Cooper: The Government's national planning policies on development in the countryside and on agricultural development, which includes horticulture, are set out in Planning Policy Statement 7, Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, published August 2004. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (including the Planning Inspectorate) has not issued any planning guidance specifically on the use of polytunnels.

The considerations in determining whether, in the first instance, horticultural polytunnels come within the scope of planning controls and, if so, whether they are permitted development under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, have not changed. Each case should be considered individually, in the light of the particular facts and circumstances pertaining.

Where the decision-taker, the local planning authority in the first instance, decides in any particular case that the erection and use of polytunnels constitutes "development" and requires a specific planning permission, any planning application should be determined in accordance with relevant policies in an adopted development plan for the area, subject to any other material considerations.

Proposed Railway Bridge (Colindale)

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his Department's financial contribution to the proposed new railway bridge over Aerodrome Road, Colindale. [41222]

Yvette Cooper: In the announcement on second round growth area funding of 24 August 2005 the London borough of Barnet was invited to submit a fully developed bid for up to £7 million for this project to replace two railway bridges over Aerodrome Road. This bid was received in December and is currently being considered. A formal announcement of the projects that will receive Government money will be made within the next few weeks.

Regional Assemblies

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the role of regional assemblies in England. [51149]

Yvette Cooper: The Government are committed to the development of fit-for-purpose regional institutions and to continue their clear policy to devolve and decentralise power to regions, where this adds value. This is integral to creating sustainable communities.

Regional assemblies are inclusive strategic bodies 'of the region' and bring together representatives from key sectors across the region, sub-region, major cities and city areas and the rural areas. They were designated under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as the Regional Planning Body with responsibility for preparing the Regional Spatial Strategy, including the Regional Housing and Transport strategies on behalf of the relevant Secretary of State.

The Government have indicated they will give assemblies additional functions where they consider it appropriate. They have accepted the Barker recommendation that Regional Housing Boards and Regional Planning Bodies be merged and are currently considering responses from regional assemblies detailing how each would take on this new merged role.

Regional Housing Boards

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether regional housing boards will continue to operate from the Government Offices for the Regions. [51082]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has already announced merging regional housing and planning functions by passing responsibility for the work of the Regional Housing Boards from the Government Offices to the Regional Assemblies (and in London the Mayor), which in each region is already the Regional Planning Body. The ODPM is working to effect these new arrangements by September 2006.

Rent Increases

Mr. Purchase: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 429W, if he will publish the consultation paper setting out the arrangements for compensating housing authorities that keep average rent increases to 5 per cent. in both 2006–07 and 2007–08. [48949]

Yvette Cooper: The intention is to adjust the housing revenue account (HRA) in year for housing authorities who keep rent rises to below 5 per cent. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects to publish a consultation paper shortly on the mechanisms for adjustment.

Rent Restructuring

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library the summary of responses to his Department's three year review of rent restructuring. [50544]

Yvette Cooper: A copy has been made available in the Libraries of both Houses.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact of the introduction of greater differentials in rent for larger properties resulting from his Department's final housing revenue account subsidy determinations for 2006–07 on the income after housing costs of larger families. [50545]

Yvette Cooper: The introduction of greater differentials for five and six bedroom properties is intended to encourage landlords to provide more properties of this size, enabling more large households to move out of expensive, unsuitable and often overcrowded accommodation in the private rented sector.

No separate assessment was made as part of the annual housing revenue account subsidy determination exercise. Differentials were looked at as part of our wider policy assessment at the time of the three-year review of rent restructuring, when many respondents to the consultation welcomed the policy.

Rent Subsidy Rules

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what local authorities were granted a derogation from housing revenue account rent rebate subsidy limitation rules in 2005–06. [50546]

Yvette Cooper: There have been no applications for a derogation from rent rebate subsidy limitation in 2005–06.

Roadside Advertising

Ben Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his proposals to create a database of unauthorised roadside advertisement companies will include the sites on which they advertise. [50680]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will liaise with local planning authorities on the type of information to be contained in the database of companies prosecuted for illegally advertising or selling illegal advertising alongside motorways and trunk roads.

Shropshire (Unitary Authority)

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the merits of Shropshire becoming a unitary authority. [49061]

Mr. Woolas: A consultation meeting was held on 7 February with stakeholders in Shropshire. No conclusions have been drawn.

Squatters

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate the Government have made of the number of squatters in empty local authority housing. [48060]

Yvette Cooper: Information on the number of squatters in empty local authority housing is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Supermarkets (Planning Permission)

Keith Vaz: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what account is taken of competition issues when planning permission is considered for new supermarket stores. [49672]

Yvette Cooper: Planning policy statement 6: planning for town centres (PPS6) sets out the Government's planning policy for town centres and main town centre uses, which include retail. Statements of the Government's planning policy should be taken into account by those responsible for the preparation of both regional and local planning policy documents. Planning policy statements are also considerations which may be material to decisions on individual planning applications.

The Government's key objective for town centres is to promote their vitality and viability and PPS6 sets out other Government objectives which need to be taken into account in the context of this key objective. One of these is directed at supporting an efficient, competitive and innovative retail sector. In planning for additional development local planning authorities are also advised to provide for consumer choice by ensuring that provision is made for a range of sites for shopping and other main town centres uses to meet the needs of the whole community.

But PPS6 makes it clear that it is not the role of the planning system to restrict competition, preserve existing commercial interests or to prevent innovation. Each application for planning permission must be determined on its merits having regard to the policies in the relevant development plan and to any other material considerations. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Office for Fair Trading (OFT) have overall responsibility for competition issues.

Swindon Borough Council

Mr. Wills: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total cost of officials from his Department engaged full-time in supporting Swindon borough council has been since 2003. [46887]

Mr. Woolas: No official from the ODPM has been engaged full-time in supporting Swindon borough council.

A lead official was appointed in 2002 to monitor Swindon borough council's improvement. That official is paid at rates within the salary range for a senior civil servant at pay band 1, ie minimum rate £54,788 to maximum rate £76,156. During the period concerned, between two and four days each week have on average been spent on work related to Swindon.

In addition £2 million has been provided, by ODPM and Department of Health, to support Swindon's improvement.

Telecommunication Transmitters

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he proposes to alter the scope and powers of local planning authorities in relation to telecommunication transmitters. [50419]

Yvette Cooper: On 4 April 2005 I announced that the Government would be commissioning research into the future direction of electronic communications technology, and the need for mast developments. This research will inform the ongoing review of the planning arrangements for such developments.

Thames Gateway

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the public sector bodies involved in the Thames Gateway development. [49715]

Yvette Cooper: The key partners are identified in "Creating Sustainable Communities: Delivering the Thames Gateway" (page 52), which sets out the Government's vision for and commitment to the Gateway. My right hon. Friend the Minister of Communities and Local Government announced last November that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will additionally be publishing a strategic framework to help shape and guide investments, decisions and actions by Government and our delivery partners across the Thames Gateway.

Traveller Sites

Colin Burgon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the traveller sites provided by each of the five local authorities in West Yorkshire; and how many pitches *(a)* there are and *(b)* are currently occupied on each site. [52025]

Yvette Cooper: As at the date of the last bi-annual Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Count, undertaken on 19 July 2005, the Gypsy and Traveller sites provided by local authorities in West Yorkshire were:

Mary Street Gypsy Site, comprising 28 pitches, all occupied, and Esholt Gypsy Site, comprising 19 pitches, 16 of which were occupied, provided by City of Bradford metropolitan district council.

Cottingley Springs Site, comprising 41 pitches, all occupied, provided by Leeds city council.

Heath Travellers Site, comprising 39 pitches, 38 of which were occupied, provided by City of Wakefield metropolitan district council.

No sites are provided by Calderdale metropolitan borough council or Kirklees metropolitan council.

Valuation Office Agency

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the Valuation Office Agency made of the average size of (i) business

premises which paid business rates and (ii) a Band D property in the last year for which estimates are available. [51061]

Mr. Woolas: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister produces estimates of commercial and industrial floorspace from data received from the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). Using these data, the average size of business premises in England and Wales at 1 April 2004 (the latest available data) was 433 m^2. The figure for England was 434 m^2 and for Wales it was 429 m^2.

These figures are based on bulk class premises, namely retail premises, offices, factories and warehouses. These types of commercial and industrial property have floorspace information available from the VOA.

The Valuation Office Agency has not separately produced any average size estimates for business premises.

Neither ODPM nor the Valuation Office Agency has produced any average size estimates for Band D properties.

Workplace Bullying/Racism

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice his Department has given to local authorities on reducing *(a)* bullying and *(b)* racism in the workplace. [49817]

Jim Fitzpatrick: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not give advice to local authorities on tackling bullying and racism. This line of advice would be given to local authorities by local government organisations such as the Local Government Association, the Employers' Organisation and the Improvement and Development Agency, or by national organisations such as the Commission for Racial Equality.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adoption

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* same sex couples and *(b)* civil partners applied to adopt children between 30 December 2005 and the most recent date for which figures are available. [48756]

Ms Harman: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested is as follows:

(a) 10 adoption applications have been received from same sex couples since the 30 December 2005.

(b) Statistics for civil partners are not being collected.

Bullying

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what role school welfare officers play in preventing bullying and truancy in and from schools in Lancashire; and if she will make a statement. [51404]

Jacqui Smith: Education welfare officers help to identify the causes of poor attendance, such as bullying where that is a factor, and work with both schools and families to resolve attendance issues, arranging home visits where necessary.

In addition education welfare officers in Lancashire participate in regular truancy sweeps organised by the local authority and police.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research her Department has *(a)* evaluated and *(b)* commissioned in the last three years on bullying in schools. [51724]

Jacqui Smith: The Department has not, in the last three years, evaluated any research on bullying in schools.

The Department commissioned an external evaluation of our guidance to schools on tackling bullying, "Don't Suffer in Silence", by researchers at Goldsmith's College, University of London. The results, though based on a fairly low response rate from schools, show that the schools found that the pack met their expectations and helped in drawing up their anti-bullying policies.

This evaluation included research into the perceived success of the anti bullying strategies and interventions recommended in the guidance. Schools generally reported a high level of satisfaction with the interventions they had used.

The Department commissioned the Thomas Coram Research Unit at the Institute of Education, University of London, to review the research evidence relating to homophobia in schools and to talk to groups with an interest in this area. The Department published their work in its Research Report series in late 2004, number 594, entitled "Homophobia, Sexual Orientation and Schools: A Review and Implications for Action".

Chesterton Community High School

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which of the features of trust school status she considers would contribute to the raising of standards at Chesterton community high school in Newcastle-under-Lyme. [51551]

Jacqui Smith: The opportunity to form partnerships with external organisations will strengthen trust schools' governing bodies, and help to invigorate school leadership by providing an external source of direction, continuity and focus for the school. Trust governors will help their schools to develop a distinctive ethos and approach to the curriculum and the organisation of the school, with a central focus on raising standards and creating new opportunities for children.

A trust could therefore contribute to the raising of standards at a school like Chesterton community high school by involving external partners in the leadership of the school in a sustainable way. However, it would be for the governing body of Chesterton community high school to determine whether to make a link to a trust. A trust could also encourage collaboration if it supported a number of schools in the area.

Child Care

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many child care places have been created in Doncaster North in each year since 1997. [50590]

Beverley Hughes: We do not have information relating specifically to the number of child care places in the Doncaster North constituency. Nor do we have information broken down to local authority level for the number of child care places for 1997 and 1998.

The following table show the number of new child care places created in the Doncaster local authority area since 1999.

	Gross new child care places	*Net increase in child care places (after closures)*
1999/2000	332	101
2000/01	1,006	588
2001/02	597	299
2002/03	1,238	770
2003/04	1,437	945
2004/05	1,245	852

Figures quoted for years 1999/2000 to 2001/02 are based on local authorities' quarterly child care returns to DfES. From March 2003 onwards the figures are drawn from Ofsted's registration data.

Child Protection

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many individuals convicted or cautioned for a sexual offence against children listed under schedule 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 are not included on the Protection of Children Act 1978 List. [46657]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* Since the establishment of the Protection of Children Act List all those individuals referred to the Secretary of State and who meet the criteria set out in legislation have been included in the Protection of Children Act List. That includes those people who have been referred with a caution or conviction for a sexual offence against children under schedule 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

The Protection of Children Act 1999 List is primarily a referral system for employers who have dismissed an individual for misconduct that harmed a child or placed a child at risk of harm. For all regulated/child care positions it is mandatory to check whether individuals are on the Protection of Children Act List prior to appointment (subject to exceptions where, for example, another specified organisation has carried out a check within the last 12 months). That check is carried out through a CRB check. The Protection of Children Act List provides an additional safeguard within the CRB system for a limited range of circumstances set out in legislation, for example where somebody employed in a regulated child care position has been dismissed because they harmed a child.

Civil Servant Relocations

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many employees of *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the Office for Standards in Education have been redeployed from London and the South East since July 2004; and how many she expects to be redeployed in this way in the next two financial years. [50968]

Maria Eagle: My Department and sponsored organisations are implementing the Lyons Review recommendations to relocate around 800 posts from the Department and its non-departmental public bodies out of London and the South East by 2010.

During the financial year 2004–05, 58 posts in DfES were relocated from London to our existing offices in Runcorn, Sheffield and Darlington. So far in 2005–06, 21 posts have been relocated and up to a further nine posts will have relocated by the end of period. There has been no redeployment of staff from London to fill these posts. There are no plans to redeploy staff out of London in the next two financial years.

At 1 July 2004, Ofsted has just over 750 office-based posted in London and the South East. Ofsted estimate that by June 2006 there will be 360 office-based posts in London, as a result of their restructuring programme to meet the Government's efficiency target. To date, 30 staff have been redeployed to other Ofsted offices outside London and the South East and 49 staff have been redeployed to posts elsewhere in the civil service. Ofsted has no plans for further redeployment in the next two financial years.

Computer-based Marking

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she has taken to extend computer-based marking. [51311]

Jacqui Smith: The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, which regulates qualifications in England, has responsibility for ensuring that ICT is used appropriately and efficiently for examinations and tests. Some awarding bodies are piloting use of ICT to support marking of a range of different qualifications. Already, over 600,000 on-screen tests have been taken successfully by people seeking to gain key skills qualifications and skills for life certificates.

Within the national curriculum test context, a new test in ICT at key stage 3, to be taken on-screen and marked by computer, is being developed, and subject to a successful pilot, will be introduced in 2008.

Consultants

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much her Department has spent on outside consultants in each of the last five financial years. [51727]

Bill Rammell: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Angus (Mr. Weir) on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 340W.

Consultation (Youth Issues)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the outcome of the consultations on youth matters was; what steps she plans to take as a result of those consultations; and if she will make a statement. [51210]

Maria Eagle: There was a record response to the consultation on the Youth Matters Green Paper, which attracted over 19,000 completed questionnaires from young people and 1,000 submissions from organisations, professionals and parents. They generally welcomed the proposals, with strong support for more opportunities for young people and empowering them to make decisions and influence provision. We will shortly publish the Government response and plans to implement the proposals.

Corporate Services

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures she has taken to improve the efficiency of corporate services functions within further education colleges; and what savings have been made as a consequence. [52399]

Bill Rammell: As part of the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) agenda for change business excellence strand, the LSC will develop and share with colleges benchmarking data showing the relative efficiency of colleges' corporate services. Providing this information will demonstrate to colleges the potential for them to reduce spending on these services to current sector averages, increasing their own ability to deliver to the front line.

We will be measuring efficiency gains from a range of specific initiatives which contribute to our Gershon efficiency target, including corporate services efficiencies in colleges. These are set out in our efficiency technical note. In most cases, the gains are recyclable at the frontline into other activities rather than being clawed back by the Department. The Department is reporting progress towards our overall efficiency target through existing departmental reporting processes. We reported progress towards our target in the Department's autumn performance report and will report further progress in the departmental annual report which we expect to publish in April.

Departmental Entertainment

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent on entertainment by her Department in 2004–05; and how much of that sum is accounted for by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [50888]

Maria Eagle: All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with Departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on the principles set out in Government Accounting. The Department for Education and Skills spent a total of £35,000 on entertainment in 2004–05. It is not possible to split these figures into the elements requested. The figures exclude costs incurred as part of official events or formal meetings held to further Departmental business.

Early Years Education

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many three and four-year-olds in Doncaster North constituency have received *(a)* 12.5 hours a week, *(b)* 15 hours a week and *(c)* 20 hours a week of free early-years education in each year since 1997. [50591]

Beverley Hughes: Information is not collected in the form requested.

All four-year-olds have been entitled to a free early education place since 1998 and from April 2004 this entitlement was extended to all three-year-olds. The free entitlement consists of a minimum of five two and a half hour sessions per week for 33 weeks of the year for six terms before statutory school age, which is the term following their fifth birthday. This will increase to 38 weeks from 1 April 2006 and to 15 hours a week by 2010. By that time, parents who wish to do so will also be able to access the free entitlement flexibly across a minimum of three days.

Some local authorities may additionally offer subsidised child care places but this information is not collected centrally.

Figures for January 2005 show that all four-year-old children receive some form of free entitlement. The figure for three-years-olds is 96 per cent. This covers all maintained, private, voluntary and independent providers and represents 535,100 three-year-olds and 568,300 four-year-olds.

In January 2005 in Doncaster North constituency there were 800 free nursery places taken up by three-year-old children. The equivalent figure for four-year-olds was 940.

The latest figures on early education places for three and four-year-olds in England were published in Statistical First Release 43/2005 "Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2005 (final)" in September, which is available on my Department's website at:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000604/index.shtml

Erasmus Lifelong Learning Programme

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what level of support for the Erasmus Lifelong Learning programme has been agreed for the UK for each of the years from 2007 to 2013. [51194]

Bill Rammell: The EU Education Council, which my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, chaired on 15 November 2005, reached a partial political agreement on the new lifelong learning programme for 2007–13, which includes Erasmus. This agreement covered all aspects of the programme except the budget, which was subject to agreement on the overall EU budget.

While the December European Council reached agreement on the overall EC budget for the new financial perspective period 2007–13, the level of support for the Erasmus programme will depend on the outcome of negotiations with the European Parliament on both the overall size of the budget and the share of

the relevant heading to be spent on the lifelong learning programme, and within that for Erasmus. Once this has been agreed, later this year, the programme will then return to the Education Council for the outstanding issues to be negotiated and for a political agreement to be sought. Only then will it be possible to determine the national allocations for each programme.

Foster Care Allowances

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of whether the proposed level of minimum foster care allowances are adequate; and what representations she has received from *(a)* representative, *(b)* expert and *(c)* voluntary groups in the field of fostering on the level of these allowances. [51838]

Maria Eagle: The national minimum allowance proposed in our consultation is based on thorough consideration of the research available into the cost of caring for a child and on the additional costs associated specifically with fostering children. The steering group that contributed to the development of the proposals included key stakeholders such as the Fostering Network and the British Association of Adoption and Fostering, local authority representatives, members of voluntary organisations, fostering services and others. Focus groups of foster carers, children with experience of foster care and fostering services also informed the consultation paper. It is too early to report on representations received in response to the consultation, which was launched on 31 January and will run for three months. We will produce a report on the consultation response in early summer, before announcing the level of the national minimum allowance in July.

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what total sum has been received by her Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48471]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Education and Skills has not charged for the provision of any information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The Freedom of Information Act allows for public authorities to determine when the cost of processing a request will exceed the appropriate limit, which for central Government is set at £600 and for the wider public sector £450. In this instance the public authority may decide to either approach the applicant to help them refine their request and where possible to bring it under the appropriate limit. Alternatively, public authorities may charge the applicant the cost of processing the request. There is, however, no obligation for Departments to provide information if the cost of processing the request exceeds the appropriate limit.

Public authorities may also charge for disbursements when handling requests where it is deemed appropriate. Further information on the FOI fees regime can be found on the DCA website at http://www.foi.gov.uk/feesguide.htm

Further Education

Mr. Rob Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding was made available to further education colleges in *(a)* 2004–05, *(b)* 2003–04 and *(c)* 2002–03. [50801]

Bill Rammell: Information about the total Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) post-16 programme expenditure for all further education (FE) providers including colleges is available from the LSC's published accounts as follows:

	£ billion
2002–03	4,399
2003–04	4,788
2004–05	5,080

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what arrangements are required for the vetting of staff in further education colleges, with particular reference to those in contact with pupils aged under 16. [46225]

Maria Eagle: We have made it clear in guidance that CRB checks are strongly recommended as part of the appointment process on anybody who will be working in a school or further education institution.

Arrangements for the vetting of staff working in further education colleges are set out in the Department's guidance "Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children in the Education Service" (issued May 2002) which states that

> "Teachers, other staff and volunteers whose job regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children under 18 years of age should obtain an Enhanced Disclosure'.

The guidance, 'Criminal Records Bureau: Managing the Demand for Disclosures' (issued December 2002), provides further advice about seeking disclosures.

"Safeguarding children in education" (September 2004) emphasises the wider responsibilities on employers including adopting recruitment practices which involve scrutinising applicants, verifying any qualifications, obtaining references, checking previous job history as well as the mandatory check of List 99 and CRB check where appropriate.

Recent changes announced by the Secretary of State mean that existing arrangements detailed in the above guidance will be strengthened through the introduction of new regulations which will make an on appointment CRB check compulsory for all new appointments of teachers and teaching support staff in a further education institution who have not worked in a further education institution or school in the last three months.

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures she has undertaken to improve procurement in the further education sector; and what assessment she has made of the effect of these measures on costs. [52041]

Bill Rammell: The Learning and Skills Council has recently established a procurement development team to drive forward improved procurement in the FE sector, working closely with the Centre for Procurement Performance at the Department for Education and Skills. Significant progress has been made over recent months including:

the establishment of a sector network to trial new approaches and disseminate good practice;

the development of an FE good practice guide to procurement across the sector;

raising awareness of the use of procurement cards;

developing a programme to improve procurement skills in the sector; and

conducting a pilot of an e-procurement system.

We will be measuring efficiency gains from a range of specific initiatives which contribute to our Gershon efficiency target, including improved procurement in the FE sector. These are set out in our Efficiency Technical Note. In most cases, the gains are recyclable at the frontline into other activities rather than being clawed back by the Department. The Department is reporting progress towards our overall efficiency target through existing departmental reporting processes. We reported progress towards our target in the Department's autumn performance report and will report further progress in the departmental annual report which we expect to publish in April.

Higher Education

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many applications to higher education institutions there were for the *(a)* 2006/07, *(b)* 2005/06 and *(c)* 2004/05 academic year; and if she will make a statement. [44183]

Bill Rammell: Latest figures published by Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) show that, between 2004/05 and 2005/06, total applicants from England to full-time undergraduate courses rose from 339,967 to 368,801, an increase of 8.5 per cent.

Latest figures for 2006/07, covering students who applied by mid-January, show that applicants from England are down by 4.5 per cent., from 284,359 to 271,663. Given the big increase in applications last year, it is not unexpected that this year's UCAS application figures reveal a fall in comparison. But applications this year are still up by 12,500 (or 4.8 per cent.) compared to the corresponding figure in 2004, and I am confident that we will continue to see a return to a long term upward trend as happened after tuition fees were introduced in 1998. Figures from UCAS also show that there has been no reduction in the proportion of students from lower socio-economic groups applying to university.

International Student Assessment Study

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of *(a)* the key outcomes from the most recent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Programme for International Student Assessment study and *(b)* the implications of the study for education policy in England; and if she will make a statement. [51471]

Jacqui Smith: Because of our low participation rates in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), it was the view of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), that the data for the United Kingdom from the 2003 study could not be reliably used. It would therefore be inappropriate to try to draw conclusions for education policy in England from the data.

The Government believe that international comparisons studies, such as PISA, offer unique and valuable insights into how the outcomes of our education system compare with those of other countries. That is why the Department for Education and Skills is putting its efforts into meeting the targets for school and pupil participation rates for the next PISA study which will take place later this year.

However, in assessing the outcomes of any such studies, we will keep in mind the conclusions of the Education and Skills Select Committee in its Fifth Report of Session 2004–05, published on 9 March 2005, that

> "the data supplied by international educational comparisons is both of interest and of use in the formulation of education policy. Nevertheless, individual studies always have their limitations and cannot alone form a sound basis on which to build the foundations of a publicly funded school system".

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her Department's participation was in the most recent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Programme for International Student Assessment study; and when that participation commenced. [51472]

Jacqui Smith: Ministers agreed to participate in the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) on 2 August 2000. Since 1997 the Department has been involved in the overall development of PISA through its membership of the international PISA Governing Board.

As sponsor of the PISA study in England the Department appointed the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as data collection contractor for PISA 2003, after a tendering exercise. ONS collected data from a sample of schools chosen by the independent PISA Consortium which leads the study internationally. ONS supplied the resulting data directly to the Consortium. The Department published a Statistical First Release on 7 December 2004, detailing the status of the England and UK data.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the response rate was for participation in the most recent Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Programme for International Student Assessment study; and which other OECD member countries achieved a similar response rate. [51476]

Jacqui Smith: The school and pupil response rates for the United Kingdom and other OECD countries for PISA 2003 are set out in the table as follows.

	Weighted school participation rate after replacement (Percentage)	
	Final sample—after school replacement	*Final sample—students within schools after school replacement*
OECD countries		
Australia	90.43	83.31
Austria	99.29	83.56
Belgium	95.63	92.47
Canada	84.38	83.90
Czech Republic	99.05	89.03
Denmark	98.32	89.88
Finland	100.00	92.84
France	89.24	88.11
Germany	98.82	92.18
Greece	95.77	95.43
Hungary	99.37	92.87
Iceland	99.90	85.37
Ireland	92.84	82.58
Italy	100.00	92.52
Japan	95.91	95.08
Korea	100.00	98.81
Luxembourg	99.93	96.22
Mexico	95.45	92.26
Netherlands	87.86	88.25
New Zealand	97.55	85.71
Norway	90.40	87.86
Poland	98.09	81.95
Portugal	99.31	87.92
Slovak Republic	99.08	91.90
Spain	100.00	90.61
Sweden	99.08	92.61
Switzerland	98.53	94.70
Turkey	100.00	96.87
United Kingdom	77.37	77.92
United States	68.12	82.73

IT Equipment

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding her Department has allocated for IT equipment in schools in *(a)* West Lancashire and *(b)* England in each year between 1997 and 2005. [51117]

Phil Hope: The Department does not hold information on funding for ICT at constituency level. However, West Lancashire is in Lancashire LA and allocations for this authority, since 1998, are detailed in 'Funding for ICT in Schools in England" which is available in the House Library. The document also includes total funding allocations for schools in England in each year.

Learning Environments

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of changes in the productivity of teaching staff as a consequence of use of *(a)* virtual learning environments and *(b)* managed learning environments. [51312]

Jacqui Smith: The Department for Education and Skills has asked the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta) to undertake a study to assess the impact of both virtual learning environments and managed learning environments on the productive time of the front line workforce. This study will report in April 2006.

Level 2 Qualifications

Kelvin Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1011W, on Level 2 Qualifications, how many EU member states have taken up the Level 2 entitlement since it was introduced. [51787]

Phil Hope: The latest full year volumes available are for academic year 2004/05 in which the Level 2 Entitlement (L2E) pilot was operating in the North East and South East regions only. The number of learners from national EU member states benefiting from free tuition for a first full Level 2 qualification in the L2E pilot regions in 2004/05 was less than ten from a cohort of 2,795 learners.

Lisbon Objectives

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to achieve the Lisbon objectives for education; and if she will make a statement. [51195]

Bill Rammell: The UK Government outlined its plans to achieve the Lisbon objectives in its national reform plan published in October 2005. This described how our national education and skills policies are contributing to the Lisbon objectives, in particular, through raising productivity and thereby contributing to economic growth.

Local Area Agreements

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she expects to issue guidelines to local authorities on their commissioning role under local area agreements. [51207]

Jacqui Smith: Local area agreements are voluntary, three year agreements between central Government and local authorities and their partners. 66 phase two agreements, starting in April 2006, are currently being finalised on the basis of guidance issued in June 2005. This guidance is being reviewed, and will be revised as necessary in respect of phase three agreements to be negotiated in 2006–07.

Looked-after Children

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many looked after children were placed out of area by local authorities in the latest year for which the data are available; and what proportion of the total this represents. [51842]

Maria Eagle: I refer the hon. member to my answer of 18 July 2005, *Official Report*, column 1402W.

Physical Education

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what average number of hours per

week of physical education was undertaken in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Loughborough constituency area in 2004–05. [51126]

Jacqui Smith: The 2004–05 national school sport survey found that pupils in primary schools in the Burleigh school sport partnership in Loughborough spend an average of 95 minutes in a typical week on curriculum physical education (PE). The average time for pupils in secondary schools in the partnership is 111 minutes.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to ensure that facilities for physical education and sport at Southfield school, Kettering enable the school to make provision for all pupils to participate in two hours of high quality physical education and sport each week. [52431]

Jacqui Smith: It is the responsibility of the schools and local authorities to determine how they allocate capital funds to different projects, including enhancing school sports facilities, taking account of local needs and priorities.

Over the last three years, we have allocated over £191 million to Northamptonshire and schools in its area, which includes Southfield school, of which £101 million relates to a PFI contract and over £4 million to a Targeted Capital Fund (TCP) Scheme. In the next two years, 2006–07 and 2007–08, we are allocating over £65 million to the local authority, including £12 million for TCP schemes. Officials have been informed that Northamptonshire county council is considering how the facilities at Southfield school might be improved.

The Government are investing £750 million in the New Opportunities for PE and Sport Programme across the United Kingdom over the period 2003–04 to 2007–08. £581 million was allocated to England, of which £25 million was passed to the Space for Sport and the Arts Programme and £30 million set aside for football projects within schools to be distributed via the Football Foundation. Of the £581 million allocated to England, £556 million has been committed to date and over £191 million spent.

The Government's publication, Schools for the Future, Inspirational Design for PE and Sport Spaces, can be downloaded from www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications, using reference 2064–2005DOC-EN.

Postgraduate Courses

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department is taking to encourage children from families on low income to pursue postgraduate courses. [49614]

Bill Rammell: The Government are committed to encouraging people from all backgrounds to take up research careers, and this includes making the career choice a more attractive one and the career more secure. As part of this, we have provided funding for an increase of one-third in the minimum Research Council PhD stipend between 2003–04 and 2005–06.

The available evidence suggests that, once people qualify with a first degree qualification, their background does not significantly affect their decision to enter postgraduate study. The 2005 report "Young Participation in Higher Education", by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), estimates that the degree of inequality between young postgraduate participation rates is similar to that of young undergraduate students suggesting that the effects of background are negligible at this stage.

Our policies to widen participation at undergraduate level, including our reforms to student finance, and the Aimhigher programme which seeks to raise the attainment levels of young people and their aspirations to university, are therefore also likely to help to widen participation at postgraduate level.

Public Information

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent on the Department's public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [48961]

Bill Rammell: The following table lists spend on public relations and information services for the Department of Education and Skills, in each of the last five years.

	Public relations	*Public relations expenditure as a percentage of total DfES spend*	*Web services as part of ad campaign (£000)*	*Web services expenditure as a percentage of total DfES spend*	*Direct marketing phone lines (£000)*	*Direct marketing phone line expenditure as a percentage of total DfES spend*
2001–02	283	0.001	0	0	734	0.004
2002–03	259	0.001	0	0	200	0.001
2003–04	411	0.002	0	0	426	0.002
2004–05	630	0.002	236	0.001	412	0.001
2005–06[1]	338	0.001	267	0.001	143	0.000

[1] Planned.

School Bus Passes

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what rules apply to the provision of school bus passes to *(a)* junior and *(b)* high school children. [51402]

Jacqui Smith: There are no specific rules relating to the provision of bus passes.

Under current legislation local education authorities (LEAs) have a legal duty to make transport arrangements, which might include bus passes, where they consider it 'necessary' to secure a pupil's attendance at school. The law stipulates that it must always be considered 'necessary' where a child of compulsory school age attends their nearest suitable

school, and this is beyond 'statutory walking distance' (two miles for those under the age of eight and three miles for those aged eight and over).

School Playing Fields

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many school playing fields in Loughborough constituency have been sold since May 1997. [51125]

Jacqui Smith: We have not approved any application involving the sale of a school playing field in Loughborough constituency since May 1997.

School Psychologists

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average waiting time is for a child in Lancashire to see a school psychologist. [51403]

Maria Eagle: This information is not collected centrally.

School Sport Facilities

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding her Department has made available for improvements to school sports facilities in *(a)* Tamworth and *(b)* England in each year between 1997 and 2005. [51415]

Jacqui Smith: Significant funding is being provided specifically to enhance PE and school sport facilities between 2001 and 2009. In total, £686 million of lottery funding is providing a step change in school sport facilities through the space for sport and arts and big lottery's new opportunities for PE and sport programmes.

Local authorities and schools may supplement this with the formula capital funding that we provide to them. However, it is the responsibility of the schools and local authorities to determine how they allocate these funds to different projects, including enhancing school sports facilities, taking account of local needs and priorities. Records are not held centrally that show how much of this funding is spent on school sports facilities, neither am I able to provide a breakdown for Tamworth.

Schoolchildren (Employment)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what estimate she has made of the number of children who work before school; what types of employment they are engaged in; and how many children are estimated to be employed in each type; [50267]

(2) if she will make a statement on her Department's assessment of the impact on children of carrying out paid work before the start of the school day. [50273]

Maria Eagle: The information requested is not collected centrally. Local authority bylaws establish in general what work children may undertake. Such bylaws may permit children to work for one hour before school, although not before 7 am. This limits the kind of work that children may legally carry out in the mornings before school. Within these limits, participation in suitable work is a matter for individual choice, with advice where necessary from parents, carers, and other relevant adults. Such work can offer young people an opportunity to develop their self-confidence and life skills, such as personal organisation and dealing with people.

Sector Skills Councils

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will rank the licensed Sector Skills Councils by proportion of their funding derived from the Sector Skills Development Agency in the last year for which figures are available; and what proportion of the balance of funding for each council was derived from *(a)* other public sources and *(b)* the private sector. [51279]

Phil Hope: The list shows the Sector Skills Councils ranked by proportion of their funding derived from the Sector Skills Development Agency. They are ranked highest to lowest by proportion of income (top to bottom of the list). Only the first 18 are ranked. The information is based on data collated in July 2005. Data was not available for the new/unlicensed SSCs at that point and ConstructionSkills is an outlier.

Information on the proportion of balance funding derived from *(a)* the public sector and *(b)* the private sector is not given as the release of this information would prejudice commercial interests.

1. Skillsmart
2. AssetSkills
3. Financial Services
4. Summitskills
5. Improve
6. Goskills
7. Automotive
8. Justice
9. Eskills
10. People1st
11. Cogent
12. Skillsactive
13. Logistics
14. Skillsfast
15. Lantra
16. Energy and Utility
17. SEMTA
18. Skills for Health

Skillset

Lifelong Learning

Care and Development

ConstructionSkills

Creative and Cultural

Proskills

Government Skills

Services Education

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 686W, on services education, how many admission forums have service representatives sitting on them. [51383]

Jacqui Smith: The Department does not collect information about the membership of admission forums. The Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS), an agency of the Ministry of Defence that supports service families, believe that the CEAS, along with some Army and RAF welfare personnel, are represented on 15 admission forums.

Setting

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance her Department has issued regarding setting children by ability in schools. [51788]

Jacqui Smith: We have published case studies, research evidence and, through our National Strategies and Gifted and Talented programmes, issued guidance to schools to help support their own professional judgement when considering a range of ability grouping practices to better meet the learning needs of pupils and ensure their progression.

Skills Training (Universities)

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the provision of key skills training in universities. [51728]

Bill Rammell: Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are autonomous organisations and are therefore responsible for assuring the quality and standards of their own provision. However, there are a number of national measures in place to assist institutions in maintaining and continually improving standards, and to safeguard the public interest in sound quality and standards in higher education. These measures include the Quality Assurance Agency for higher education (QAA) and the Higher Education Academy, a sector owned body, set up to enhance teaching and learning in universities and colleges.

Special Needs

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the adequacy of special needs education funding in Hertfordshire; and if she will make a statement. [51153]

Jacqui Smith: Local authorities have a duty to make appropriate provision for all pupils in their area, including those with special educational needs (SEN), through their locally agreed funding formula. In common with other authorities, Hertfordshire has benefited from the significant increases in funding that this Government have committed to education since 1997 and is set to receive an increase of 13.2 per cent. per pupil in its dedicated schools grant over the next two years.

Teacher Training

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cohort size of each school-centred initial teacher training scheme is; and what the percentage change in the cohort size of each scheme is for the *(a)* 2006–07 and *(b)* 2007–08 allocation round. [51475]

Jacqui Smith: The cohort size of each school-centred initial teacher training scheme and the percentage change in cohort size for the 2006–07 and 2007–08 allocation round is provided in the following table.

Provider name	*2005/06 allocation*	*Change*	*Percentage change*	*2006/07 allocation*	*Change*	*Percentage change*	*2007/08 allocation*
Billericay Educational Consortium	25	-1	-4.0	24	-1	-4.2	23
Birmingham Primary Training Partnership	25	-1	-4.0	24	-1	-4.2	23
Borough of Poole SCITT	25	0	0.0	25	0	0.0	25
Bournemouth and East Dorset SCITT	25	-2	-8.0	23	-1	-4.3	22
Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset East SCITT	24	0	0.0	24	0	0.0	24
Bromley Schools Collegiate	30	0	0.0	30	0	0.0	30
Chiltern Training Group	58	0	0.0	58	0	0.0	58
Colchester SCITT	42	0	0.0	42	0	0.0	42
Cornwall Early Years SCITT	25	-2	-8.0	23	-1	-4.3	22
Cornwall SCITT	58	0	0.0	58	-2	-3.4	56
CREDIT	25	0	0.0	25	0	0.0	25
Cumbria Primary Teacher Training Centre	26	-1	-3.8	25	-1	-4.0	24
Devon Primary SCITT Group	30	0	0.0	30	0	0.0	30
Devon Secondary Teacher Training Group	27	0	0.0	27	-2	-7.4	25
Durham Secondary Applied SCITT	30	2	6.7	32	0	0.0	32
Essex Primary Schools Training Group	25	0	0.0	25	0	0.0	25
Forest Independent Primary Collegiate	22	-1	-4.5	21	0	0.0	21
Gateshead 3–7	25	0	0.0	25	0	0.0	25
Gloucestershire SCITT Consortium	35	2	5.7	37	0	0.0	37
Hastings and Rother SCITT	21	0	0.0	21	0	0.0	21
High Force Education	30	-1	-3.3	29	-1	-3.4	28
Jewish Primary Schools Consortium	20	-4	-20.0	16	0	0.0	16
Kent and Medway Training	43	0	0.0	43	0	0.0	43
Langdale Early Years SCITT	30	-5	-16.7	25	0	0.0	25
Leeds SCITT	26	2	7.7	28	0	0.0	28
Leicester and Leicestershire SCITT	25	0	0.0	25	0	0.0	25
London Arts Consortium	13	0	0.0	13	0	0.0	13
London Diocesan Board of Schools	25	-2	-8.0	23	-1	-4.3	22

Provider name	2005/06 allocation	Change	Percentage change	2006/07 allocation	Change	Percentage change	2007/08 allocation
Marches Consortium SCITT	123	-2	-1.6	121	-2	-1.7	119
Maryvale Institute	20	-3	-15.0	17	0	0.0	17
Mid Essex SCITT Consortium	28	-1	-3.6	27	0	0.0	27
Middlesbrough SCITT	19	0	0.0	19	0	0.0	19
North Bedfordshire Consortium	24	0	0.0	24	0	0.0	24
North East Essex Coastal Confederation	24	0	0.0	24	0	0.0	24
Northampton Teacher Training Partnership	23	-6	-26.1	17	0	0.0	17
Northumbria DT Partnership	31	-3	-9.7	28	0	0.0	28
Nottingham City Primary SCITT	25	-2	-8.0	23	-1	-4.3	22
Outstanding Primary Schools SCITT	71	11	15.5	82	0	0.0	82
Portsmouth Primary SCITT	25	0	0.0	25	0	0.0	25
Primary Catholic Partnership	26	-1	-3.8	25	-1	-4.0	24
SCITTELS	40	-1	-2.5	39	-1	-2.6	38
Shire Foundation	25	-2	-8.0	23	-1	-4.3	22
Solihull SCITT Consortium	27	0	0.0	27	0	0.0	27
Somerset SCITT Consortium	22	0	0.0	22	0	0.0	22
South Essex, Southend and Thurrock	0	0	0.0	30	0	0.0	30
South London Teacher Training SCITT	27	0	0.0	27	0	0.0	27
South West Teacher Training	40	0	0.0	40	-2	-5.0	38
Suffolk and Norfolk Secondary SCITT	52	-1	-1.9	51	0	0.0	51
Suffolk and Norfolk Primary SCITT	57	-2	-3.5	55	-2	-3.6	53
Swindon SCITT	30	0	0.0	30	0	0.0	30
Tendring Hundred Primary SCITT	0	0	0.0	20	0	0.0	20
Thames Primary Consortium	29	-1	-3.4	28	-1	-3.6	27
The Dorset Teacher Training Partnership	24	-1	-4.2	23	-1	-4.3	22
The Grand Union Training Partnership	25	-1	-4.0	24	0	0.0	24
The Learning institute	32	0	0.0	32	0	0.0	32
The North East Partnership	25	-3	-12.0	22	-3	-13.6	19
The Pilgrim Partnership	40	-1	-2.5	39	-2	-5.1	37
The Titan Partnership Secondary SCITT	26	-1	-3.8	25	0	0.0	25
Wandsworth Schools Consortium	38	-1	-2.6	37	-2	-5.4	35
West Mercia Consortium	30	-6	-20.0	24	-4	-16.7	20

Veterinary Students

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will include veterinary students in the exemption from tuition fees. [51439]

Bill Rammell: The Education (Student Support) Regulations 2006, which come into effect from September this year, do not exempt any group of students from the payment of tuition fees.

From September, no eligible, full-time students will have to pay tuition fees before they start their course or while they are studying as they will be able to take out a fee loan to cover the full cost of their fees.

Some students, exceptionally, have their tuition fees paid in full or part for specific courses leading to public sector employment, including medical courses and some teacher training courses. These schemes are funded by the relevant Government Departments.

Youth Support Services

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what role she expects for *(a)* the voluntary and *(b)* private sectors in the delivery of youth support services following commissioning under local area agreements. [51193]

Maria Eagle: We recognise the important role of the voluntary sector in developing and delivering services to young people, particularly those experiencing disadvantage. We are also keen to draw in the contribution of the private sector in planning and delivering a variety of opportunities for young people. Local area agreements, involving local authorities and a wide range of local partners, are an important part of these processes. Government offices, who negotiate agreements on behalf of central Government, need to be satisfied that all appropriate partners have been brought into the development, negotiation and delivery of each agreement.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture Budget

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of the agricultural budget from the EU for the UK reached UK farmers in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [50685]

Jim Knight: The major category of budgetary expenditure, under pillar I of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), paid to producers is direct payments. Direct payments are paid directly to producers whose entitlement (prior to decoupling) was typically based on area of cropland or numbers of livestock.

According to the EU Commission's FEOGA—Garantie: Depenses documents total CAP expenditure in the UK was £4.0 billion in the 2004 budget year and £4.2 billion in 2005. Using the definition of 'direct payments' in the Commission's provisional draft budget for 2006, the share going on direct payments to producers was estimated to be approximately 82 per cent. in both 2004 and 2005.

In addition producers gain from expenditure on market price support (largely export refunds and intervention purchasing and storage costs). Expenditure on market price support measures is paid to intervention agencies or exporters, however, producers benefit from the higher market prices generated by these market interventions.

Producers also receive expenditure on CAP pillar II measures (agri-environment schemes and rural development).

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of the total agricultural budget of the EU reached farmers in the EU in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [50686]

Jim Knight: The major category of budgetary expenditure, under Pillar 1 of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), paid to producers is direct payments. Direct payments are paid directly to producers whose entitlement (prior to decoupling) was typically based on area of cropland or numbers of livestock.

According to the EU Commission's Provisional Draft Budget for 2006, total expenditure under the CAP was €43.3 billion in the 2004 budget year and €48.8 billion in 2005. Using the definition of 'direct payments' in the same source the share going on direct payments to producers was estimated to be 69 per cent. in 2004 and 68 per cent. in 2005.

In addition producers gain from expenditure on market price support (largely export refunds and intervention purchasing and storage costs). Expenditure on market price support measures is paid to intervention agencies or exporters, however, producers benefit from the higher market prices generated by these market interventions.

Producers also receive expenditure on CAP Pillar II measures (agri-environment schemes and rural development).

Animal Welfare Bill

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 298W, on the Animal Welfare Bill, if she will list the dates of each meeting held; who attended; and what matters were discussed. [51646]

Mr. Bradshaw: Since 2001 the Department has held numerous meetings on the Animal Welfare Bill with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the British Veterinary Association. Representatives of the Council of Docked Breeds have attended meetings relating to the docking of dogs' tails. It would not be practical to list the dates, attendees and matters discussed.

Avian Influenza

Robert Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what precautions she recommends should be taken by owners of flocks of fewer than 50 birds to minimise risks associated with the spread of avian influenza; [52139]

(2) what mechanisms she is using to inform owners of avian flocks under 50 birds of their responsibilities in the event of an outbreak of avian influenza in the UK; and what advice she has provided to them. [52140]

Mr. Bradshaw: Owners of all poultry flocks should follow the guidance on strengthening biosecurity measures set out in the leaflets, posters and advertisements that Defra has issued very widely.

We also recommend that owners of less than 50 birds should register their flocks under the GB Poultry Register. In the event of an outbreak, this will help us to communicate with them more effectively, to alert them and provide them with necessary guidance.

Bass Fishing

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect on charter boats in the South West of her proposal to increase the minimum length of bass that can be landed. [52333]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra's Consultation on measures to increase the number and size of bass closed on 8 February 2006. The partial Regulatory Impact Assessment issued as part of the Consultation set out our assessment of the costs and benefits of the proposed measures and sought comments on this assessment.

There have been a large number of responses from stakeholders to the consultation, including from charter boat interests. Once an analysis of responses and the information provided has been completed, I will make an announcement on next steps.

Blueberries

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what was the total cost of imports of blueberries in *(a)* 2002 and *(b)* 2005. [51271]

Jim Knight: Blueberry trade is not recorded separately, it is recorded under the category 'other berries' which also includes, amongst others, blackberries, mulberries and loganberries. In 2002 the total value of imports for this category was £2.0 million. For the period January to November 2005 the total value of imports for this category was £5.0 million.

Bovine TB

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the annual Government expenditure on *(a)* farmer compensation and *(b)* testing and veterinary costs for bovine tuberculosis has been since 1998. [46732]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information is as follows.

Government expenditure on tuberculosis compensation, testing and veterinary costs since 1998

£ million

	Activity	
	Testing and veterinary costs	*Farmer compensation*
1998–99	6.61	2.36
1999–2000	17.6	5.3
2000–01	13.3	6.6
2001–02	15.4	9.2

Government expenditure on tuberculosis compensation, testing and veterinary costs since 1998

£ million

	Activity	
	Testing and veterinary costs	*Farmer compensation*
2002–03	24.7	31.9
2003–04	33.2	34.4
2004–05	36.4	35.0

[1] Testing was suspended due to foot and mouth disease

Burma

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much the Government have spent on projects promoting wild bat surveys in Burma in the last five years. [52465]

Jim Knight: Defra's Darwin Initiative has funded one project on bat surveys in Burma in the last five years. This project was to provide a national database for bats from limestone karst areas, an action plan for cave bats, and management plans for key karst areas. The Darwin Initiative committed a total of £120,000 to this project, spread over three years to March 2005.

Climate Change

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 9 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1350W, on climate change, if she will list the other Government Departments with whom her Department has been working closely. [52637]

Mr. Morley: We have been working closely with other Government Departments through a number of ministerial groups, including: the Sustainable Energy Policy Network, the Ministerial Committee on Energy and Environment (EE) and the sub committee on Sustainable Development (EE (SD).

The Departments represented on these groups are:

No. 10,
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister,
Her Majesty's Treasury,
Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs,
Cabinet Office,
Home Office,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office,
Ministry of Defence,
Department for Trade and Industry,
Department for Transport,
Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs,
Department for Culture Media and Sport,
Department for Health,
Department for International Development,
Department for Constitutional Affairs,
Department for Education and Skills,
Department for Work and Pensions,
Scotland Office,
Northern Ireland Office,
Wales Office,
Office of Science and Technology.

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her assessment is of the most cost-effective way to mitigate the projected climate change set out in the document Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change, published by her Department on 30 January. [50224]

Mr. Morley: The most effective way to mitigate the effects of climate change described in Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change is by a response as broadly based as possible. This needs to involve adaptation as well as emissions reduction. Emissions reduction should address all anthropogenic greenhouse gases and all economic sectors, including reduction of emissions from deforestation, and there should be enhancement of the uptake and storage of carbon by forests and soils. It will be most cost effective if action to limit and reduce emissions extends to the greatest possible number of countries, consistent with the principle of common but differentiated responsibility set out in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol. The framework provided by the Convention and the Protocol will facilitate function of market mechanisms which promote cost effectiveness.

Commercial Developments (Energy Efficiency Standards)

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government are taking to ensure that new commercial developments are built to the highest energy efficiency standards; and if she will make a statement. [49537]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

On 13 September 2005, I announced improvements to the energy efficiency standards set out in Part L of the Building Regulations. The Part L changes come into effect in April 2006 and will make a major contribution to the UK's commitment to combat climate change delivering increased energy standards of up to 27 per cent. for new commercial buildings. In support of these changes, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is working with the construction industry, including building control bodies to facilitate improved compliance.

Departmental Entertainment

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much was spent on entertainment by her Department in 2004–05; and how much of that sum is accounted for by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [50887]

Jim Knight: The figures include expenditure on official entertainment made in accordance with the principles set out in "Government Accounting" and can range from tea and biscuits to catering for major events at which the Department—at official or Ministerial level—discusses a range of issues from high-level policy issues to highly technical, legal and scientific issues. All such expenditure is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety.

Defra recognises and endorses that the expenditure of taxpayers' money on official hospitality is a highly sensitive matter and the slightest hint of casualness can lead to disproportionate adverse public reaction.

Offering hospitality should not be regarded as the normal way of conducting Departmental business nor should it be offered merely because it is pleasant to provide it; indeed it is desirable to avoid the impression that business cannot be conducted without hospitality or entertainment.

On each occasion Defra officials are required to consider carefully what form and extent of hospitality should be offered and if it can be justified—by both the host and the authorising officer—bearing in mind the need for economy and the limited funds available.

Defra 2004–05	£
Food	132,818
Alcohol	4,848
Staff	65,453
Accommodation	60,674
Other	134,110
Total	397,903

Included in the 'Other' category are transactions which, owing to the limitations of information within our accounting ledger, cannot be classified into the categories asked for.

Departmental Staff

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many people were employed by the *(a)* Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science, *(b)* Office of Water Services, *(c)* Veterinary Laboratories Agency, *(d)* Central Science Laboratory, *(e)* Veterinary Medicines Directorate, *(f)* Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and *(g)* Pesticides Safety Directorate in each of the last 12 months for which information is available; and how many and what percentage of posts were vacant in each region in each month. [51162]

Jim Knight: The figures requested are published in Civil Service Statistics. Table A covers staff numbers (on a FTE and headcount basis) for each organisation. Civil service statistics are available in the Library and at the following address on the Cabinet Office Statistics website: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management/statistics/index.asp

Information on the number and percentage of vacant posts in each region and each month could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Engagements

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on what date a Minister from her Department last visited Shropshire. [50103]

Jim Knight: A Minister from this Department last visited Shropshire on 25 February 2005.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will visit the Minsterley Agricultural Show this year in the hon. Member for Shrewsbury's constituency. [51239]

Jim Knight: No decisions have been reached yet on ministerial attendance at agricultural shows in 2006.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will visit the Wroxeter Vineyard in Shrewsbury constituency to discuss the impact of Government regulations on the development of English vineyards. [51240]

Jim Knight: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has no immediate plans to visit an English vineyard having visited one just last month. However, my officials will be engaging with industry representatives in the coming months to discuss the impact of the EU wine regime on the UK in the context of European Commission thinking to reform the regime.

Farm Incomes

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average annual income of *(a)* dairy, *(b)* beef, *(c)* arable, *(d)* mixed and *(e)* sheep farmers in (i) England and (ii) Lancashire was in each of the last three years. [50975]

Jim Knight: Data on farm incomes according to the classification in the question are not available. The average net farm income for similar farm types in England and Lancashire over the last three years are shown in the table. Data for some farm types are missing due to insufficient farms in the sample.

Average net farm income by farm type (£/farm)

	England			*Lancashire*		
March/February	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Dairy	16,400	23,600	26,400	15,102	16,173	16,598
Grazing livestock (less favoured area)	17,700	15,000	13,400	16,627	13,204	10,970
Grazing livestock (lowland)	6,400	7,100	5,400	—	—	—
Cereals	13,200	36,400	15,600	—	—	—
General cropping	15,600	56,800	32,200	—	—	—
Mixed	11,400	24,400	16,400	—	—	—
All types	16,600	29,500	21,200	19,836	25,502	15,546

Source:
Farm Business Survey

Net farm income is defined as the return to the principal farmer and spouse for their manual and managerial labour and on the tenant type capital of the business.

Rosie Cooper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* percentage and *(b)* real terms changes in total income from farming were in West Lancashire in each of the last four years. [51114]

Jim Knight: Estimates of total income from farming are not available for West Lancashire. However, statistical models are used to produce estimates for the whole of Lancashire which are given in the following table. It should be noted that these estimates are subject to sampling and other sources of statistical error and therefore need to be treated with caution.

	Total income from farming		Total income from farming in real terms (2005 prices)	
	£ million	Percentage change	£ million	Percentage change
2000	16	—	18	—
2001	39	141	43	136
2002	28	-28	30	-29
2003	21	-24	22	-26
2004	19	-8	20	-11

GM Imports

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the recent World Trade Organisation ruling on the EU decision to help block new GM imports. [52236]

Mr. Morley: Owing to the WTO rules, I am unable to go into the details of the interim panel report at this stage. These rules stipulate that an interim panel report is confidential, and is only circulated to the parties to the dispute in order for them to send comments to the panel. However, once the final report is issued, this will be made publicly available.

Light Bulbs

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the merits of banning incandescent light bulbs on grounds of their relative inefficiency. [51766]

Mr. Morley: The Government remains fully committed to raising product standards and encouraging consumers to use the most efficient products available. The Government cannot itself though, simply ban or otherwise prevent the free trade in such products on the basis of their energy efficiency and therefore no assessment of the merits of banning incandescent light bulbs has been made. This would be reliant on the European Commission, other member states and the European Parliament agreeing that this was necessary.

National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 372W, on the National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit, what options are under consideration for the future location of the National Wildlife Crime Intelligence Unit; what implications its relocation will have for its resourcing; and when she expects to reach a decision on its future. [52240]

Jim Knight: I am hoping to make a announcement on this shortly.

Pet Sales

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on how many occasions since 1 January 2004 her Department has sought legal opinion on the legality of *(a)* pet fairs and *(b)* pet markets, with particular reference to itinerant sales; what those opinions concluded; and if she will place copies of each opinion in the Library. [40584]

Mr. Bradshaw: It is not current practice to disclose information about internal legal advice. However, I will shortly send the hon. Member a briefing note on the Bill which provides a summary of the law on pet fairs which we made available to the EFRA Select Committee on the Bill. A copy of the briefing note will be placed in the Library of the House.

Poland

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she is having with her Polish counterpart to encourage agricultural imports and exports between Poland and the UK. [50106]

Mr. Bradshaw: There have been no recent discussions between the Secretary of State and her Polish counterparts concerning agricultural imports and exports between the Poland and the UK. However, Food from Britain and the International Agriculture Technology Centre, both funded by Defra and responsible for promoting exports of UK food and drink and primary agricultural products respectively, have undertaken activities to increase the level of exports of UK products to Poland.

The type of activities include assisting producers to enter, evaluate and develop Poland as an export market, organising seminars and workshops in Poland and attendance at relevant trade shows. The products covered include red meat, fish, dairy, poultry, tea, alcoholic beverages, ambient groceries and aquaculture.

Potatoes

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many tonnes of potatoes were produced in Shrewsbury constituency in *(a)* 1989 and *(b)* 2005. [51269]

Jim Knight: We do not collect information specifically on potato production at a constituency level.

It is possible to provide information on the area of potatoes grown within a constituency but only from 1992, the earliest year from which it is possible to compile data on this basis. The latest data are for 2004; the 2005 data are not yet available. An estimate of the production can be calculated using the average yield figure for England. Potato area data and estimates of production for Shrewsbury constituency for 1992 and 2004 are:

	Potato area (hectares)	Potato production (thousand tonnes)
1992	1,678	77
2004	1,255	54

Looking back to 1989, it is possible to provide information on the area of potatoes grown at a county level and calculate an estimate of production based on

the average yield figure for England. Potato area data and estimates of production for Shropshire for 1989, 1992 and 2004 are:

	Potato area (hectares)	*Potato production (thousand tonnes)*
1989	7,088	269
1992	5,748	264
2004	4,224	182

It should be noted that area data for 1992 are based on main holdings only; data for other years are based on all holdings. Data for 1989 and 1992 are for maincrop potatoes; data for 2004 are for early and maincrop potatoes.

Secondments

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many people from science and technology backgrounds have been seconded into the civil service in her Department in each of the last three years. [48408]

Jim Knight: Defra continues to promote and encourage the exchange of personnel between the Department and a range of organisations. In the last three years the Department has seconded individuals from both the private and public sector to develop and exchange good practice and expertise. Unfortunately detailed data regarding whether these individuals have science and technology backgrounds is not held centrally and would be possible only at disproportionate cost.

Single Farm Payment

Tim Farron: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment her Department has made of the impact on farmers of late payments of the single farm payment. [50788]

Jim Knight *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* In my statement on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 10WS, I confirmed that payments under the Single Payment Scheme would begin before the end of February 2006. This is in line with the forecast made over a year ago and well within the EU regulatory window of 1 December 2005 to 30 June 2006. All evidence to date suggests no otherwise viable businesses will fail because of the timing of these payments, but I know cash-flow is currently an important issue for a number of farmers and that my statement has, consequently, been widely welcomed.

Mr. Fraser: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effects the delays in single farm payments have had on the supply chain within the farming industry; and what discussions she has had with farmers on compensation for their creditors as a result of the delays. [52480]

Jim Knight: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, and the rest of the Defra ministerial team meet regularly with farmers and their representatives, when the timing of payments under the single payment scheme (SPS) and the related impact on the agricultural industry are regular topics of discussion. The most recent such meeting was with the President of the National Farmers Union on 14 February, when my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State reconfirmed the Government's commitment to begin SPS payments before the end of February as was made clear in the statement on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 10WS. I am sure that representatives of the agricultural supply chain, having previously expressed concerns about consequential effects of cash flow problems within the industry, will have welcomed that statement.

Tuberculosis Compensation

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what account was taken by her Department of the cost of replacing an animal with another of similar quality when setting the compensation level for cattle slaughtered under tuberculosis control measures before 1 February 2006; [52509]

(2) what weight *(a)* is given and *(b)* was given before 1 February, when considering the compensation value of a cow slaughtered under tuberculosis control measures, to the fact the animal is or was (i) from a closed organic herd and (ii) six months in calf to a pedigree South Devon Bull. [52641]

Mr. Bradshaw: Prior to 1 February 2006 legislation required that the level of compensation for cattle affected by bovine tuberculosis (bTB) was market value, i.e. the price, which might reasonably have been obtained at the time of valuation, from a purchaser in the open market, if the animal were not affected by or exposed to bTB.

Under the current table based cattle compensation system, which came into force on 1 February, no breed specific weighting is provided, nor is there weighting for organic cattle. However, there are separate tables for pedigree and non-pedigree animals. And compensation payments also vary according to the age and sex of an animal.

A Cattle Compensation Advisory Group (made up of stakeholder representatives) will be established soon to help monitor the new compensation arrangements.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will reassess the compensation provided for a cow slaughtered under tuberculosis control measures following the introduction of the new system on 1 February; what mechanism is open to the owner of a cow slaughtered under tuberculosis control measures to appeal against the compensation value assigned to the animal by a valuer appointed by her Department before 1 February; and if she will make a statement. [52512]

Mr. Bradshaw: The new arrangements for cattle affected by bovine tuberculosis came into force in England on 1 February 2006. In making these changes, the Department's objective is to have in place a system that promotes good industry practice, enhances disease control, addresses the serious (and independently identified) problem of over-compensation, and is fair to both cattle owners and the taxpayer.

Under these arrangements, we believe that all farmers effectively gain because they are being compensated for disease affected animals (whose true worth are salvage value only) using a price based on the value of healthy animals.

As part of government's ongoing commitment to work in partnership with stakeholders, Defra is setting up a Cattle Compensation Advisory Group involving industry stakeholder representatives. We expect this stakeholder group to help us monitor the new compensation arrangements.

Under the previous system of compensation, there was no mechanism for appeal against valuations once a cattle owner and the department had agreed a valuer.

Waste Efficiency

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the potential savings identified were in the report on waste efficiency savings in the London market jointly commissioned by her Department and the Greater London Authority; and what steps she plans to take to achieve these savings. [51829]

Mr. Bradshaw: The report into waste efficiency savings in the London market jointly commissioned by Defra and the Greater London Authority identified efficiency savings of potentially £44.9 million for 2007–08 and £104.9 million for 2009–10.

Plans to achieve these savings will be agreed with the GLA and stakeholders when the current review of the powers and responsibilities of the Mayor of London and the GLA is complete and in this regard, the Department expects to see a final package of measures for announcement in March 2006.

Wildlife Management/TB

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the public consultation on wildlife management and related TB issues. [52291]

Mr. Bradshaw: I refer the hon. Member to the Written Ministerial Statement given on 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 165–66WS, and the Debate on 15 December 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1442–49.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

European Programme for Critical Infrastructure Protection

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the nature of measures supported under the European programme for critical infrastructure protection; and what the treaty base is for such measures. [52566]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Under the UK presidency of the EU, we agreed a set of principles for critical infrastructure protection. The Commission produced a Green Paper on the subject at the end of 2005, which is the focus of ongoing discussion between the Commission and experts from member states. Until there are concrete proposals, we cannot comment on the treaty base for a future programme.

Foreign Travel (Health and Safety)

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many UK citizens have died abroad as a result of accidental death or dismemberment in each of the last 20 years. [51543]

Dr. Howells: Our records only go back to 1994 and the following table shows the number of accidental death cases of UK citizens handled by consular staff since then. We do not collect statistics on dismemberment.

	Number
1994	384
1995	360
1996	373
1997	344
1998	369
1999	358
2000	310
2001	270
2002	260
2003–04	295
2004–05	389

Gibraltar

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Gibraltar on representation of the people of Gibraltar in the UK Parliament; and if he will make a statement. [51382]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right. hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not had any recent discussions with the Government of Gibraltar on the representation of the people of Gibraltar in the UK Parliament.

The hon. Member may also wish to refer to my reply of 9 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1449W, which explains the Government's position on overseas territories' representation in Westminster and EU Parliaments.

Iran

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Iran regarding respect for human rights. [52184]

Dr. Howells: We remain deeply concerned at human rights violations in Iran, and discuss our concerns frequently with the Iranian authorities, at both ministerial and official level. Senior officials most recently discussed human rights concerns with the Iranian Charge d'Affaires in London on 17 January, 24 January and 8 February; the British ambassador in Tehran did so when he met Deputy Foreign Minister Jalili on 4 January; and the Austrian Foreign Minister did so on behalf of the European Union when she spoke to her Iranian counterpart on 14 February. My right

hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary raised human rights concerns with Iranian interlocutors on several occasions last year.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he has received about the health of former Iraqi Foreign Secretary, Tariq Aziz; what consideration is being given to his release; and if he will make a statement. [45955]

Dr. Howells: Tariq Aziz is being held in Iraqi custody in Iraq. It is a matter for the Iraqi authorities if or when he may be released. We understand that he has complained of ill health and is receiving medical treatment.

Israel/Palestine

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government continues to recognise the pre-1967 Green Line as the international border of the State of Israel. [52343]

Dr. Howells: We believe that it is for the parties to determine their permanent borders through mutual agreement in accordance with the road map. Under Phase III of the road map, both parties will determine their permanent borders through mutual agreement. Final status issues can only be resolved through negotiations and agreement between the parties themselves.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the report by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs concerning the introduction by Israel of additional movement restrictions on Palestinians in the Jordan Valley; and what representations he is making to the Government of Israel on the subject. [52710]

Dr. Howells: We are concerned about the additional movement restrictions in the Jordan Valley just as we are concerned about free movement issues elsewhere. Israel has a right to protect its citizens from terrorist attack but also a duty to ensure the effect of its security measures on the Palestinian population are minimised. We will continue to raise this concern at all levels with the Israeli Government. In addition to this, we seconded a senior British Army officer to work with the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Quartet Special Envoy James Wolfensohn's team to examine ways of improving freedom of movement in the West Bank.

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of UN resolutions 194 and 242 on the rights of Palestinian refugees; and what steps he is taking to ensure that the rights of Palestinian refugees are both respected and incorporated in future peace negotiations. [52369]

Dr. Howells: We believe that the roadmap is the best way forward to secure a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. In phase three of the roadmap, the parties are to reach a final and comprehensive permanent status agreement that "includes an agreed, just, fair and realistic solution to the refugee issue".

Kyrgyzstan

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken by his Department to support good governance, stability and the transition to democracy in Kyrgyzstan. [52186]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave to him on 10 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 465W.

I met the Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Djekshenkulov on 1 February and reiterated our support for good governance, stability and democratic reform in Kyrgyzstan, including through the project work of the Department for International Development (DFID) office in Bishkek. On 31 January my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at DFID, Gareth Thomas, was able to deliver similar messages to Foreign Minister Djekshenkulov.

The Ambassador and his team based in Almaty have been to Kyrgyzstan four times since the turn of the year and met various members of the Kyrgyz Government, including President Bakiev and Foreign Minister Djekshenkulov, as well as non-governmental organisations and other members of civil society. We will continue to work closely with other international partners and donors, including the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, US AID, United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank to ensure the effectiveness of our respective programmes and the continuity of our messages on democratic reform, good governance and stability.

Russia

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his counterparts in the EU regarding human rights and the use of torture in Russia. [52162]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I regularly discuss relations with Russia with our EU counterparts, including human rights. The most recent discussion of Russia by all 25 EU Foreign Ministers took place at the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 3 October. At this meeting, the EU's objectives for the 4 October EU-Russia summit were agreed. On the human rights situation, these related to Chechnya, judicial reforms, human rights defenders and media freedom. These points were raised by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister with President Putin at the summit.

The human rights situation in Russia is the subject of regular discussions at Council Working Group meetings, including to prepare for EU- Russia human rights consultations. The specific issues of torture and combating immunity for perpetrators of torture were discussed during the March 2005 consultations.

Sugar Regime

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the allocation of €190 million per annum to sugar protocol nations under the EU financial perspectives will be considered by *(a)* the EU Council and *(b)* the European Parliament. [36491]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: Following agreement at the December 2005 European Council to the overall ceiling for the 2007–13 Financial Perspective, the European Commission is expected to publish its proposal for a breakdown of expenditure for different instruments on 16 February. The Council and the European Parliament will take forward discussion of individual allocations on the basis of that proposal.

Venezuela

Mr. Galloway: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the Prime Minister's answer of 8 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 873, what rules of the international community the Government considers to have been broken by the Government of Venezuela; and if he will make a statement. [51713]

Mr. Douglas Alexander: I have nothing further to add to the answer my right. hon. Friend the Prime Minister gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Elmet (Colin Burgon) at Prime Minister's Questions on 8 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 873.

Western Africa

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with authorities in *(a)* Mauritania and *(b)* Western Sahara about stopping the flow of illegal immigrants into Europe from these areas. [51275]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not held discussions with the Mauritanian authorities on this subject. The Government regard the status of Western Sahara as undetermined, and as a result we do not recognise any 'Western Saharan authorities'.

The Government takes the issue of illegal migration very seriously. We are currently engaged in dialogue with EU partners, and both source and transit countries, on how best to meet this challenge. Substantial progress was made during the UK presidency to implement EU initiatives to tackle illegal migration across the Mediterranean and to strengthen co-operation with transit countries in North Africa. The 10th anniversary Euromed summit in November 2005 adopted a five-year work programme covering enhanced co-operation on all aspects of migration, including reducing illegal migration and trafficking in human beings. A Euromed ministerial meeting on migration will be held in 2006 to drive forward this agenda.

The conclusions of December's European Council included a pledge to address illegal migration "in partnership with African countries and regional organisations, such as the Economic Community of West African States, through a range of fora, initiatives and regional meetings, including an EU-Africa Ministerial Conference in Morocco in 2006".

Building on our presidency achievements, we will continue to encourage the EU to work in closer partnership with transit and source countries to tackle illegal migration across the Mediterranean and for improved migration management globally.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will support an amendment in the Fisheries Council to the EU-Morocco Fisheries Partnership Agreement to exclude the territory of Western Sahara from the agreement. [51622]

Dr. Howells: Article 2 of the fisheries agreement initialled on 28 July 2005 indicates that it applies "to the Moroccan fisheries zone under the sovereignty or jurisdiction of the Kingdom of Morocco". This delimitation of the geographical scope of the agreement is identical to the delimitation in the previous agreement, which expired in 1999.

The Government will consider its position on the draft agreement as part of the approval process, and in order to do so is currently awaiting further information from the Commission.

HEALTH

"Our Health, Our Care, Our Say"

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reason patient and public involvement was not mentioned in her Department's White Paper "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say". [51040]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The White Paper contains some very clear messages about how a stronger voice can be achieved by strengthening arrangements for patient and public involvement.

Chapter seven sets out a series of principles which will underpin the strengthened voice for patients and the public in health and social care.

Alzheimer's Disease

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish a short version of the appraisal consultation document produced by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence on the use of Alzheimer's disease drugs for distribution to those who responded to the consultation; and if she will make a statement. [51712]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* No. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has published the appraisal consultation document on its website at www.nice.org.uk. I understand that at the start of the consultation process, NICE sent copies of its consultation document to all those who had responded to its earlier consultation.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether her Department has submitted a formal response to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) in connection with its appraisal of donepezil, rivastigmine, galantamine and memantine for the treatment of Alzheimer's in addition to that submitted to NICE by her Department in March 2005. [51895]

Jane Kennedy: Yes. The Department submitted a formal response to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) on 13 February. We will publish a copy of our response on the Department's website and will place a copy in the Library.

Ambulance Service

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what use the ambulance service made of public mobile communications networks during the response operation to the incidents on the London Underground and bus network on 7th July 2005. [43781]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The London Ambulance Service National Health Service Trust uses an analogue radio system and mobile phones to communicate with and between front-line staff. Our understanding is that both were used on 7 July 2005.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on plans to restructure ambulance services in Staffordshire. [51420]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A 14-week consultation, led by strategic health authorities, is currently being held on the future organisation of ambulance trusts. The Department proposes that there are 11 trusts, including one that would incorporate the existing West Midlands, Staffordshire, Hereford and Worcester, and Coventry and Warwickshire National Health Service Ambulance Trusts. Any changes to the organisation of ambulance trusts will only happen following local consultation and discussion with relevant parties in the local area.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations she has received on plans to restructure ambulance service provision in Cambridgeshire; and if she will make a statement. [52328]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A 14-week consultation, led by strategic health authorities, is currently being held on the future organisation of ambulance trusts. The Department proposes that there are eleven trusts, including one that would incorporate the existing East Anglian, Essex and Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire National Health Service Ambulance Trusts. Any changes to the organisation of ambulance trusts will only happen following local consultation and discussion with relevant parties in the local area.

Anticholinesterase Drugs

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines for the use of anticholinesterase drugs. [50441]

Jane Kennedy: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has consulted on draft guidance on the use of anticholinesterase drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease. The consultation ended on 13 February 2006. NICE has not yet finalised its guidance to the national health service.

Avian Influenza

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to ensure key workers in *(a)* power plant operations, *(b)* telephone services and *(c)* other essential public services are inoculated against avian influenza. [25715]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There has been some confusion between seasonal flu, avian flu and pandemic flu. Avian influenza is a disease which mainly affects birds. Seasonal flu refers to the viruses that circulate in the human population and cause widespread illness each winter. Pandemic flu will occur only after an avian virus has mutated into a strain to which large numbers of the population have not been exposed and which can spread easily between humans.

We are finalising a contract for the purchase of a two to three million doses of vaccine against the H5N1 strain currently circulating in South East Asia and other areas. This vaccine can be used for research and for possible use for health care workers in an emergency, and may provide some limited protection against a pandemic emerging from that source. We hope to award this contract shortly and would receive some stocks early next year.

No definite plans have been developed to vaccinate health care workers, or other key workers, against avian influenza.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the total number of human *(a)* fatalities and *(b)* infections resulting from H5N1 avian influenza to date, broken down by country. [46673]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of confirmed cases and deaths from avian influenza (H5N1) is provided by the World Health Organisation (WHO) which is shown in the table. This information is regularly updated and is available on the WHO website at:

www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/country/cases_table_2006_01_25/en/index.html.

Cumulative number of confirmed human cases of avian influenza A/(H5N1) reported to the World Health Organisation, 25 January 2006

Date of onset	Cambodia		China		Indonesia	
	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths
2003	0	0	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005	4	4	8	5	16	11
2006	0	0	2	2	3	3
Total	4	4	10	7	19	14

Date of onset	Thailand Cases	Thailand Deaths	Turkey Cases	Turkey Deaths	Vietnam Cases	Vietnam Deaths	Total Cases	Total Deaths
2003	0	0	0	0	3	3	3	3
2004	17	12	0	0	29	20	46	32
2005	5	2	0	0	61	19	94	41
2006	0	0	4	2	0	0	9	7
Total	22	14	4	2	93	42	152	83

Notes:
1. Total number of cases includes number of deaths.
2. HO reports only laboratory-confirmed cases.

The WHO reports those cases confirmed in WHO collaborating laboratories.

In Turkey, a total of 21 cases, including four deaths have been confirmed by the Turkish authorities, these include the four cases and two deaths in the table.

Mr. Hands: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate she has made of the likely number of cases of strain H5N1 in the United Kingdom in the event of a pandemic; [46598]

(2) what estimate or range of estimates she has made of the likely death toll in the United Kingdom in the event of a pandemic of strain H5N1. [46599]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The pandemic strain may not necessarily be H5N1. The widespread occurrence of a highly pathogenic avian (bird) influenza virus (H5N1) in poultry since 2003, which has also infected some people, is thought to provide a seedbed for the possible emergence of a new virus with greater affinity for people and thus the potential to cause a new pandemic.

Estimates of the impact of an influenza pandemic are based on the best available evidence. However, the number of people affected and the impact on the healthcare system will depend critically on the detailed properties of the pandemic Flu virus.

Bowel Cancer

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what projections her Department has made of the expected take up of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Programme in *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2006–07 and *(c)* 2007–08; [43477]

(2) for Health in how many sites she expects to introduce bowel cancer screening in April; [43478]

(3) what the estimated total cost of the roll-out of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Programme is to *(a)* her Department and *(b)* primary care trusts. [43479]

Ms Rosie Winterton: NHS Cancer Screening Programmes are currently assessing strategic health authority bids for their local endoscopy units to become local screening centres.

The Government have stated their commitment to a national bowel cancer screening programme. On 30 January 2006, the new Health White Paper, "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services" reaffirmed that the programme will be rolled out from April 2006. Departmental budgets for 2006–07 are currently being finalised, and announcements will be made in due course.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are in place *(a)* to inform people from (i) ethnic minorities, (ii) deprived areas and (iii) hard to reach groups about the National Bowel Cancer Screening Programme and *(b)* to encourage them to participate. [43776]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* A bowel cancer communications group was set up in 2005 to discuss communications with the public when the bowel cancer screening programme begins. The voluntary sector, patient groups, researchers, NHS Cancer Screening Programmes and the NHS Cancer Screening Programmes press office are all represented on the group. The group is considering all aspects of communications, including reaching ethnic minorities, people from deprived areas and hard to reach groups.

In addition, bowel cancer screening leaflets sent out with each invitation will be translated into a number of languages, as happens in breast and cervical screening now. Lessons are also being learned on how to reach these groups from the existing breast and cervical screening programmes, and from the bowel cancer screening pilot.

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what central funding has been made available for the roll-out of the National Bowel Cancer Screening Programme in *(a)* 2004–05, *(b)* 2005–06, *(c)* 2006–07 and *(d)* 2007–08; and what ring-fenced funding has been made available to primary care trusts to assist with the roll-out. [44401]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Norwich, North (Dr. Ian Gibson) today.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the national bowel cancer screening programme will be rolled out from April. [47617]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* The Government have stated their commitment to a national bowel cancer screening programme. On 30 January 2006, the new Health White Paper, "Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services" reaffirmed that the programme will be rolled out from April 2006. Departmental budgets for 2006–07 are currently being finalised, and announcements will be made in due course.

Braintree Community Hospital

Mr. Newmark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether *(a)* there are any plans to delay construction of the new Braintree Community Hospital on the site of St. Michael's Hospital, *(b)* the levels of funding originally planned for the new hospital have

changed and *(c)* changes have been made to the project's scheduled completion date since its original approval; and what the scheduled completion date is for the hospital. [47002]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Essex Strategic Health Authority (SHA) has no plans to delay construction of a new Braintree Hospital on the site of the existing St. Michael's Hospital. Witham, Braintree and Halstead Care Trust has consistently maintained that this private finance initiative (PFI) project had to fit hand in glove with the Mid Essex Hospital PFI scheme at Broomfield Hospital and this has taken time to negotiate.

Witham, Braintree and Halstead Care Trust is currently pulling together its full business case (FBC) which will include revised capital costs and revenue costs. The care trust plans to bring its FBC to the SHA in the summer/autumn this year for consideration and approval.

Breast Cancer

Mr. Walker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress is being made in rolling out HER2 testing for all women diagnosed with breast cancer. [47020]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Professor Mike Richards, the National Cancer Director, is working with cancer networks to ensure that testing arrangements are put in place to enable women who require it to be tested for HER2 status. This work is ongoing.

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the reasons for the long-term trend in rates of breast cancer over the last 30 years. [47986]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* The reasons behind the increase in breast cancer rates are complex. The Cancer Atlas, published by the Office for National Statistics in 2005, states that most of the known risk factors for breast cancer relate to a woman's reproductive history and that lifestyle factors, such as poor diet and alcohol consumption, may also contribute to a higher risk.

Although breast cancer rates are increasing, death rates are falling. Since 1997 there has been a 13 per cent. decrease in breast cancer mortality in those under 75.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* average and *(b)* longest wait for urgent breast cancer referral at the Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was in the latest period for which figures are available. [50428]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available in the requested format. However, information relating to:

the number of patients referred by their general practitioner with suspected breast cancer, by waiting time from referral to first outpatient appointment is shown in table 1; and

the number of patients treated for breast cancer during the quarter within two months (62 days) of the decision to refer by their GP have been shown in the table 2.

Table 1. Number of patients referred by their GP with suspected breast cancer, by waiting time from referral to first out-patient appointment—England and Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, 2005–06 quarter 2

			Waiting time from referral to first out-patient appointment (days)				
	Percentage seen within two weeks of referral	*Total referrals*	*Under 14*	*15–16*	*17–21*	*22–28*	*Over 28*
Urgent referrals received by trust within 24 hours							
Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals National Health Service Foundation Trust	100	281	281	0	0	0	0
England	99.5	33,782	33,605	26	84	64	3
Urgent referrals not received by trust within 24 hours							
Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	75.0	44	33	3	2	2	4
England	87.5	1,875	1,641	59	101	35	39

Source:
CWT-Db, Department of Health

Table 2. Number of patients treated for breast cancer during the quarter within two months (62 days) of the decision to refer by their GP—England and Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, 2005–06 quarter 2

	Patients treated within two months	*Patients not treated within two months*	*Percentage treated within two months*
Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	38	0	100
England	4,268	100	97.7

Source:
CWT-Db, Department of Health

Chelmsford Primary Care Trust

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) why the average NHS funding per person for the Chelmsford Primary Care Trust (PCT) area is less than the average figure for England; what measures are being taken to bring the funding for the Chelmsford PCT area closer to the average figure for England; and if she will make a statement; [48368]

(2) what the average NHS funding per person is in *(a)* England and *(b)* the Chelmsford Primary Care Trust area; and what each figure is projected to be in 2008. [48370]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answers 6 February 2006]:* The recurrent revenue allocations per head for 2005–06 and 2007–08 for Chelmsford Primary Care Trust (PCT) and England are shown in the table.

Unweighted

	Allocation per head	
	2005–06	*2007–08*
Chelmsford PCT	975	1,159
England	1,172	1,388

Revenue allocations are made to PCTs on the basis of the relative needs of their populations. A weighted capitation formula is used to determine PCTs' target shares of available resources, to enable PCTs to commission similar levels of health services for populations in similar need.

The components of the formula are used to weight each PCTs crude population according to their relative need (age, and additional need) for healthcare and the unavoidable geographical differences in the cost of providing healthcare (the market forces factor).

The formula does not determine allocations. The formula is used to set targets, which then inform allocations. Actual allocations reflect decisions on the speed at which PCTs are brought nearer to target through the distribution of extra funds (pace of change policy).

Pace of change policy is decided for each allocations round. For the 2006–08 allocations, it has been decided to move PCTs more quickly towards their fair share of funds. As a result of this allocation round, no PCT will be more than 3.5 per cent. under its fair share by the end of 2007–08. At the start of 2006–07, Chelmsford PCT will be very close to their target allocation (only 0.1 per cent. below target).

The reason that Chelmsford PCT receives lower allocations per person than the England average, is that the measurement of healthcare needs across the population of Chelmsford is lower than the England average.

The development of the formula is kept under constant review by the advisory committee on resource allocation (ACRA). ACRA is an independent body, made up of national health service managers, academics and general practitioners. ACRA will make recommendations on any changes to the formula, that may be required in advance of the next round of allocations.

Chicken Farms

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if her Department will issue advice to educational establishments on the health implications for *(a)* children and *(b)* staff of a school of being in close proximity to a large-scale chicken farming establishment. [51802]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer14 February 2006]:* The Department does not propose to issue advice on the health implications for children and staff of a school of being in close proximity to a large-scale chicken farming establishment.

Child Eye Examinations

Mr. Dunne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that parents understand the importance of eye examinations for children. [46658]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 31 January 2006]:* Personal child health records are provided to parents after the birth of their child. The record provides families with a means of recording visits, immunisation, concerns raised and action taken. The record covers the range of health and development milestones and although it cannot go into the detail of conditions the record does prompt inquiries about vision and promotes further discussion and specific eye checks where indicated.

Free sight tests are available under the national health service for children under 16 and those aged 16 to 18 in full time education. Sight tests allow the opportunity to review all aspects of eye health, including investigations for signs of disease.

Information about the extensive arrangements for providing help with NHS optical services and other health costs are publicised in leaflet HC11 "Are you entitled to help with health costs?".

Colon Cancer

Mr. Gauke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much was spent by the NHS in 2004–05 on testing for colon cancer; [46189]

(2) which test procedures are used to detect colon cancer; what plans she has to change the procedures; and if she will make a statement; [46190]

(3) what proportion of people over the age of 50 have undertaken a test for colon cancer. [46191]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Screening for bowel cancer in England is currently only available as part of the English bowel cancer screening pilot in Coventry and Warwickshire. The pilot began in 2000, and is now into its third round of screening. People aged 58 to 69 are sent a kit called a faecal occult blood (FOB) test, which looks for hidden blood in the stools, an indicator that bowel cancer may be present. People are invited every two years, and complete the kit in their own homes before returning it to the laboratory where the results are interpreted.

Around 2 per cent. of people who take the FOB test will be positive, and they are invited for a full bowel investigation called a colonoscopy.

In 2004–05, 31,074 people were screened at a cost of around £800,000. Research and an independent evaluation of the pilot have shown that around 60 per cent. of the population take up their invitations to participate in bowel cancer screening.

Community Matrons

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps the Government are taking to increase the number of qualified community matrons in Bedfordshire; and if she will make a statement. [47350]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are plans in place that by the end of 2007 there will be 3,000 community matrons in post in England. Strategic health authorities are monitoring primary care trusts (PCTs) to ensure that they are on target to achieve this.

Bedfordshire PCT currently has two community matrons in post.

PCTs in partnership with local stakeholders, have the responsibility to ensure that national health service establishments are adequately staffed to deliver high quality and sustainable services as well as ensuring the safety of those people under their care.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures the Government are taking to enhance the skills and training of community matrons in Bedfordshire; and if she will make a statement. [47354]

Ms Rosie Winterton: An outline of the responsibilities of community matrons was provided in the document, "Supporting People with Long-Term Conditions—liberating the talents of nurses who care for people with long term conditions", which was published in February last year. Since then the Department has issued a competency framework to help employers and workforce planners develop education programmes, and community matrons themselves understand what additional knowledge and skills they need for the work. The Department will soon publish an education framework so that education providers can develop local programmes and commissioners specify contracts appropriately.

In addition, this year the Department will be hosting a series of master-classes for community matrons, and the results will be published.

The local health communities within the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority area, are working towards implementing the competency framework issued by the Department.

Delayed Discharges

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many delayed discharges there were in acute hospitals serving the Cambridgeshire area in the last 12 months; and how many acute hospital bed nights these represented. [50427]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Acute delayed transfers of care

	Papworth Hospital NHS Trust		*Peterborough and Stamford NHS Foundation Trust*		*Cambridge Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust*		*Hinchingbrooke Health Care*	
Month	*Delayed transfers of care*	*Number of days delayed*	*Delayed transfers of care*	*Number of days delayed*	*Delayed transfers of care*	*Number of days delayed*	*Delayed transfers of care number of days delayed*	
February 2005	1	21	13	370	64	2,071	7,130	
March 2005	1	22	9	371	61	2,437	14,297	
April 2005	0	17	16	347	60	1,882	12,299	
May 2005	0	3	16	304	46	1,545	13,421	
June 2005	0	0	13	323	53	2,140	7,366	
July 2005	0	0	7	216	48	1,427	799	
August 2005	0	0	7	217	39	1,515	13,197	
September 2005	0	2	10	328	32	1,802	9,370	
October 2005	0	0	14	327	26	1,244	9,231	
November 2005	0	0	10	302	41	1,366	15,271	
December 2005	0	0	10	453	53	2,163	9,490	
January 2006	0	3	7	247	37	704	9,343	

Note

Data in the table are taken from local monitoring of delayed discharges included in the SITREPs collection. The delayed transfers of care figures are based on a snapshot taken on the last typical Thursday in the month. This differs to the day used in the separate, quarterly LDPR commissioner collections on which the figures published in the Statistical Supplement to the Chief Executive's Report to the NHS, December 2005 are based. The number of days delayed sums all delays in the month.

Source: SitReps

Dentistry

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in Hereford constituency whose training was funded by the NHS only treat private patients. [44612]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not collect information on dentists who only treat private patients.

It is not possible to ascertain whether an individual private dentist was trained using national health service funding. Nor is it possible to ascertain whether individual private dentists who were trained using NHS funding but subsequently declined to treat NHS patients are continuing to practice.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists stopped registering NHS patients in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004 and *(c)* 2005. [44833]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists have been practising in Peterborough constituency in each year since 1997. [47921]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of general dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS) in the Peterborough parliamentary constituency in each year since 1997, are shown in the table.

Data on dentists that work purely in private practice are not held centrally.

	Peterborough constituency
1997	35
1998	33
1999	37
2000	43
2001	48
2002	53
2003	60
2004	71
2005	65

Notes:
1. Data includes all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the Dental Practice Board, up to 19 October 2005. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, for example, data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS.
2. Dentists include principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded from the data.

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps she is taking to ensure that sufficient NHS dentists are recruited in Bolton. [51536]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* Since 2003–04, the Department has invested an additional £250 million in national health service dentistry and supported the NHS in recruiting the equivalent of an extra 1,459 dentists to improve patient access. The Government are also funding an additional 170 training places per year from 2005.

From April 2006, the NHS will be implementing major reforms to dentistry to build upon this success. New contracts for dentists will abolish the traditional fee per item remuneration system and support new ways of working with a greater focus on preventative care. Evidence from personal dental services pilot schemes is that these new ways of working free up significant capacity that dentists can then use in part to see a greater range of patients.

Dentists' current NHS earnings will be protected for at least three years and there will be a five per cent. reduction in the courses of treatment that general dental services practitioners are expected to carry out each year.

From April 2006, primary care trusts (PCTs), including Bolton PCT, will also have devolved responsibility and ring-fenced budgets for commissioning primary dental services. This means that, if a dentist leaves the NHS or reduces their NHS commitment, the resources stay with the PCT to be re-invested in local dental services.

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the personal dental service pilot in Wirral. [47938]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Dental practices in Wirral have played an important role in piloting new ways of working through personal dental services (PDS) arrangements. There has been a major improvement in access to national health service dentistry across Wirral.

The lessons learned in the Wirral and other pilot sites have informed the new arrangements for NHS dentistry being implemented from 1 April 2006. From this date, dentists in pilot PDS schemes are entitled to transfer to substantive PDS agreements under the new regulations.

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff in the Dental Policy Directorate *(a)* are and *(b)* were (i) dentally qualified or practising dentists and (ii) officers of (A) the British Dental Association and (B) the Dental Practitioners' Association. [43582]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 19 January 2006]:* There are five dentally qualified staff in the dental services team.

The former employment of departmental members of staff is a matter for the individuals concerned, and it is not the Departments policy to collect or publish such information.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was spent on school dentistry in each primary care trust in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [45912]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not held centrally. We estimate the full cost of the community dental services, in which dentists who visit schools are employed, is approximately £100 million per annum.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were registered with an NHS dentist in Essex in each of the last five years; and how many new registrations there were in each year. [48347]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* The information requested is shown in tables 1 and 2. General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS).

Table 1: Number of patients registered with a national health service dentist as at 30 September in each specified year

	Patients registered
2001	811,966
2002	803,307
2003	800,476
2004	779,539
2005	768,789

Table 2: New registrations and registrations deleted in Essex strategic health authority (SHA) at each month end since January 2001

Month	*Registrations Added*	*Deleted*
January 2001	47,475	51,549
February 2001	57,477	54,332
March 2001	45,671	49,261
April 2001	50,905	60,422

Table 2: New registrations and registrations deleted in Essex strategic health authority (SHA) at each month end since January 2001

Month	Registrations Added	Deleted
May 2001	44,281	34,860
June 2001	47,278	48,408
July 2001	46,853	43,991
August 2001	41,354	54,830
September 2001	66,458	57,690
October 2001	54,134	64,392
November 2001	56,007	42,808
December 2001	44,101	45,458
January 2002	40,004	37,860
February 2002	38,601	42,644
March 2002	35,700	35,988
April 2002	34,665	32,815
May 2002	54,496	53,763
June 2002	41,147	44,926
July 2002	39,128	35,726
August 2002	41,684	54,905
September 2002	64,930	56,516
Break in series[1]	—	—
October 2002	40,352	44,256
November 2002	57,057	47,710
December 2002	38,482	38,897
January 2003	40,438	46,571
February 2003	46,017	54,494
March 2003	51,209	45,115
April 2003	40,253	37,126
May 2003	43,050	51,508
June 2003	41,354	44,133
July 2003	44,348	45,255
August 2003	61,416	60,413
September 2003	63,710	70,878
October 2003	56,734	52,922
November 2003	44,950	50,353
December 2003	48,049	42,888
January 2004	36,165	40,347
February 2004	41,460	46,085
March 2004	55,432	39,384
April 2004	43,352	39,083
May 2004	43,100	35,653
June 2004	44,012	34,932
July 2004	43,396	40,910
August 2004	43,793	51,037
September 2004	63,934	54,973
October 2004	94,045	46,043
November 2004	77,679	50,265
December 2004	66,290	30,745
January 2005	69,917	48,777
February 2005	55,006	67,576
March 2005	75,304	53,419
April 2005	72,788	50,099
May 2005	33,536	66,758
June 2005	27,339	88,203
July 2005	36,855	57,288
August 2005	27,947	63,207
September 2005	35,503	53,796
October 2005	31,395	34,617
November 2005	31,326	33,949
December 2005	32,720	32,027

[1] Between January 2001 and September 2002 data are for GDS dentists only. From October 2002 onwards the data are for GDS and PDS dentists.

Notes:

1. Table 2 indicates monthly additions and deletions to registrations within Essex SHA. However it is not possible to say if they are new registrations.
2. Some of the patients being added to the list will be patients regarded as old patients by dentists (or the patients) who are being re-registered after a gap of more than 15 months (GDS).
3. A yearly breakdown for table 2 is not possible as this may include duplications in registrations added and registrations deleted. This data should only be used as a monthly snapshot.
4. Most PDS schemes that have registrations have re-registration periods in excess of fifteen months, so the figures for PDS schemes are generally higher than they would have been for the same attendance pattern under GDS.

Source: Dental Practice Board

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average waiting time is for residents in Chorley constituency to be taken on as NHS patients by a dental practice; [49211]

(2) how many dental practices are taking new NHS patients in Chorley constituency. [49210]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps she is taking to minimise increases in charges for NHS dental work; [49212]

(2) what assessment she has made of the effects on health of cost disincentives to people in relation to regular dental check-ups. [49213]

Ms Rosie Winterton: From April 2006, a new system of patient charges will be introduced, based on the recommendations of a working group comprising of representatives of the dental profession, consumer organisations and other stakeholders. It will be a simpler system with three charging bands for overall courses of treatment, as opposed to the current system of over 400 separate charges for individual items of treatment. The maximum charge for dental treatments will fall from £384 to £189.

The cost to an individual patient for a given course of treatment will in some cases be more than now, and in other cases less. The overall level of charges raised will however, be the same proportion of dental expenditure as has historically been the case.

The working group, on whose recommendations the system is based, expressed a concern that the current system, based on over 400 charges ranging up to £384, may deter some people from seeking treatment because of confusion as to what that might have to pay. Part of their reason for recommending a simple, three-band system was to prevent this confusion in future.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists, excluding orthodontists, have been employed by the NHS in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England since 1997. [49584]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Most general dental practitioners are self employed contractors working in general dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS). The table shows the numbers of GDS and PDS dentists in England and Leicestershire County as at 30 September each year. It is not possible to exclude orthodontists from these figures, as they are not employed under separate GDS and PDS contracts.

	England	Leicestershire County
1997	16,670	170
1998	17,199	174
1999	17,755	179

	England	Leicestershire County
2000	18,167	186
2001	18,722	183
2002	18,946	195
2003	19,260	201
2004	19,722	207
2005	20,890	213

Notes:
1. Information is provided by county, as it is not available in the format requested.
2. The postcode of the dental practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. County areas have been defined using the Office for National Statistics all fields postcode directory.

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists there were in Shrewsbury and Atcham constituency in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [50095]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the number of national health service dentists in the Shrewsbury and Atcham constituency in 2004 and 2005:

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS): number of dentists in Shrewsbury and Atcham parliamentary constituency as at 30 September each year

	Number
2004	71
2005	80

Notes:
1. Data includes all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the Dental Practice Board, up to 19 October 2005. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period; for example, data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS.
2. Dentists include principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded from the data.
3. The postcode of the dental practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. Constituency areas have been defined using the Office for National Statistics all fields postcode directory.

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the impact of the new dental contract on practices where children are treated under the NHS if their parents pay for their treatment. [50287]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* Under The National Health Service (General Dental Services Contracts) Regulations 2005 and The National Health Service (Personal Dental Services Agreements) Regulations 2005, dentists will no longer be able to accept children as NHS patients only on condition that their parent or parents agree to private treatment.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists there have been in West Suffolk in each year since 1997. [50695]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in following table.

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS): number of dentists within Suffolk West primary care trust as at 30 September each year

	Number
1997	78
1998	77
1999	84
2000	87
2001	93
2002	104
2003	109
2004	115
2005	121

Notes:
1. Data includes all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the Dental Practice Board, up to 19 October 2005. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, e.g. data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS.
2. Dentists include principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded from the data.
3. The postcode of the dental practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. PCT areas have been defined using the Office for National Statistics all fields postcode directory.

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS dentists have been employed by Eastern Leicester Primary Care Trust in each year between 1997 and 2005. [51012]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

General dental services (GDS) and personal dental services (PDS): number of dentists within Eastern Leicester Primary Care Trust as at 30 September each year

	Eastern Leicester PCT
1997	87
1998	89
1999	95
2000	87
2001	85
2002	77
2003	78
2004	86
2005	96

Notes:
1. Data includes all notifications of dentists joining or leaving the GDS or PDS, received by the Dental Practice Board, up to 19 October 2005. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, e.g. data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists joining or leaving the CDS or PDS.
2. Dentists include principals, assistants and trainees. Prison contracts have been excluded from the data.
3. The postcode of the Dental Practice was used to allocate dentists to specific geographic areas. PCT areas have been defined using the Office for National Statistics all fields postcode directory.

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much her Department estimates the changes to NHS dentistry will save *(a)* Eastern Leicester Primary Care Trust and *(b)* the NHS over the next five years. [51013]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national health service dental reforms being implemented from April 2006 are not designed to release financial savings. On the contrary, the Department has given a commitment that, for at least the next three years, primary care trusts (PCTs) will be expected to maintain at least the current level of NHS investment in primary dental care services. The reforms give greater flexibility to PCTs to commission and develop dental services in ways that best meet the needs of their local population.

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in the registration of clinical dental technicians with the General Dental Council. [51398]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The General Dental Council has agreed that appropriately qualified clinical dental technicians should be registered and allowed to see edentulous patients, without prior review by a dentist, for the purpose of supplying and maintaining complete dentures. The register will be opened later this year.

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many dentists served *(a)* Yorkshire Wolds and Coast Primary Care Trust and *(b)* East Yorkshire Primary Care Trust in each of the last five years. [47520]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data on the number of dentists working purely in private practice is not held centrally. The numbers of national health service dentists with a general dental services (GDS) contract or personal dental services (PDS) contract for the specified primary care trusts (PCTs) are provided in the following table.

Number of GDS and PDS dentists within the specified PCTs as at 30 September each year

	East Yorkshire PCT	*Yorkshire Wolds and Coast PCT*
2001	53	37
2002	55	45
2003	58	45
2004	59	41
2005	63	51

Notes:
Data includes all notifications, received by the Dental Practice Board, up to 19 October 2005. Figures for the numbers of dentists at specified dates may vary depending upon the notification period, for example, data with a later notification period will include more recent notifications of dentists leaving the GDS or PDS.

Source:
Dental Practice Board

Diabetes

Mr. Havard: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she expects the clinical guideline for footcare which forms a part of the type two diabetes guideline to be reviewed. [50521]

Jane Kennedy: The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) plans to publish its guidance on type two diabetes, including footcare, in July 2008. Further information can be found on NICE's website at www.nice.org.uk

Domiciliary Oxygen

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will publish correspondence between her Department and its agencies since January 2005 about the direct supply of domiciliary oxygen for patients by the British Oxygen Company and its subsidiaries. [51806]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 15 February 2006]:* Since January 2005, the British Oxygen Company (BOC), like all other companies tendering for the direct supply of the domiciliary oxygen service to patients, received correspondence about the evaluation of bids, including an invitation to make a presentation to assessment panels in support of tenders submitted and, where necessary, requests for further information.

In addition, the Department and the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency corresponded with BOC in relation to the company's award of one regional contract for this service and this included feedback on the evaluation of tenders for all service regions submitted by BOC. This correspondence includes information that is commercially confidential to BOC and there is no agreement with BOC as to its publication.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what guidance her Department has issued to *(a)* patients and *(b)* health care professionals on changes in the provision of domiciliary oxygen; and on what dates the guidance was issued; [51807]

(2) what guidance her Department has issued to pharmacies since January 2005 on the provision of domiciliary oxygen; and on what dates the guidance was issued. [51808]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 15 February 2006]:* The national health service primary care contracting website www.primarycarecontracting.nhs.uk provides advice and guidance to primary care trusts and others on communicating changes to patients and health care professionals; including pharmacists, on the provision of domiciliary oxygen. Information has been available since July 2005 with updates provided on a weekly basis.

In addition, the Department has been working with the British Lung Foundation and new suppliers to provide information to patients.

Part 10 of the drug tariff, which relates to the provision of home oxygen, provides updated advice to pharmacies and others, with changes made on 1 October 2005 and 1 February 2006.

Eating Disorders

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what types of eating disorders are treated by the NHS; and how many people are estimated to be suffering from such disorders. [50538]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data relating to patients presenting with eating disorders and who were treated by the national health service in 2004–05 is shown in the table. This data may include duplicate episodes where the same patient presented for treatment for the same condition at different times; disclosure rules apply due to the sensitive nature of the data, thus the figures have been rounded to the nearest 10; and they may not add up due to rounding.

Number of patients with a primary diagnosis of an eating disorder, by gender, in England, 2004–05

Type of eating disorder	*Gender*		
	Male	*Female*	*Total*
Anorexia nervosa	80	930	1,010
Bulimia nervosa	10	90	90
Overeating associated with other psychological disturbances	0	0	0
Vomiting associated with other psychological disturbances	10	20	30
Other eating disorders	20	50	60
Eating disorders not otherwise specified	30	150	180
Total	140	1,230	1,360

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Health and Social Care Information Centre.

The national health service provides treatment for eating disorders, and other medical conditions, on the basis of clinical need. We regard the issue of eating disorders very seriously, and have asked the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to publish guidelines on core interventions for eating disorders as part of its second programme of work. NICE published clinical guidelines on eating disorders in January 2004, to inform individual NHS organisations about best practice.

Emergency Preparedness

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the statement of 19 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 925, on emergency preparedness, when the group chaired by the deputy chief medical officer to examine NHS bed capacity in the event of an influenza pandemic was established; when she expects the group to make recommendations; whether these recommendations will be published; and what resources have been set aside in preparation for implementing the recommendations of the group. [22983]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The group chaired by the Deputy Chief Medical Officer first met in October. The group has discussed issues relating to national health service additional bed capacity during a flu pandemic, and a range of issues are being taken forward.

The group met again in January to discuss progress. Resources to support emergency planning and preparedness for major incidents including a possible flu pandemic have been included within the global allocations made to primary care trusts and acute trusts. This includes resources for critical care services. However, the position regarding resources will be reviewed once the guidance prepared by the group considering critical care services is available.

Essex Strategic Health Authority

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* job title, *(b)* salary including payment by results elements and *(c)* total employment costs were for each of the highest paid five employees in the Essex Strategic Health Authority in 2004–05. [51657]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information requested is not held centrally.

The information on salaries of executives of national health service organisations are published in their annual reports and accounts.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many meetings of the *(a)* Committee of senior officials on public health, *(b)* Committee for the implementation of the Community action plan to combat cancer and *(c)* Committee on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the member states concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco products have taken place during the UK presidency of the EU; who presided over each meeting; what other UK representatives were present; what provisions were made for representation of the devolved governments; and if she will make a statement. [38042]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Committee of Senior Officials on Public Health did not meet during the United Kingdom presidency of the European Union.

We are not aware of the committee for the implementation of the community action plan to combat cancer.

The committee on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the member states concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco products met once during the UK presidency of the EU. Commission tobacco officials chaired the meeting. Two departmental tobacco officials attended, representing the UK.

The UK Government takes into account the views and interests of the devolved administrations when formulating the UK's policy position on all EU and international issues which touch upon devolved matters. Provision for attendance at EU meetings by Ministers and officials of the devolved administrations is set out in paragraphs 4.12–15 of the Concordat on Co-ordination of European Union Policy Issues (part of the Memorandum of Understanding between devolved Ministers and the UK Government). Ministers from the devolved administrations have attended and do attend councils, by agreement with the lead Whitehall Minister.

A copy is available on the Department for Constitutional Affairs' website at: www.dca.gov.uk/constitution/devolution/pubs/odpm_dev_600629.pdf.

European Health Insurance Card

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the average time taken between an eligible individual applying for and receiving a European Health Insurance Card. [46400]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are three different ways to apply for a European Health Insurance Card:

online;

telephone and by

post

Delivery time is dependent on application method currently, the average time taken from receipt of application is between three and five days, with internet the fastest route and post the slowest.

Foster Review

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will place in the Library before the February Adjournment a copy of the Foster Review of Regulatory Bodies. [52331]

Jane Kennedy: May I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Romsey (Sandra Gidley) on 13 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1765W.

General Osteopathic Council

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the work of the General Osteopathic Council. [52332]

Jane Kennedy: The role of all regulatory bodies including the General Osteopathic Council have been considered in the context of the review of non-medical regulation.

Health White Paper

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Swift campaign referred to in paragraph 2.42, of the White Paper, Our Health, Our Care, Our Say, was introduced; what resources have been committed to support the campaign in each year since its introduction; whether she has assessed the effectiveness of the campaign; and if she will make a statement. [49529]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Shift is a five year initiative, running from 2004 to 2009, as part of the National Institute for Mental Health in England's work tackling the stigma and discrimination surrounding mental health issues. Shift is funded by the Department and it received £900,000 in 2003–04 and £1 million in 2004–05.

Shift's work is steered by a board of advisors comprising people from the voluntary sector, the Department and from the National Institute for Mental Health in England, and its work programme is overseen by the Department and a cross government network focusing on mental health issues.

Further information about Shift is available from its website at www.shift.org.uk.

Hearing Aids

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health from what date in 2008 patients waiting for audiology aids and testing will be covered by the proposed 18-week maximum waiting time from the date of initial referral to fitting of a device; and if she will make a statement. [50418]

Jane Kennedy: The Department is currently reviewing the principles and definitions for the 18-week patient pathway, in light of the listening exercise conducted at the end of 2005. The final principles and definitions will be published in the spring of 2006.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will introduce a waiting list target for digital hearing aids; and if she will make a statement. [45229]

Jane Kennedy: The Department is considering the results of a recent listening exercise on the principles and definitions to govern the 18-week pathway. In the light of comments received, we will publish conclusions in the spring. To go further on audiology at this stage would pre-empt those conclusions.

Mary Creagh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to ensure that the waiting time for an NHS analogue or digital hearing aid is reduced to 18 weeks. [50714]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The Department is considering the results of a recent listening exercise on the principles and definitions to govern the 18-week pathway. In the light of comments received, we will publish conclusions in the spring. To go further on audiology at this stage would pre-empt those conclusions.

Hemel Hempstead Hospital

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will reassess her decision to close the *(a)* intensive treatment unit, *(b)* cardiac unit, *(c)* stroke unit and *(d)* acute accident and emergency services at the Hemel Hempstead Hospital in the light of the Buncefield oil depot fire and subsequent explosion in Hemel Hempstead; and if she will make a statement. [47620]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The decision to change what services are provided by the West Hertfordshire Hospital Trust is the responsibility of the trust in partnership with the primary care trusts who commission services from the trust and with the strategic health authority who is responsible for ensuring services meet the needs of the populations that they serve.

Herceptin

Mrs. Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of eligible women with metastatic breast cancer are treated with Herceptin in the Northern Cancer Network. [47418]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mrs. Hodgson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of eligible women with metastatic breast cancer in England were treated with Herceptin in the latest period for which figures are available. [47421]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

High Security Mental Hospitals

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients have escaped from high security mental hospitals in each of the last five years. [48064]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No patients have escaped from within the secure area of the high security hospitals in the last five years. During the same period, five patients absconded while on leave of absence. All five patients were returned to their hospitals within a short period of time without any offences being committed.

Home Oxygen Services

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the new arrangements for delivering home oxygen services. [51801]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* Healthcare professionals, patients' representatives and others helped develop the new arrangements and welcome this opportunity to provide a modernised service offering patients the latest oxygen equipment to improve their quality of life. Plans are to manage the change to the new arrangements over a six-month programme from 1 February 2006 to support continuity in patient services. However, in the first few days, huge volumes of orders—many for delivery of oxygen supplies at a future date—disrupted this programme. Prompt action has put these plans back on course and we continue to monitor these closely to ensure patients are receiving a reliable service.

Hospital Pharmacies

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many out-patient pharmacies there are in hospitals; and in how many cash is the only available means of payment. [50447]

Jane Kennedy: The Department does not collect information on the number of out-patient pharmacies in hospitals.

Neither is information collected about the arrangements which hospitals have in place to collect prescription charges. This is a matter for local decision.

Hospital Trusts (Thefts)

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many NHS hospital trusts have reported losing diagnostic equipment worth at least £10,000 from thefts in the last 12 months; [52633]

(2) what advice the NHS Security Management Service has issued to NHS hospital trusts in the last 12 months on how to protect drugs and equipment from organised criminals. [52634]

Ms Rosie Winterton: 11 national health service trusts have reported thefts of diagnostic equipment worth over £10,000 in the past 12 months to the NHS Security Management Service (NHS SMS).

The NHS SMS issues alerts to all NHS health bodies indicating where risks to the security of drugs and equipment have been identified. For example, an alert regarding the protection of endoscopy equipment was issued on 7 December 2005, containing 10 key pieces of advice for health bodies to assist them in both preventing and detecting such thefts.

The NHS SMS manual, launched on 17 March 2005, contains guidance on the better protection of NHS drugs and equipment. NHS health bodies' nominated security management directors and accredited local security management specialists are directed to have regard to this manual in the discharge of their security management function.

NHS SMS is also actively exploring the options for making use of new technology to track and trace high value pieces of NHS equipment. This electronic tagging may be used in the future as both a preventative measure and to monitor the whereabouts of key pieces of medical equipment.

Joint Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when she will reply to the invitation of the Joint Scrutiny and Overview Committee for Sutton, Merton, Kingston and Surrey to attend one of its meetings to discuss her decision in respect of better healthcare closer to home. [50870]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* A reply from the Secretary of State's office was sent on 6 February 2006.

Macmillan Nurses

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures she is taking to increase the numbers of Macmillan nurses working for the NHS in Shropshire. [49054]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is for trusts to decide how many nurses including palliative care nurse specialists, are employed in each specialty within hospitals. It is for local cancer networks working in partnership with primary care trusts, strategic health authorities and their workforce development directorates to assess, plan and review their workforce, education and training needs for all staff linked to the delivery of local and national priorities for cancer.

Medical Students (Newcastle)

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many students there were at *(a)* the Newcastle upon Tyne Medical School and *(b)* the Newcastle upon Tyne Dental School in each of the last five years; and what plans she has to increase the numbers of such students. [50991]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Table one shows the full-time undergraduate student numbers for medicine and dentistry at the joint Newcastle and Durham Medical and Dental school for 2001–02 to 2005–06. Table two shows the actual intake for new students for 2001–02 to 2005–06.

Table 1: Full-time undergraduate Home and European Union medical and dental students (pre-clinical and clinical) for Newcastle and Durham universities

	Dental	Medical
2001–02	339	1,023
2002–03	337	1,132
2003–04	344	1,301
2004–05	358	1,440
2005–06	384	1,583

Table 2: Intake to Newcastle Medical and Dental schools

	Newcastle medical school[1]	Newcastle dental school
2001–02	287	70
2002–03	344	70
2003–04	355	72
2004–05	363	81
2005–06[2]	381	100

[1] Includes students based at University of Durham, Queens Campus, Stockton from 2001–02.
[2] Provisional information awaiting confirmation of July 2006 student numbers in November 2006.
Source:
Higher Education Students Early Statistics survey.

We announced jointly with the Higher Education Funding Council for England the allocation of 108 extra medical school places last month. This builds on the 68.7 per cent. increase in medical school places we have already overseen between 1997–98 to 2004–05. Also, 100 extra dental school places were also announced last month, including the development of a new dental school in the South-West. All these places were allocated following highly competitive bidding exercises. We will continue to look at the scope for further expansion in line with national health service and workforce planning requirements.

Mental Health

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance she has issued to general practitioners on the prioritisation of people with severe mental illnesses for immunisation against *(a)* influenza and *(b)* avian influenza. [24444]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is important to be clear about the differences between seasonal flu, avian flu and pandemic flu. Avian influenza is a disease which mainly affects birds. Seasonal flu refers to the virus that circulates in the human population and causes widespread illness each winter. Pandemic flu will only occur after an avian virus has mutated into a novel strain which can spread easily between humans and to which they do not have immunity.

We do not currently prioritise people with severe mental illnesses for immunisation against influenza and have made no specific plans to prioritise this group of people for immunisation against pandemic influenza.

As a specific vaccine will not start to become available until four to six months after the pandemic virus has emerged, it is unlikely to be available for the first wave. When stocks start to become available, priority may have to be given to certain groups. Health care workers and other essential service key workers may need to be vaccinated first, as it will be important to maintain health and other essential services. Those groups most at risk of serious illness will be a priority to receive the vaccine as supplies increase.

Final decisions regarding prioritisation will be made on the basis of information emerging from the early stages of the pandemic about the virus and those groups most at risk.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action she has taken in response to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence recommendations that psychological treatment should be offered prior to drug treatment for patients suffering from psychological conditions; and if she will make a statement. [47183]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Local health communities are expected to review their existing practice in the treatment and management of various mental health problems against the guidelines published by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. The reviews should consider the resources required to implement any recommendations relating to the use of psychological interventions and the timeline over which full implementation is envisaged. As announced in the recent White Paper, 'Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services', the Government are committed to expand access to psychological therapies. To this end, two demonstration sites are being established for people of working age with mild to moderate mental health problems with the aim of helping them to remain in or return to work. The sites will also aim to establish an evidence base for the effectiveness of such therapies and to support the extension to non-working age people and those with moderate to severe mental illness.

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the consistency and effectiveness of prescribing practices within the NHS for delivering the most effective drug therapies to individuals affected by psychological problems; and if she will make a statement. [47184]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Responsibility for prescribing rests with the clinician caring for the patient. Prescribers have an ethical responsibility to inform patients about the treatment proposed including any possible side effects of prescribed medicines. It is the responsibility of local national health service bodies to ensure that robust clinical governance arrangements are in place to prevent poor prescribing. Local clinical audit and peer review provide an incentive for clinicians to study their patterns of care and improve prescribing standards. Clinical guidelines developed by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence provide recommendations for good practice in the management and treatment of various mental health problems.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the requirement is for inspection of in-patient care facilities for people with mental illness in *(a)* the independent sector and *(b)* NHS establishments. [48185]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Healthcare Commission has a statutory duty to assess the management, provision and quality of healthcare provided by the national

health service. NHS trusts with inpatient mental health facilities are reviewed annually, and are awarded annual performance ratings.

The independent (private and voluntary) mental healthcare sector is also regulated by the Healthcare Commission, through registration, annual inspections and through the monitoring of complaints and information. The Healthcare Commission's duty to regulate and inspect independent healthcare is laid out in the "Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act" (2003), the "Care Standards Act" (2000), and the Department's "Private and Voluntary Healthcare (England) Regulations" 2001 and "National Minimum Standards" 2002.

Detailed information about the Healthcare Commission's work on inspecting NHS and independent sector mental health inpatient facilities is available from the Healthcare Commission's website at www.healthcarecommission.org.uk.

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much accommodating NHS patients detained under the Mental Health Acts in private sector beds cost in each year since 1997, broken down by strategic health authority area. [49264]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not available. Data for detained patient costs is not collected, but the total costs for secure unit activity from non-national health service providers for the most recent year which data are available, 2003–04, and which includes detained patient costs, is shown in the table.

Secure unit service costs are not collected on an individual strategic health authority basis. Data for other years from 1998 is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/refcosts, within worksheet TMHv, and data for 2004–05 is due for publication in March.

Secure unit activity from Non-NHS providers	*Number of occupied bed days*	*2003–04 national average unit cost (£)*	*Total activity cost (£)*
Local psychiatric intensive care units	4,896	652	3,193,309
Low level secure services	57,096	376	21,444,545
Medium level secure services	100,760	441	44,438,180
High dependency secure provision: women's services	442	754	333,192
High dependency secure provision: mental health/ psychosis	1,226	407	499,349
High dependency secure provision: learning disabilities	6,728	305	2,054,729
High dependency secure provision: personality disorder	578	433	249,988
Total	—	—	72,213,290

Ministerial Visit

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans she has to visit Hemel Hempstead constituency in this Session of Parliament. [26251]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 8 November 2005]:* The Secretary of State for Health has no current plans to visit Hemel Hempstead in this Session of Parliament.

NHS Finance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 11 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 732W, on NHS Finance, whether the NHS staff with a track record of helping challenged NHS trusts included in the turnaround teams will be remunerated by the organisation which has been awarded the contract to operate turnaround teams; whether she intends to award further contracts to turnaround teams in addition to the contract for the initial assessment referred to in her previous answer; and what total budget she has set aside for all such contracts is in *(a)* 2005–06 and *(b)* 2006–07. [46563]

Jane Kennedy: The turnaround teams were announced by the Secretary of State in a ministerial statement on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS. The teams will comprise of experts with a mix of commercial and national health service turnaround skills.

If NHS staff are used to help turnaround, arrangements will be made with the NHS staff's employer.

A contract for a national programme office to co-ordinate and manage the turnaround teams has been awarded to consultants PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Turnaround financial support for the transition leaders across the country will be contracted through the Department.

The value of all these contracts are to be treated as commercial in confidence.

NHS Medicines (Fraud)

Sir John Butterfill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of whether companies are being fraudulently set up to supply fake medicines under licence to the NHS; what steps she is taking to prevent this; and if she will make a statement. [48547]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), as the Government body responsible for the safety and licensing of medicines in the United Kingdom, is undertaking retrospective checks on companies that have submitted wholesale dealer's licence applications and has conducted a review of processes for checking the bona fides of applicants for wholesale dealer's licences. New arrangements for checking information provided in such applications are being established. These will include more detailed checks on companies and individuals, as well as on the experience, qualifications and personal credentials of those named on a licence.

NHS Trusts (Chartered Accountants)

Mrs. Lait: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 16 January 2006, *Official*

Report, column 470W, on NHS trusts (chartered accountants), whether *(a)* employment history and *(b)* professional qualifications are included in the information presented to Ministers when they appoint non-executive directors of health trusts; and whether Ministers have an input into the appointment of executive directors. [50860]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Secretary of State has delegated responsibility for the appointments of non-executive chairs and members to national health service boards to the NHS Appointments Commission. The Appointments Commission ask candidates to provide details including career history and qualifications that are pertinent to the role they have applied for.

The Secretary of State has no role in the recruitment of executive directors as these appointments are for individual NHS trusts to undertake.

NICE Guidance

Mr. Havard: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how stakeholders may submit new evidence of relevance to a published clinical guideline to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence; [50522]

(2) what steps she takes to ensure that National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines are as up-to-date as possible. [50523]

Jane Kennedy: Stakeholders may write, at any time, to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to draw NICE'S attention to new evidence of relevance to a published clinical guideline.

The updating of NICE'S clinical guidelines is a matter for NICE. NICE follows an established process for ensuring that its guidelines are updated. The process that NICE follows can be found in the guides, 'The Guideline Development Process—An Overview for Stakeholders, the Public and the NHS', and technical manual, 'Guideline Development Methods—Information for National Collaborating Centres and Guideline Developers'. These guides are available on NICE'S website at www.nice.org.uk

Mr. Havard: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether one section of a National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence clinical guideline may be reviewed after two years without reviewing the whole guideline; [50524]

(2) what evidence is considered when deciding whether to review a National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence clinical guideline two years after publication. [50525]

Jane Kennedy: The process of reviewing the evidence underpinning a clinical guideline is expected to begin four years after the date of issue of this guideline. Reviewing may begin earlier than four years if significant evidence that affects the guideline recommendations is identified sooner. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) considers whether new evidence is significant evidence that may affect the guideline recommendations.

NICE is currently consulting from 25 November 2005 until 17 February 2006 on its process for reviewing clinical guidelines and the consultation document, 'Proposals for making the guideline development process more efficient'. Further information on this consultation can be found on NICE'S website at: www.nice.org.uk/pdf/CG_Tech_Consultation.pdf

Non-geographic Telephone Lines

Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps she is taking to ensure that users of the NHS are informed of changes by NHS service providers to non-geographic telephone lines; [45757]

(2) how revenue from calls to NHS service providers using non-geographic telephone lines is used; [45758]

(3) how many NHS service providers in England use non-geographic telephone lines; and if she will make a statement. [45759]

Jane Kennedy: It is the responsibility of local management to ensure users of the national health service are informed of changes by NHS service providers to non-geographical telephone lines.

Information on how revenue sharing from calls to NHS service providers using non-geographical telephone lines is used is not collected centrally.

Information on the number of NHS service providers in England and Wales using non-geographical telephone numbers is not collected centrally.

Optometrists

Mr. Pelling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make it her policy for NHS patients to have the right to see the optometrist of their choice under the NHS. [48691]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is already the case that eligible patients may apply to any contractor on a primary care trust ophthalmic list to have a national health service funded sight test.

Orthodontic Practices

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what agreement was reached on 13 January with the British Orthodontic Society regarding the contractual arrangements for new practices; [49846]

(2) if she will make a statement on the dental contract arrangements for new orthodontic practices. [49848]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department will shortly be issuing further guidance on the new arrangements for orthodontic care and treatment, which will take into account discussions with the British Orthodontic Society.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate she has made of the number of new orthodontic practices established in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005; and what steps she is taking to ensure that their contracts are based on current activity levels. [49849]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not available.

Following discussions with the British Orthodontic Society, the Department will shortly be issuing further guidance to primary care trusts on agreeing appropriate contracts for orthodontists whose current levels of activity are above the levels reflected in the reference period.

Palliative Care

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total amount of Government spending on *(a)* palliative care and *(b)* hospices was in each of the last 30 years. [45569]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not collect the data requested. The level of funding given to local hospices is a matter for discussion between the commissioning primary care trust and the hospice.

Parkinson's Disease

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the level of funding has been for patients suffering from Parkinson's disease in Bedfordshire in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [47356]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts, in partnership with local stakeholders, have the responsibility for deciding what services to provide for their populations, including those with Parkinson's disease. They are best placed to understand the health needs of the communities that they serve and have responsibility for commissioning services to meet that need.

Mrs. Dorries: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations her Department has received regarding funding for Parkinson's disease nurse specialists in Bedfordshire; and if she will make a statement. [47358]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I am not aware of any representations made to the Department regarding funding for Parkinson's disease nurse specialists in Bedfordshire.

Patient and Public Involvement Resource Centre

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which organisations have responsibility for *(a)* setting up and *(b)* running the patient and public involvement resource centre; and on what date she expects the resource centre to begin its work. [50826]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* The Department is responsible for setting up the patient and public involvement resource centre. We are currently finalising the contract and until the procurement process is complete we are unable to provide further details as they are commercially sensitive.

We expect the successful provider to commence work soon. A press notice will be issued as soon as the contract has been awarded.

Patients Forums

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how administrative support will be given to patients' forums after forum support organisation contracts end. [50825]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* This is being considered as part of the review of patient and public involvement, which will be completed by April.

Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals Foundation NHS Trust

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what effect the ongoing reappraisal by her Department of the NHS Private Finance Initiative programme has had on her Department's support for the proposals for the Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals Foundation NHS Trust as laid down in its outline business case. [48416]

Ms Rosie Winterton: "The NHS in England: the operating framework for 2006/7" was published on 26 January. The trust, with its local health partners, will now need to revalidate the approval parameters for the Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals Foundation National Health Service Trust private finance initiative scheme and confirm they take account of the current reforms to the national health service. They will be asked to respond to a range of questions from the Department concerning factors such as long-term affordability, assumptions on efficiency gains and income growth, liquidity, activity shift and reference cost. The conclusions will need to be ratified by the Department before the scheme can proceed to financial close.

PFI Project

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what costs incurred by the preferred bidder on the Barts and the London NHS trust private finance initiative project would require to be returned if the project were not to proceed. [50462]

Jane Kennedy: As with all such contractual arrangements, the amount of liability, if any, would be subject to agreement and negotiation at some time in the future, should the project not proceed.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much central Government funding was received by *(a)* Tendring and *(b)* Colchester primary care trusts in each of the last five years; and what average amount was received by primary care trusts in England for each of those years. [52245]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Funding received is shown in the table.

Government funding received

£000

	Tendring primary care trust	*Colchester primary care trust*	*Average for all primary care trusts in England*
2000–01	65,628	n/a	57,166
2001–02	85,683	77,245	102,476
2002–03	102,522	105,906	152,643
2003–04	145,694	156,233	169,217
2004–05	164,749	168,754	189,599

Notes:
1. Funding is the sum of net parliamentary funding and income from the Department. Funding from other Government Departments cannot be separately identified.
2. Primary care trusts were not fully established until 2003–04. In earlier years health authorities continued to receive funding and be responsible for the commissioning of health care services, with devolution to primary care trusts occurring at different rates, hence figures cannot be directly compared.
3. Funding allocations to primary care trusts are based largely on weighted populations so direct comparisons are not necessarily appropriate.
Source:
Audited primary care trust summarisation schedules.

Royal Shrewsbury Hospital

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding her Department provides to run the MRI scanner at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. [49056]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available in the format requested. We allocate funding to primary care trusts on the basis of the relative needs of their populations.

It is for primary care trusts (PCTs) in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services.

For the current financial year, Shropshire County PCT has been allocated £276 million, a cash increase of £23 million over the previous year, which equates to 9.16 per cent. Telford and Wrekin PCT has been allocated £153 million, a cash increase of £16 million, or £11.69 per cent.

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much VAT the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital paid the Exchequer for drugs purchased by the hospital in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2005. [50087]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Value added tax is not separately identified within the National Health Service summarisation schedules or accounts submitted to the Department.

Sex Change Operations

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients have sought to have their sex change operations reversed since 1995. [50853]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not centrally available.

St. Bartholomew's Hospital

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will make a statement on the redevelopment of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. [51018]

Jane Kennedy: The North East London Strategic Health Authority recently commissioned an independent review looking at the redevelopment of St. Bartholomew's in the context of existing cancer and cardiac capacity in London. We have now received the report and ministers must now consider the full findings of the review.

The national health service in East London has already seen record investment since 1997. We are committed to continuing to deliver improvement to NHS services in this part of London. As soon as ministers have considered the full findings of the review, we will work quickly with the local NHS to finalise consideration of the business case for the Barts and the London private finance initiative scheme.

Statins

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the use of statins in each year since they have been prescribed. [45563]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Statin prescribing effectively began in 1991 with a low base. Since publication of the national service framework for coronary heart disease (CHD) in 2000 it has been rising at approximately 30 per cent. per year. In the last financial year the national health service spent about £0.75 billion on statins, benefiting around £2.7 million patients.

There are numerous studies showing the benefits of statins for secondary prevention of CHD. One of the most influential is the heart protection study published in 2002 which found that reducing low density lipoprotein cholesterol in high risk patients resulted—allowing for non-compliance—in a possible 70 to 100 lives saved per 1,000 treated over five years.

Suffolk Coastal Primary Care Trust

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people made up the financial and management specialist team that visited Suffolk Coastal primary care trust to examine the state of the primary care trust; and how many days the team spent investigating onsite. [47653]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* The turnaround teams were announced in a ministerial statement on 1 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 37WS. The teams will comprise of experts with a mix of commercial and national health service turnaround skills.

The first stage of this is a baseline assessment, the aim of which is to ensure there is an agreed understanding of the local financial problem and that actions are in hand to address this.

The contract for the baseline assessment was awarded to consultants KPMG. Suffolk Coastal primary care trust's assessment was included in this assessment, which covered 62 organisations. Information is not available on the breakdown of the resources KPMG assigned to each assessment. The value of this contract is commercial in confidence.

Tarceva

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether Tarceva (erlotinib) has been prescribed by NHS trusts. [50505]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* Erlotinib (Tarceva), for non-small cell lung cancer, was granted a licence by the European Medicines Agency in September 2005. There is no record of it having been dispensed in England, though our information is not comprehensive and might not capture the use of the drug in clinical trials where it has not been dispensed at the national health service's expense.

Terminal Illness (Benefit Provision)

Anne Main: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if she will take steps to ensure advice on benefits is made available to patients when they are diagnosed as having terminal illness. [44334]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is working with the Department for Work and Pensions to ensure that advice on benefits is available to all patients including those with a terminal illness.

Total Purchasing Pilots

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of total purchasing pilots in primary care services. [46590]

Jane Kennedy: No recent assessment has been made.

Visual Impairment

Dr. Tony Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when a comprehensive low vision service will be available to visually-impaired people in all primary care trust areas. [43172]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Low vision aids are already available free on loan to any person requiring them. The Hospital Eye Service assesses the needs of the individual and provides any necessary low vision aids.

Social services departments have responsibility for assessing the needs of individuals who request help due to problems with their vision. This is usually in the form of modifications to a person's home such as improved lighting and hi-marks for cookers. Any help offered will be following a comprehensive assessment of the individual's needs.

The Government-funded integrating community equipment services (ICES) project was designed to improve equipment services for people by integrating the previously separate national health service and social services equipment services. The ICES team completed their work on integration in March 2005 and it is now the responsibility of the local social care and health service providers to determine how best to provide services to meet the needs of the individuals in their populations, in the light of local priorities.

Low vision was one of the areas identified by the eye care services steering group as an area for further development. A care pathway for low vision services has been published and a number of pilots are currently testing the pathway. The model pathways are designed to improve integration of eye care services across primary and secondary care and social services.

Learning from the pilots and their developing evidence-base will be shared with the NHS to support wider implementation. A conference is planned for June 2006 to showcase the pilots.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 17 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1299W, on Health Committee evidence, if she will place in the Library the diagnostic waiting time statistics referred to in answer to Question 188 before the Health Committee on 1 December 2005, HC 736-i, on public health and personal social services. [45420]

Jane Kennedy: The data collected from the pilot sites is unvalidated management information collected to help to refine the list of diagnostic tests and procedures to be included in the national data collection, and to inform the development of policy on 18 weeks. Pilot sites submitted data in the knowledge that it was unvalidated and of variable data quality. It would not, therefore, be appropriate to publish this information in the Library. However, over time, we will commence routine publication of data on diagnostic waiting times and activity and expect the first report to be published during spring 2006.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* average and *(b)* longest waiting time was for an out-patient appointment at each of the hospitals run by Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust in the last year for which figures are available. [50729]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available in the requested format. However, the table shows waiting times for a first out-patient appointment following general practitioner written referral request for the Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals National Health Service Foundation Trust.

Waiting times for first out-patient appointment following GP written referral request—Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust—tranche 2

Quarter	*Median wait (weeks)*
December 2004	8.5
March 2005	8.2
June 2005	7.6
September 2005	7.9
December 2005	n/a

Tranche 1

Quarter	*Not seen over 13 but less than 17 weeks*	*Not seen over 17 but less than 21 weeks*	*Not seen over 21 weeks*
December 2004	1,105	0	0
March 2005	443	0	0
June 2005	624	0	0
September 2005	557	0	0
December 2005	0	0	0

Notes:
December 2005 contains only data collected in tranche 1. Tranche 2 data that is used to calculate the average waiting time will be available on 3 March.

Source:
Department of Health form QM08

Greg Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made towards ensuring every patient is treated within 18 weeks of general practitioner referral; and what assessment she has made of the impact of such progress on other NHS services. [40263]

Jane Kennedy: Clear progress has been made in setting the foundations for 18-weeks over the past few years—with in-patient and out-patient waiting times falling to six months and 13 weeks respectively. A new data collection on diagnostic test has been rolled out nationally since January 2006 in order to monitor progress against local plans.

We plan to measure the total patient pathway, from referral to treatment, across England starting in April 2007. In the meantime, all strategic health authorities (SHAs) have developed plans, based upon the three stages of treatment, out-patients, diagnostics and in-patients. The Department has recently asked primary care trusts and SHAs to refresh these plans for cutting long waits in order to reflect their latest thinking on achievement of the 18-week target.

The Department is currently collating the responses of a service-wide listening exercise on the proposed principles and definitions for 18-weeks and will publish the outcome in 2006.

The Department has issued very clear guidance that clinical priority must be the main determinant of when patients should be seen and we are not aware of any evidence to suggest that the successes in delivering shorter maximum waiting times to date has had any adverse impact on other national health service services. NHS guidelines make it clear that it remains the responsibility of local health services to ensure that there are fair and acceptable local standards governing access to services for areas not covered by national targets.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Alcohol Misuse

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to combat *(a)* binge drinking and *(b)* other forms of alcohol misuse. [50471]

Hazel Blears: The Government have recently introduced a number of measures to combat alcohol misuse, the Licensing Act 2003 is a central component of these measures. *(a)* Rights and responsibilities are central to the Government's plans to combat alcohol misuse.

Flexible licensing hours as brought in by the Licensing Act 2003 counters binge drinking by not encouraging people to drink as much as possible before last orders, this is backed up by tough enforcement powers that target individuals through increased use of fixed penalty notices, premises through conditional licenses and expedited licensing reviews, and areas through designated public place orders (and drink banning orders which are proposed in the Violent Crime Reduction Bill). The Government are working with the drinks industry to develop a voluntary approach to tackling alcohol misuse. *(b)*

The Departments of Health, Education and Skills and Home Office are taking forward measures to combat alcohol misuse. Alcohol education is a key component of the national curriculum as part of the healthy schools initiative The alcohol misuse enforcement campaigns target alcohol misuse through increased enforcement of legislation, test-purchasing operations. The Government are planning to launch sensible drinking messages later this year in partnership with the drinks industry.

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he plans to take to help the public to gain access to services that will help them tackle antisocial behaviour. [50612]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* We have already provided guidance and support to local agencies helping them to target resources and powers to protect the public and ensure that antisocial behaviour is tackled, not tolerated. The Respect programme will now take this further so that local services are organised so that they respond swiftly and effectively to the problems that communities face today.

People need to see and feel that a difference can be made. For example, along with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister we are developing a single non-emergency number to provide the public direct access, via a new three digit number to community safety advice, information and action to tackle antisocial behaviour. We are also committed to ensuring that every area will be benefiting from neighbourhood policing by 2008. Local people will know who their police officers are and how to contact them and neighbourhood policing teams will tackle antisocial behaviour as a priority when local communities identify this as one of their key concerns.

We also aim to improve accountability between service providers and the public by giving more power to local communities. The Police and Justice Bill, contains provisions for the Community Call for Action. This is a way for local communities to demand a response from agencies to persistent local community safety or antisocial behaviour problems, via an approach to their ward councillor.

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals were charged with causing criminal damage to property by means of graffiti in *(a)* Swindon, *(b)* the South West and *(c)* England and Wales in each year since 1995. [50915]

Hazel Blears: Data on the number of persons charged with offences are not collected centrally. Also, it is not possible to distinguish offences of graffiti from other types of criminal damage in the Office for Criminal Justice Reform figures for court proceedings as the circumstances of individual offences are not collected centrally

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of local authorities have an antisocial behaviour policy. [50920]

Hazel Blears: All of the 351 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP) in England and 22 Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) in Wales currently audit the levels of crime and disorder and misuse of drugs (substance misuse in Wales) in their area so as to identify the extent of these problems within their community, and develop strategies that deal effectively with the problems agreed as priorities for action following consultation within their communities.

They must ensure the need to tackle antisocial behaviour is reflected in the way local services are delivered where it is identified as a priority for action. Local authorities as a "responsible authority" within the CDRP play a major part, working in partnership with the police, police and fire and rescue authorities and primary care trusts, in addressing and tackling antisocial behaviour.

By 2007 all top tier local authorities in England will have a Local Area Agreement (LAA). LAAs are three year agreements struck between central and local government containing outcomes which address national and local priorities. The requirement for LAAs to contain an outcome on building respect and reducing antisocial behaviour is mandatory.

This underlines the importance of respect and antisocial behaviour as key national priorities. Preventing and tackling antisocial behaviour has also been identified as a key theme in Round eight of the Beacon Council Scheme and this will act as a further incentive for councils to ensure antisocial behaviour is top of their agenda.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions there have been in North Yorkshire for breaches of antisocial behaviour orders. [50988]

Hazel Blears: Antisocial behaviour order (ASBO) breach data held centrally only cover breach proceedings where there has been a conviction. These data are currently available from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 for ASBOs issued since 1 June 2000. During this period, within the North Yorkshire criminal justice system area, notification has been received of eight persons breaching their ASBO on one or more occasions.

Asylum/Immigration

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average length of time was that an asylum seeker was detained under the fast-track procedures in the last period for which figures are available. [50637]

Mr. McNulty: Of those detained on 10 February 2006, the average length of time asylum seekers had been detained under the fast track asylum procedure was 56 days for male claimants at Harmondsworth and 47 for female claimants at Yarl's Wood.

The combined average time for the two is 55 days. These figures include claims that are still pending. This information is based on internal management information and as such is not published within the official statistics.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fast-track asylum applications were *(a)* made and *(b)* refused as at 31 December 2005. [50638]

Mr. McNulty: The latest date for which figures are available is 10 February 2006, at which date 3,494 male asylum claimants had been detained under the fast-track procedure at Harmondsworth since it began in April 2003. Of those male claimants who remained in the procedure, 2,901 were refused asylum at the initial decision stage.

At the same date, 278 female asylum claimants had been detained under the fast-track procedure at Yarl's Wood since it began in May 2005. Of those female claimants who remained in the procedure, 205 were refused asylum at the initial decision stage. This information is based on internal management information and as such is not published within the official statistics.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers are detained under the asylum fast-track procedures; and how many of them are children. [50639]

Mr. McNulty: As at 10 February 2006, there were 230 asylum claimants detained under the fast-track asylum procedures. None of those detained were children. Neither asylum seeking children nor asylum seekers with child dependants are detained under the fast-track procedures. This information is based on internal management information and as such is not published within the official statistics.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum applicants have broken their bail conditions in each of the last three years. [50644]

Mr. McNulty: The information requested, on the number of asylum applicants who have broken their bail conditions in each of their three years, is not available.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum detainees have had their removal delayed due to difficulties in obtaining travel documents in each of the last five years. [50658]

Mr. McNulty: Figures on delays in obtaining travel documentation are not kept and could be obtained only at disproportional cost.

Asylum/Immigration

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what projects his Department is funding to promote affordable immigration advice to visa applicants overseas. [50636]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

UKvisas does not fund any projects to promote affordable immigration advice to visa applicants overseas. However, free information leaflets about the different categories of entry clearance and advice on how to apply is available from Visa Sections, our missions' websites and from UKvisas.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* asylum and *(b)* immigration removals were delayed for two weeks or more in 2005. [50649]

Mr. McNulty: The information is as follows.

(a) Records indicate that in 2005, 15,019 failed asylum seekers were removed from the UK. Out of this figure, 452 (3 per cent.) were removed within two weeks of their appeal rights being exhausted.

(b) In additions records indicate that in 2005, there were 12,540 non failed asylum seeker removals. Our records do not indicate how many immigration (non failed asylum seeker) removals were delayed for two weeks or more after removal directions were set in 2005.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many student applicants were refused entry to the UK by an *(a)* immigration officer and *(b)* entry clearance officer in each of the last five years. [50651]

Mr. McNulty: The number of student applicants refused by an Immigration Officer, for each of the last five years, is as follows:

	Number
2001	2,395
2002[1]	2,815
2003	2,940
2004	2,400
2005	[1]1,480

[1] The data for 2002 is incomplete due to a change in computer systems.

Note:
The data for the first half of 2003 is incomplete (see above). The statistics supplied are locally collated management information and are therefore subject to change. The data has been rounded to the nearest 5.

The number of student applicants refused by an Entry Clearance Officer, for each of the last five years, is as follows:

	Number
2000	20,105
2001–02	38,873
2002–03	52,520
2003–04	72,052
2004–05	92,720

Prior to 2001–02, Entry Clearance statistics were produced by calendar year. The statistics supplied are Entry Clearance statistics published by UKvisas.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many successful appeals of refusal decisions of student applicants there were in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004 and *(c)* 2005. [50653]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

Neither UKvisas nor the Department for Constitutional Affairs holds these statistics.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many entry clearance officers can speak fluently the language of the country they are situated in; and if he will make a statement; [50654]

(2) what language qualification requirements there are on entry clearance officers before they can take up their position. [50665]

I have been asked to reply.

UKvisas does not keep a record of how many Entry Clearance Officers (ECOs) can speak the language of the country they are situated in. Most Visa Sections have interpreters and therefore an ECO is not required to have formal language qualifications in order to do their job. However, where an ECO is required to have language skills, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office will provide training up to the necessary level.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people *(a)* were successful in applying for a visa to enter the UK and *(b)* failed in their visa application in (i) 2003, (ii) 2004 and (iii) 2005. [50659]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

Details of successful and unsuccessful visa applications in the requested years are as follows:

Visas	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Issued	1,648,474	1,828,367	2,008,132
Refused	249,830	339,616	483,457

Since 2001, UKvisas has published statistics on a financial year basis. The figures provided here are all publicly available along with other entry clearance statistics on the UKvisas website at www.ukvisas.gov.uk—"Entry Clearance: Facts and Figures".

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many local interpreters are employed by the Entry Clearance Office in Islamabad. [50664]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

The Visa Section at our High Commission in Islamabad currently has 26 dedicated locally-engaged Entry Clearance Assistants whose primary purpose is to provide interpreting services. In addition, there are 10 further locally-engaged staff engaged in other work within the Visa Section who can assist with interpreting duties. There are also three Entry Clearance Officers (UK staff based overseas) who speak Urdu.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average length of time taken by an immigration officer in the UK to make a decision on an entry application was in the last period for which figures are available. [50837]

Mr. McNulty: The statistics requested are not available and may be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

British Citizenship (Erroneous Refusals)

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of British nationals from Hong Kong who have been erroneously refused British citizenship as a result of Home Office error; over what period of time the errors occurred; what steps he has taken to rectify the errors; and if he will make a statement. [51399]

Mr. McNulty: There has been no Home Office error. The decisions made were taken on the basis of information provided by the Indian Government in 1997–98 about their citizenship law which they have just corrected. Under the British Nationality (Hong Kong) Act 1997 possession of another citizenship immediately before four February 1997 rendered individuals ineligible for British citizenship.

We relied on other governments for advice about people who possessed their citizenship. We estimate that approximately 600 applications were determined on the basis of the Indian Government's original advice, mostly dating from the period July 1997 to June 1999. Any applications which were refused on the basis of the original advice, and where the applicant has confirmed that he or she still wishes to receive British citizenship, will be reconsidered.

No additional fee will be payable by the applicant in such cases. Both the Home Office and the Consulate-General Hong Kong have taken steps to publicise these developments. Details can be found on the following websites:

http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/ind/en/home/applying/british_nationality/new_information_on.html

and

http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1138870241398.

The Consulate-General in Hong Kong has also sent a letter to the Council of Hong Kong Indian Associations asking them to bring this matter to the attention of their members. The *South China Morning Post* carried the story on the front page of its 10 February 2006 edition.

Cautions

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy that cautions should not be used to deal with offences where reoffending is likely; and if he will make a statement. [51733]

Hazel Blears: Guidance on the cautioning of adult offenders is contained in the Cautioning of Adult Offenders Circular 30/2005 issued by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform. Cautions are a non-statutory disposal. One of their main aims, as stated in the circular, is to reduce the likelihood of re-offending.

The circular makes clear that a caution can be used for cases involving first-time, low level offences when to do so would meet the public interest. It is not possible to set out definitive rules on the circumstances in which cautions are appropriate, because their use involves the exercise of discretion by the police who have to take into account a number of considerations in each case. These considerations include whether a caution is appropriate to the offence and the offender and whether it is likely to be effective in the circumstances.

The circular advises that both national and any locally held records must be checked before a caution is given, to ensure that the suspect's criminal record is known and up-to-date and to avoid inappropriate use. If the suspect has previously received a caution, then a further caution should not normally be considered. However, if there has been a sufficient lapse of time to suggest that a previous caution has had a significant deterrent effect (two years or more), then a caution can be used. A caution can also still be administered if the subsequent offence is trivial or unrelated. If the suspect has previously, when aged 17 or under, received a reprimand or final warning, a period of two years should also be allowed to elapse before administering a caution.

Class A Drug Offences

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people under the age of 25 years were arrested for class A drug offences in each of the last five years. [47699]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The requested data are not collected centrally.

Community Sentences

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to introduce a requirement for all offenders sentenced in the community to perform unpaid work; and what resource implications are being taken into account. [50058]

Fiona Mactaggart: We believe that unpaid work should be at the heart of tough and effective community sentences. Highly visible community payback shows the public that offenders are making amends to the community for the harm they have caused. At the moment unpaid work is a part of about half of all community sentences. We expect the number of hours of unpaid work that offenders carry out in the community to rise from five million hours in 2003 to approaching 10 million hours by 2011.

Community Support Officers

Edward Miliband: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many police community support officers have been introduced in *(a)* Doncaster North, *(b)* the borough of Doncaster and *(c)* South Yorkshire since the scheme began; and what assessment he has made of the impact of community support officers on crime and antisocial behaviour; [50597]

(2) how many police officers there were in *(a)* Doncaster North, *(b)* the borough of Doncaster and *(c)* South Yorkshire in each year since 1997. [50598]

Hazel Blears: Figures relating to the number of police officers are collected by police force area and have been collected at basic command unit (BCU) level since March 2003. These figures are given in the table. Figures for Doncaster North are not collected centrally.

In South Yorkshire there were 14 PCSOs as at 31 March 2003. This figure increased by 45, to give a total of 59 at 31 March 2004. As at 31 March 2005 this figure had increased again by 66, giving a total of 125 PCSOs. This figure remained the same for September 2005. Information on the number of PCSOs in basic command units has been collected since June 2005. The Doncaster basic command unit had 36 PCSOs on 30 June 2005. Deployment of PCSOs with in Doncaster is an operational matter for the Divisional Commander. "A National Evaluation of Community Support Officers" (Home Office Research Study 297) was published on 25 January.

A copy of the report has been placed in the Library and shows that PCSOs have been well received by the public. They are helping to restore respect in local communities by providing reassurance and tackling antisocial behaviour and low level crime.

Police officer strength in South Yorkshire and Doncaster, 1997–2005

	South Yorkshire[1]	Doncaster[2]
1997	3,159	—
1998	3,182	—
1999	3,168	—
2000	3,163	—
2001	3,197	—
2002	3,199	510
2003	3,183	533
2004	3,279	549
2005	3,265	526

[1] The figures in this table are based on full-time equivalent figures less staff on career breaks or maternity/paternity leave, and have been rounded to the nearest whole number.
[2] Police officer strength has only been collected at basic command unit level since 2003. The 2002 figure was provided by HMIC. Figures are based on full-time equivalent figures (including staff on career breaks or maternity/paternity leave) and have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Complaints Audit Committee

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department has taken following the recommendations made in the latest Complaints Audit Committee report. [50691]

Mr. McNulty: Since the publication of the Complaints Audit Committee's 2004–05 Annual Report in July 2005, IND has undertaken a significant amount of work to implement their recommendations across the Department.

The 2004–05 Annual Report recommendations will form part of a wider "rolling register" of action points that the Committee has raised for IND to consider. Also included in the register will be recommendations arising from their quarterly audits of complaints across IND.

IND's response to these recommendations will be published in our official reply to the CAC's annual report which is due for publication in October 2006.

Crime

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents of violent crime there were in *(a)* Swindon and *(b)* England in each year from 1997 to 2005. [50918]

Hazel Blears: Available information relating to recorded offences is given in the following table. Crime statistics for Swindon are recorded at Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) level and are available from 1999–2000 to 2004–05. It is estimated that the effect of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002 was a 20 per cent. increase nationally in recorded violent crime in its first year. Violent crime is comprised of the violence against the person, sexual offences and robbery offence groups.

Table 1: Recorded offences of violent crime—1997

Number of offences recorded

Period	Swindon CDRP	England
1997	—	326,993

Note:
The data in this table are prior to the introduction of the revised counting rules for recorded crime, which came into effect on 1 April 1998. Therefore, this figure is not directly comparable with those for later years.

Table 2: Recorded offences of violent crime—1998–99 to 2001–02

Number of offences recorded

Period	Swindon CDRP	England
1998–99	—	571,027
1999–2000	1,906	662,525
2000–01	2,094	692,552
2001–02	2,315	773,897

Note:
The data in this table are prior to the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard. These figures are not directly comparable with those for later years.

Table 3: Recorded offences of violent crime—2002–03 to 2004–05

Number of offences recorded

Period	Swindon CDRP	England
2002–03	3,191	935,019
2003–04	2,947	1,052,601
2004–05	2,794	1,127,681

Note:
The data in this table take account of the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in April 2002. These figures are not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many violent crimes took place in Peterborough city council area in each of the last five years. [50730]

Hazel Blears: The information requested is given in the following table. It is estimated that the effect of the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002 was a 20 per cent. increase nationally in recorded violent crime in its first year.

Peterborough UA—violent crime

Financial year	CDRP offences
2000–01	2,761
2001–02	3,202
2002–03	5,203
2003–04	5,855
2004–05	5,827

Note:
The National Crime Recording Standard was introduced on 1 April 2002. Figures are therefore not directly comparable with those for earlier years.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females were (i) prosecuted for and (ii) convicted of (A) murder and (B) manslaughter in Southend in 2004. [50857]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data from the Court Proceedings Database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at South East Essex petty sessional area for murder and manslaughter in 2004, are provided in the following table.

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates' courts and found guilty at all courts for murder and manslaughter, South East Essex Petty Sessional Area 2004[1]

Offence	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*
Murder		
Male	1	1
Female	—	—
Manslaughter[2]		
Male	2	1
Female	—	—

[1] These data are provided on the principal offence basis.
[2] Includes: manslaughter, child destruction, infanticide, causing death by dangerous driving, diminished responsibility and causing death by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs.

Data for 2005 will be available in the autumn of 2006.

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he plans to take to publicise action taken to tackle antisocial behaviour to members of the public in Swindon. [50607]

Hazel Blears: The Respect Action plan sets out our intention to empower local communities to challenge and tackle antisocial behaviour through greater awareness of the powers available to them. We will ensure effective dialogue between local people and services by introducing regular and systematic "face the people" briefing sessions, involving senior representation from the police and local authorities.

In addition, the respect "Taking A Stand" awards and action days held nationwide will stimulate public debate about acceptable behaviour and inform antisocial behaviour practitioners and other specialists about local activities. The action plan also proposes a publicity campaign to counter disrespect such as physical violence, threats, intimidation, verbal abuse by the public towards public sector workers. Swindon is one of the Government's action areas, committed to tackling antisocial behaviour.

The Swindon Evening Advertiser has promoted local initiatives run by the antisocial behaviour team, such as Operation Crackdown, Operation Graffiti and It's Your Call and has publicised details of antisocial behaviour orders. Swindon borough council and Wiltshire police use local neighbourhood safety teams to communicate activity taken to tackle antisocial behaviour and in parallel, invite local residents to highlight community safety concerns in their area.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy not to charge victims of crime for the recovery of their property from *(a)* police and *(b)* those holding the property on behalf of the police. [46185]

Hazel Blears: The police have powers to order the removal of any vehicle that is dangerously, obstructively or illegally parked, broken down or abandoned, including vehicles abandoned after being stolen .

The Government regards such removals as important for road safety and crime reduction. Before owners can regain any vehicle so removed, they are required by law to pay fees prescribed by the Secretary of State to meet the costs of removal and storage.

The Government considers it would not be appropriate for such costs to fall on the public purse We recognise, however, the concerns that have been expressed by and on behalf of the owners of stolen vehicles who have had to pay for return of their own property. We agreed with the Association of Chief Police Officers on recommended best practice in such cases.

This includes an immediate notification on report of a vehicle theft as to the need to pay the statutory fees when the vehicle is recovered, a follow-up letter with more detailed information and further information and advice on police force websites. A decision to charge for return of property other than vehicles is an operational matter for the chief officer of the individual force concerned.

Criminal Justice Act

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the *(a)* sections and *(b)* provisions within the Criminal Justice Act 2003 which (i) have not yet come into force and (ii) have been repealed (A) prior to and (B) after coming into force. [50136]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is shown in the table.

A copy will be placed in the Library.

Daniel Morgan

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the report by the Metropolitan Police Authority relating to the murder of Daniel Morgan will be made available to his family. [49577]

Hazel Blears *[holding answer 6 February 2006]:* The Metropolitan Police Authority is responsible for the report into the investigation into Daniel Morgan's murder. I will ensure that the chairman receives a copy of the question and replies to you directly. Copies of the letter containing the MPA's response will be placed in the House Libraries.

Departmental Finance

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the annual expenditure on vehicles by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body, (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which he is responsible in (A) Scotland, (B) Wales, (C) each of the English regions and (D) Northern Ireland was in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06. [39976]

Mr. Charles Clarke: For details of expenditure on Ministerial vehicles provided to the Department by the Government Car and Despatch Agency I refer the hon. Member to the letter of 20 December 2005 from the Chief Executive of the Government Car and Despatch Agency to the hon. Member for Lewes (Norman Baker). Copies of the letter are available in the Library.

Annual expenditure on vehicles is not recorded by geographical area and could be assembled only at disproportionate cost. The information as to the costs of vehicles which *(a)* the Department *(b)* each (i) NDPB (ii) executive agency and (iii) other public body for which the Department is responsible Office have purchased or leased is as follows.

	Home Office	*Independent Police Complaints Commission*	*National Criminal Intelligence Service*	*National Police Training/ Centrex*	*Police IT Organisation*	*Prison Service*	*Forensic Science Service*
2002–03	1,099,247	—	1,351,000	23,025	0	3,198,065	381,559
2003–04	1,977,570	0	313,000	3,500	10,263	3,625,237	524,559
2004–05	1,441,842	383,312	112,000	100,000	10,263	2,687,625	595,211
2005–06[1]	1,752,161	0	25,000	100,000	10,263	4,681,658	480,000

[1] Estimate

No expenditure was incurred by: Criminal Records Bureau, UK Passport Agency, Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority, Criminal Cases Review Commission, Security Industry Authority, Youth Justice Board

Drug Offenders

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the reconviction rates differ of those convicted of drug-related offences who *(a)* enter drug residential rehabilitation places, *(b)* receive drug treatment and testing orders and *(c)* receive other disposals. [50071]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 9 February 2006]:* Information on reconviction rates for offenders entering drug residential rehabilitation places are not routinely available. Information on re-offending is published annually to help monitor the Home Office's progress against its PSA target to reduce re-offending by 5 per cent. by 2006. The most recent data were published in December in 'Adult re-offending: results from the 2002 cohort'. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 25/05'. This is available on the Home Office's website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html. For offenders convicted of drug offences in the first quarter of 2002, the two year re-offending rate was 35.9 per cent. for those offenders convicted of drug import and supply offences and 53.8 per cent. for those convicted of drugs possession and small scale supply offences. Further analysis of this data shows that the two year re-offending rate for those convicted of drug offences and given DTTOs was 78.1 per cent. and for all other disposals it was 48.1 per cent. Re-offending rates should be used with caution as a number of different factors can influence them. Re-offending rates can be adjusted to take account of the changing characteristics of offenders and these adjusted rates are published annually on the Home Office's website. The latest predicted rates show a reduction in re-offending of 0.2 per cent. to 58.5 per cent. for all adults against the 2000 baseline.

Drugs Dependence Treatment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners underwent treatment for drugs dependence in *(a)* Tamworth constituency, *(b)* Staffordshire and *(c)* England and Wales in each of the past five years. [51225]

Fiona Mactaggart: Figures for prisoners undergoing drug treatment are given in the following table. There are no recorded figures prior to 2001–02. Figures for programme completion were not collected prior to 2004–05.

Tamworth[1]	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
CARATs	150	152	100	91
Detox	0	0	0	0
Programmes entrants	60	60	60	80
completions	—	—	—	*70*
Staffordshire[2]				
CARATs	595	689	557	490
Detox	89	59	9	53
Programmes entrants	116	154	187	276
completions	—	—	—	*214*
England and Wales				
CARATs	39,338	51,896	54,125	59,025
Detox	41,765	50,701	57,891	53,903
Programmes entrants	4,691	4,386	4,703	7,609
completions	—	—	—	*4,902*

[1] HMP Swinfen Hall.

[2] HMP Swinfen Hall, HMP Drake Hall, HMP Featherstone, HMP Stafford HMP Dovegate.

Drunkenness

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many offenders were found guilty of *(a)* drunken and disorderly behaviour and *(b)* drunken and aggravated disorderly behaviour in each year between 1997 and 2005 in (i) England and (ii) each local authority in England. [51289]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform on the number of offenders found guilty for drunkenness and drunkenness with aggravation in Wales 1997–2005 are given in the table.

It is not possible to identify those convicted in each local authority, as the data are not collected at this level of detail. Court statistics for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006. The penalty notice for disorder scheme was brought into effect in all police forces in England

and Wales during 2004. Under the scheme the police are able to issue persons committing specified minor offences with a fixed penalty notice.

No admission of guilt is required and payment of the penalty discharges all liability for the offence. In 2004 26,609 penalty notices were issued in England for the offence of being drunk and disorderly. Provisional data for 2005 to the end of September shows that 24,150 penalty notices were issued in England for this offence. The aggravated offence is not included in the scheme.

Number of offenders found guilty at all courts for offences relating to drunkenness in England 1997 to 2004[1]

	Offence class *Drunkenness with aggravation*[2]	*Drunkenness, simple*[3]
1997	22,474	3,333
1998	23,864	3,710
1999	22,764	3,134
2000	22,078	2,579
2001	21,468	2,424
2002	22,741	2,201
2003	23,893	1,999
2004	17,550	1,674

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Includes offences under S.91 Criminal Justice Act 1967.S.12 Licensing Act 1872, S.174 Licensing Act 1964, S.9(4) Late Night Refreshment Houses Act 1969, S.28 London Hackney Carriage Act 1843, SS.101(1)*(a)(b)*, (4) and (5) Merchant Shipping Act 1995, S.2 Licensing Act 1902 and S.61 Town Police Clauses Act 1847
[3] Includes offences under S.12 Licensing Act 1872, Sporting Events (Control of Alcohol etc) Act 1985 SS.1(4), 1A(4), 2.(2) and S.12 Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001

Fireworks

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many penalty notices have been issued in relation to the illegal use of fireworks in each police force area since the legislation was introduced. [51290]

Hazel Blears: Offences under the Fireworks Regulations 2004 (made under section 11 of the Fireworks Act 2003) for breach of the national fireworks curfew, the illegal possession of category four fireworks and the possession by a person under 18 of an adult firework attract penalty notices for disorder, as well as the offence of throwing fireworks.

The offence of throwing fireworks has been included in the penalty notice for disorder scheme since it was introduced nationally during 2004. The offences under the Fireworks Regulations 2004 were brought into the scheme with effect from 11 October 2004. The numbers of penalty notices issued by police force area for 2004 and provisional data from January to September 2005 are provided in the table.

Number of penalty notices for disorder issued for fireworks offences, by police force area, England and Wales 2004 and January to September 2005

	2004				*January to September 2005 (provisional)*			
	Throwing fireworks	*Breach of fireworks curfew*	*Possession of a category 4 firework*	*Possession by under 18 of adult firework*	*Throwing fireworks*	*Breach of fireworks curfew*	*Possession of a category 4 firework*	*Possession by under 18 of adult firework*
Avon and Somerset	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—
Bedfordshire	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cambridgeshire	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
Cheshire	6	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
Cleveland	4	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Cumbria	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Derbyshire	—	—	—	—	3	1	—	1
Devon and Cornwall	6	4	—	—	2	—	—	—
Dorset	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Durham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Essex	6	—	—	—	6	1	1	2
Gloucestershire	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
Greater Manchester	14	—	—	—	9	—	4	4
Hampshire	8	—	1	1	4	1	—	—
Hertfordshire	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Humberside	5	1	1	—	2	—	—	—
Kent	7	—	2	1	2	—	—	—
Lancashire	11	1	1	—	14	2	—	1
Leicestershire	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	—
Lincolnshire	20	2	—	—	5	—	—	—
London, City of	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Merseyside	56	—	—	1	26	—	2	1
Metropolitan	39	—	—	—	25	—	1	—
Norfolk	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
North Yorkshire	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Northamptonshire	5	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
Northumbria	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nottinghamshire	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
South Yorkshire	5	—	—	—	8	1	1	4
Staffordshire	8	—	—	—	6	—	—	1
Suffolk	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	—

Number of penalty notices for disorder issued for fireworks offences, by police force area, England and Wales 2004 and January to September 2005

	2004				January to September 2005 (provisional)			
	Throwing fireworks	*Breach of fireworks curfew*	*Possession of a category 4 firework*	*Possession by under 18 of adult firework*	*Throwing fireworks*	*Breach of fireworks curfew*	*Possession of a category 4 firework*	*Possession by under 18 of adult firework*
Surrey	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sussex	26	—	—	1	9	—	—	—
Thames Valley	23	—	—	—	3	—	—	—
Warwickshire	1	—	—	—	3	—	—	—
West Mercia	5	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
West Midlands	17	—	—	—	7	1	1	—
West Yorkshire	27	1	1	—	18	—	1	2
Wiltshire	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Dyfed Powys	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Gwent	8	—	—	—	1	1	1	1
North Wales	9	1	1	—	8	1	—	—
South Wales	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
England and Wales	341	11	8	4	177	12	12	20

Source:
RDS—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Ian Missing

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish the report of 3 January commissioned by Essex police and Essex Probation Services concerning the case of Mr. Ian Missing; and if he will make a statement. [46267]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 30 January 2006]:* The published recommendations of the review are being examined, especially those that have national implications for probation and police. We are constantly seeking to improve current systems in order to improve public protection and the report will be used to test or revise current arrangements.

The plans for any eventual publication of the report are a matter for the joint commissioners, Essex Police and Essex Probation Board, in the first instance.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the Essex probation service regarding Mr. Ian Missing. [46959]

Fiona Mactaggart: Officials of the National Probation Service's Directorate are in regular contact with their colleagues in Essex probation and have met the chief officer to discuss issues raised by the case of Ian Missing in order to establish how processes and information sharing protocols between police, probation and other agencies may be tested or revised.

Individual Support Orders

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government has taken to encourage the use of individual support orders for young people subject to antisocial behaviour orders. [51288]

Hazel Blears: In recognition of the importance of individual support orders (ISOs) in helping young people avoid breaching their antisocial behaviour orders, we have given an extra £500,000 to the Youth Justice Board to allocate to youth offending teams. We are working with the key agencies involved on a range of initiatives and tools to increase uptake.

Licensing Act

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions have been brought under the Licensing Act 2003 since November 2005 for *(a)* sales of alcohol to under-age children and *(b)* crime and disorder associated with pubs and clubs. [51184]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform for 2005 will be available in autumn 2006. Penalty notices for disorder may be issued for nine Licensing Act 2003 offences. Provisional data on the numbers issued since November 2005 will be available in March 2006.

Life Sentence Prisoners

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many life sentenced prisoners are held in local prisons awaiting the beginning of the first stage of their planned life sentence regime *(a)* six months and *(b)* one year after sentence was passed. [47566]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information requested cannot be provided without incurring disproportionate cost.

National Offender Management Service

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he will take to ensure the end-to-end management of offenders under the National Offender Management Service arrangements for persons jailed for five years or more. [50060]

Fiona Mactaggart: Offender Management requires that a single person, the Offender Manager, should be responsible for an offender through their sentence now matter how long or short the sentence is. The offender manager will be based in the community.

Offender Management is being introduced in stages: for community sentences Offender Management will be in place from April this year; for sentences involving an element of custody, Offender Management will be introduced over the two years starting in September this year. Offender Management will be fully implemented for all types of sentence by 2008.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what methodology underlay the Regulatory Impact Assessment which was published in response to Restructuring Probation to Reduce Re-offending. [50231]

Fiona Mactaggart: The indicative cost savings contained in the partial Regulatory Impact Statement assumed cost savings within the range of 3 per cent. to 8.5 per cent. through contesting certain activities of the National Probation Service. This range was based on the experience of the savings delivered through the market and performance testing programme within the Prison Service. The savings profile assumed a 10 year programme of contestability with no more that 12 per cent. by value of probation business being contested in any one year. The projected cash savings were discounted using a standard 25 year Discounted Cash Flow analysis.

Online Auction Sites

Steve McCabe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what steps UK police are taking to combat the trade in counterfeit goods on online auction sites; [51020]

(2) what estimate his Department has made of the extent of the trade in counterfeit goods involving UK citizens on online auction sites. [51021]

Hazel Blears: No estimates exist of the trade in counterfeit goods involving UK citizens and online auction sites. We are currently discussing with industry the extent of the trade in counterfeit goods and the most likely routes for this type of crime. Initial industry findings suggest that the on-line route does not play a major role.

Decisions about the investigation of alleged criminal offences rest solely with the Chief Officer of police of the force concerned who will take into account available resources, national and local policing priorities, the likely eventual outcome of any investigation and the competing priorities of other criminal cases already under investigation.

Policing initiatives in this area complement the greater level of work undertaken by Trading Standards officers who play a key role in investigating Intellectual Property (IP) Crime. The DTI's Innovation Review, published in December 2003 tasked the Patent Office with a number of actions in respect of intellectual property rights including a commitment to develop a national strategy for dealing with IP crime. In response the Patent Office set up the IP Crime Group in February 2004.

The group draws together representatives from law enforcement agencies (including ACPO and Trading Standards), Government Departments and commercial interests.

Police

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers have retired in each year since 2001, broken down by *(a)* rank and *(b)* police force area. [49044]

Mr. Charles Clarke: A full breakdown of reasons for leaving by police officers has only been collected centrally since 31 March 2003. Prior to that date the breakdown was limited to retirements, resignations and other wastage. The information requested is given in the tables for the last three years.

The number of police officers[1] taking normal retirements, by rank and police force area for 2002–03[2]

Police force area	*ACPO*	*Chief Superintendent*	*Superintendent*	*Chief Inspector*	*Inspector*	*Sergeant*	*Constable*
Avon and Somerset	0	1	1	1	4	7	13
Bedfordshire	0	0	0	1	5	4	9
Cambridgeshire	0	1	0	1	1	12	14
Cheshire	1	1	0	2	8	16	25
Cleveland	1	2	0	1	3	1	3
Cumbria	0	0	1	1	2	8	13
Derbyshire	0	2	4	0	6	11	23
Devon and Cornwall	2	1	0	3	4	11	44
Dorset	1	1	2	2	4	3	17
Durham	0	0	1	0	0	4	3
Dyfed-Powys	0	0	0	0	0	2	4
Essex	0	0	0	0	1	2	9
Gloucestershire	0	1	0	1	2	1	2
Greater Manchester	0	1	1	2	5	12	24
Gwent	1	0	0	0	1	4	4
Hampshire	0	0	6	0	8	17	62
Hertfordshire	0	1	1	1	5	5	16
Humberside	0	0	1	3	3	4	14
Kent	1	3	2	1	6	14	31
Lancashire	1	0	0	1	7	15	35
Leicestershire	2	0	1	1	5	9	20
Lincolnshire	0	0	0	0	5	9	12
London, City of	0	0	0	0	0	2	10
Merseyside	0	2	4	2	6	25	41

The number of police officers[1] taking normal retirements, by rank and police force area for 2002–03[2]

Police force area	ACPO	Chief Superintendent	Superintendent	Chief Inspector	Inspector	Sergeant	Constable
Metropolitan police	3	4	6	11	45	78	182
Norfolk	2	1	0	2	6	6	22
Northamptonshire	0	0	0	1	0	5	6
Northumbria	0	0	4	1	4	10	34
North Wales	0	1	1	0	2	3	10
North Yorkshire	1	2	1	0	6	3	6
Nottinghamshire	0	1	0	0	5	2	16
South Wales	1	0	0	1	9	10	25
South Yorkshire	1	2	1	6	4	12	40
Staffordshire	0	0	2	0	4	4	6
Suffolk	0	1	0	0	2	8	11
Surrey	0	0	3	1	3	5	27
Sussex	0	0	0	1	3	4	26
Thames Valley	0	0	5	3	18	11	45
Warwickshire	0	0	0	0	0	1	12
West Mercia	0	0	1	1	3	6	32
West Midlands	1	4	1	2	8	38	69
West Yorkshire	1	5	0	7	12	26	61
Wiltshire	0	1	0	0	2	8	11
Total 43 forces in England and Wales	20	39	50	61	227	438	1,089

[1] Based on full-time equivalent figures that have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

[2] Data is collected by the Home Office on a quarterly basis. However, data is not available for quarter 1 and so the figures are based on the total of the other quarters in the financial year 2002–03. Not all of the 43 forces were able to provide data, therefore figures are not comparable with other years.

The number of police officers[1] taking normal retirements, by rank and police force area for 2003–04[2]

Police force area	ACPO	Chief Superintendent	Superintendent	Chief Inspector	Inspector	Sergeant	Constable
Avon and Somerset	0	2	1	0	13	13	29
Bedfordshire	0	1	1	0	4	3	17
Cambridgeshire	1	0	0	1	7	6	22
Cheshire	0	1	0	1	5	10	34
Cleveland	0	1	1	0	3	11	16
Cumbria	0	0	0	1	1	7	19
Derbyshire	0	2	0	2	2	14	30
Devon and Cornwall	1	0	0	3	4	4	20
Dorset	0	0	2	1	2	4	26
Durham	0	4	0	1	4	3	21
Dyfed-Powys	0	1	0	0	0	3	11
Essex	0	0	0	4	4	18	46
Gloucestershire	0	0	0	2	0	2	14
Greater Manchester	1	4	4	6	25	27	63
Gwent	1	0	0	2	1	5	17
Hampshire	1	1	3	2	8	14	69
Hertfordshire	0	0	1	0	4	7	32
Humberside	0	1	0	1	6	10	27
Kent	2	1	5	0	6	21	42
Lancashire	0	1	3	0	13	12	36
Leicestershire	0	0	0	0	4	8	13
Lincolnshire	1	1	0	3	2	6	17
London, City of	0	1	0	0	3	5	9
Merseyside	0	3	1	5	13	17	47
Metropolitan police	4	12	15	23	53	128	284
Norfolk	0	0	1	2	1	5	17
Northamptonshire	1	2	0	2	3	5	13
Northumbria	1	2	2	4	14	19	46
North Wales	0	1	0	0	0	2	16
North Yorkshire	1	0	0	1	5	3	17
Nottinghamshire	0	0	1	3	6	8	44
South Wales	1	2	6	5	10	25	45
South Yorkshire	0	2	4	5	11	19	46
Staffordshire	0	1	1	2	4	4	29
Suffolk	0	1	0	0	4	11	12
Surrey	1	0	1	3	4	3	21
Sussex	0	1	1	1	5	13	63
Thames Valley	0	0	2	3	15	12	59
Warwickshire	0	0	0	0	5	1	16
West Mercia	0	1	2	2	6	9	31

The number of police officers[1] taking normal retirements, by rank and police force area for 2003–04[2]

Police force area	ACPO	Chief Superintendent	Superintendent	Chief Inspector	Inspector	Sergeant	Constable
West Midlands	0	0	0	1	9	22	66
West Yorkshire	0	0	2	2	8	25	55
Wiltshire	0	1	2	0	3	7	13
Total 43 forces in England and Wales	17	51	62	94	300	551	1,569

[1] Based on full-time equivalent figures that have been rounded to the nearest whole number.
[2] Data is collected by the Home Office on a quarterly basis. The figures are based on the total or all of the quarters in the financial year 2003–04. Not all of the 43 forces were able to provide data for each quarter, therefore figures are not comparable with other years.

The number of police officers[1] taking normal retirements, by rank and police force area for 2004–05[2]

Police force area	ACPO	Chief Superintendent	Superintendent	Chief Inspector	Inspector	Sergeant	Constable
Avon and Somerset	1	1	1	2	10	20	60
Bedfordshire	1	1	1	4	6	4	16
Cambridgeshire	0	1	1	1	4	5	29
Cheshire	1	0	4	1	5	14	35
Cleveland	0	3	0	1	2	2	23
Cumbria	0	0	2	0	2	3	14
Derbyshire	0	1	2	1	6	14	41
Devon and Cornwall	0	1	2	5	9	14	75
Dorset	0	1	2	0	2	13	28
Durham	0	0	1	0	6	4	28
Dyfed-Powys	0	1	1	2	0	10	17
Essex	0	1	2	0	6	29	69
Gloucestershire	1	0	1	2	3	6	19
Greater Manchester	0	4	8	4	17	45	86
Gwent	0	0	3	0	5	10	17
Hampshire	0	0	1	2	9	22	99
Hertfordshire	1	2	1	2	4	11	28
Humberside	1	1	0	2	6	8	37
Kent	1	2	1	5	9	20	66
Lancashire	0	2	0	1	16	25	56
Leicestershire	0	0	1	2	3	16	35
Lincolnshire	1	2	2	1	6	10	27
London, City of	0	0	0	0	2	1	16
Merseyside	1	0	3	3	10	37	70
Metropolitan police	6	10	11	21	69	152	297
Norfolk	0	1	1	1	3	7	32
Northamptonshire	0	1	0	0	6	10	24
Northumbria	1	0	3	2	5	11	71
North Wales	1	0	0	0	4	4	20
North Yorkshire	0	1	0	0	1	15	25
Nottinghamshire	0	1	1	2	6	14	49
South Wales	1	1	0	5	15	18	53
South Yorkshire	0	3	1	3	10	18	59
Staffordshire	0	0	1	4	3	9	32
Suffolk	0	0	2	0	1	6	15
Surrey	1	3	2	0	5	8	28
Sussex	0	1	0	1	5	13	48
Thames Valley	0	4	4	3	11	20	75
Warwickshire	0	0	1	2	2	7	19
West Mercia	0	1	1	1	9	9	32
West Midlands	1	4	1	4	19	31	137
West Yorkshire	3	5	1	5	16	27	96
Wiltshire	0	0	0	0	4	6	22
Total 43 forces in England and Wales	23	60	70	95	342	728	2,125

[1] Based on full-time equivalent figures that have been rounded to the nearest whole number.
[2] Data is collected by the Home Office on a quarterly basis. The figures are based on the total of all of the quarters in the financial year 2004–05. Not all of the 43 forces were able to provide data for each of the quarters, therefore figures are not comparable with other years.

Jeremy Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many employees of the police service on long-term sick leave are claiming incapacity benefit. [49989]

Hazel Blears: The requested information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* deputy and *(b)* assistant chief constables have spent their entire police career serving in one police force. [51188]

Hazel Blears: This information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many full-time equivalent special constables there have been in Cambridgeshire police in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [50338]

Hazel Blears: Special constables are volunteers who generally perform policing duties for a few hours per week and the information requested is therefore available on a headcount only basis. The table provides figures on headcount.

Special constable strength in Cambridgeshire, 1997 to 2005

As at 31 March:	*Headcount*
1997	303
1998	320
1999	310
2000	274
2001	218
2002	207
2003	189
2004	193
2005	199

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there are in each division of Staffordshire police force; and what the population is of the area covered by each division. [51226]

Hazel Blears: The latest information for Basic Command Units is for 2004–05 and is given in the following table.

Police officer strength (fte)[1] and population figures (in thousands) for the basic command units in Staffordshire for 2004–05.

Basic command unit	*Police officer strength (fte)[1]*	*Population figures (thousand)*
Chase	416	320.22
North Staffordshire	299	217.15
Stoke on Trent	585	237.99
Trent Valley	429	273.62
Central Services	580	*
Staffordshire	2,309	1048.98

[1] Police officer strength figures are based on full-time equivalent figures that have been rounded to the nearest whole number

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will rank English police forces by *(a)* size of local police precept, *(b)* officers per head of population and *(c)* officers per notifiable offence for the latest period for which information is available. [45595]

Hazel Blears: The latest available information is for 2004–05 and is given in the tables.

Table A: Police precepts on council tax (band D) in England

Police authority	*2004–05 police precept on council tax (band D) (£)*
Avon and Somerset	125.09
Bedfordshire	107.17
Cambridgeshire	129.33
Cheshire	97.71
Cleveland	136.84
Cumbria	150.28
Derbyshire	122.88
Devon and Cornwall	113.39
Dorset	135.36
Durham	91.53
Essex	99.27
Gloucestershire	156.71
Greater Manchester	98.52
Hampshire	108.36
Hertfordshire	112.53
Humberside	129.96
Kent	105.66
Lancashire	100.70
Leicestershire	120.11
Lincolnshire	112.23
Merseyside	110.17
Metropolitan	184.08
Norfolk	138.69
North Yorkshire	171.50
Northamptonshire	149.43
Northumbria	66.93
Nottinghamshire	120.12
South Yorkshire	102.79
Staffordshire	138.44
Suffolk	119.70
Surrey	147.06
Sussex	105.12
Thames Valley	120.51
Warwickshire	126.55
West Mercia	137.69
West Midlands	80.08
West Yorkshire	102.06
Wiltshire	120.63

Source:
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

Table B: Number of police officers[1] per 100,000 population[2], as at 31 March 2005 for English forces

Police force area	*Total officers per 100,000 population[2]*
Avon and Somerset	225
Bedfordshire	215
Cambridgeshire	194
Cheshire	223
Cleveland	305
Cumbria	257
Derbyshire	213
Devon and Cornwall	212
Dorset	211
Durham	293
Essex	198
Gloucestershire	230
Greater Manchester	321
Hampshire	212
Hertfordshire	206
Humberside	255
Kent	227
Lancashire	251
Leicestershire	246
Lincolnshire	185
London, City of	*
Merseyside	318
Metropolitan Police	433
Norfolk	192
North Yorkshire	206
Northamptonshire	201
Northumbria	294
Nottinghamshire	245
South Yorkshire	260
Staffordshire	220
Suffolk	195
Surrey	184

Table B: Number of police officers[1] per 100,000 population[2], as at 31 March 2005 for English forces

Police force area	Total officers per 100,000 population[2]
Sussex	205
Thames Valley	198
Warwickshire	195
West Mercia	203
West Midlands	316
West Yorkshire	271
Wiltshire	198

[1] Based on full-time equivalent figures that have been rounded to the nearest whole number

[2] Officers per 100,000 population for City of London and Metropolitan police are combined

Table C: Number of police officers per notifiable offence[1] in 2004–05 for English forces

Police force area	Number of officers per notifiable offence[1]
Avon and Somerset	0.0211
Bedfordshire	0.0212
Cambridgeshire	0.0193
Cheshire	0.0247
Cleveland	0.0245
Cumbria	0.0291
Derbyshire	0.0246
Devon and Cornwall	0.0255
Dorset	0.0256
Durham	0.0369
Essex	0.0240
Gloucestershire	0.0245
Greater Manchester	0.0250
Hampshire	0.0220
Hertfordshire	0.0221
Humberside	0.0181
Kent	0.0266
Lancashire	0.0236
Leicestershire	0.0240
Lincolnshire	0.0211
London, City of	0.1014
Merseyside	0.0254
Metropolitan Police	0.0306
Norfolk	0.0234
North Yorkshire	0.0252
Northamptonshire	0.0174
Northumbria	0.0288
Nottinghamshire	0.0176
South Yorkshire	0.0236
Staffordshire	0.0228
Suffolk	0.0254
Surrey	0.0276
Sussex	0.0221
Thames Valley	0.0204
Warwickshire	0.0235
West Mercia	0.0250
West Midlands	0.0277
West Yorkshire	0.0215
Wiltshire	0.0307

[1] This calculation is based on full-time equivalent figures for police officers, and figures have been rounded to four decimal places.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether all local authorities in Wales will be represented on a new police authority for a single Welsh police force. [51027]

Hazel Blears: Yes.

In order to discharge their functions effectively I believe strategic authorities should in most cases have a maximum of 23 members (in line with that of the Metropolitan Police Authority).

The Government accept, however, that in some parts of the country, including in Wales, police authorities will need to be larger in order to ensure that all upper tier local authorities are represented. This is important given that police authorities will continue to set a policing precept.

Pornography

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 25 January 2006 to the hon. Member for Crosby, *Official Report*, column 2135W, on pornography, how many successful prosecutions have been brought in each of the last three years under *(a)* the Obscene Publications Act 1959, *(b)* the Indecent Displays Act 1981, *(c)* the Communications Act 2003, *(d)* the Video Recordings Act 1984 and *(e)* the Protection of Children Act 1999 for the illegal transference of pornography to minors. [49306]

Fiona Mactaggart: Data from the court proceedings database held by the Office for Criminal Justice reform, showing the number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for selected offences related to pornography, is provided in the attached table, for England and Wales, 2002–04. It is not possible to identify how many of these prosecutions relate to the illegal transference to minors because the individual circumstances of these prosecution are not collected centrally. Data for 2005 will be available in the autumn of 2006.

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for selected offences related to pornography, England and Wales, 2002–04

Offence description	Principal statue	2002		2003		2004	
		Proceeded against	Found guilty	Proceeded against	Found guilty	Proceeded against	Found guilty
Prohibition of publication of obscene matter	Obscene Publications Act 1959 S.2(1) as amended by Obscene Publications Act 1964 8.1(1)	52	42	39	31	30	25
Take, permit to be taken or to make distribute or publish indecent photographs or pseudo-photographs of children	Protection of Children Act 1978 S.1 as amended by Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 S.84	582	434	1,464	1,048	1,097	978

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for selected offences related to pornography, England and Wales, 2002–04

Offence description	Principal statue	2002 Proceeded against	2002 Found guilty	2003 Proceeded against	2003 Found guilty	2004 Proceeded against	2004 Found guilty
Indecent matter publicly	Indecent Displays (Control) Act 1981 SS.1 and 4	3	—	6	3	2	—
Supplying video recording of unclassified work	Video Recording Act 1984 S.9 as amended by Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 S.88	62	59	44	44	42	31
Video recording of unclassified work for the purpose of supply	Video Recording Act 1984 S.10 as amended by Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 S.88	64	62	40	31	49	43
Supplying video recording of classified work in breach of classification	Video Recording Act 1984 S.11 as amended by Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 S.88	22	14	25	17	11	8
Certain video recordings only to be supplied in licensed sex shops	Video Recording Act 1984 S.12 as amended by Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 S.88	9	4	13	10	64	48
Supply of video recording not complying with requirements as to labels etc	Video Recording Act 1984 S.13	—	—	—	—	1	—
Supply of video recordings containing false indication as to classification	Video Recording Act 1984 S.14 as amended by Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 S.88	—	—	2	—	2	2
Improper use of public electronic communications network	Communications Act 2003 S.127	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	214	143

Note:
These data are on the principal offence basis
Source: RDS-Office for Criminal Justice Reform

Prisoners

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in Peterborough who were tagged on early release from prison have breached the rules governing their early release in each of the last five years. [49292]

Fiona Mactaggart: 15 people were recalled to prison in 2005 for failing to comply with the curfew conditions after being released early on home detention curfew from Peterborough prison. 204 people in total were released from Peterborough prison on home detention curfew during 2005. The prison opened on 28 March 2005. Information on the total number of people serving their curfew period while living in Peterborough is not centrally available.

Prisons

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners in *(a)* Chelmsford, *(b)* Coldingley, *(c)* Elmley and *(d)* Rochester prison have tested positive for drugs in each year since 1997. [50370]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 8 February 2006]:* There are three main types of drug testing in prisons: clinical; mandatory; and voluntary. Data on clinical and voluntary testing are not held centrally. The random mandatory drug testing programme is used to measure levels of drug misuse in prison. The random MDT figures are given in the following table:

	Chelmsford Positive (Number)	Chelmsford Percentage	Coldingley Positive (Number)	Coldingley Percentage	Elmley Positive (Number)	Elmley Percentage	Rochester Positive (Number)	Rochester Percentage
1996–97	114	34.2	150	36.2	158	20.9	21	5.3
1997–98	75	24.0	141	29.2	145	13.5	21	4.2
1998–99	93	23.1	29	13.7	116	11.8	18	4.2
1999–2000	47	24.5	37	12.2	105	13.7	14	3.0
2000–01	41	16.2	30	7.8	49	8.2	11	2.3
2001–02	56	16.0	50	11.7	78	11.9	11	3.7
2002–03	83	22.9	55	13.1	51	9.9	18	9.7

	Chelmsford		Coldingley		Elmley		Rochester	
	Positive (Number)	Percentage	Positive (Number)	Percentage	Positive (Number)	Percentage	Positive (Number)	Percentage
2003–04	87	25.7	76	16.6	74	11.7	22	9.3
2004–05	37	10.8	71	15.1	79	13.0	17	4.1
2005–06[1]	27	10.3	72	18.6	26	5.4	18	4.8

[1] Year to date (April to December 2005).

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many inmates at each prison were subject to *(a)* closed visits and *(b)* visit bans in each of the last 12 months for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [48420]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information relating to individual prisons is not collated centrally in the format required. I shall write to the hon. Member with available information and place a copy in the Library.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of the performance testing exercise at HMP Wandsworth was; what assessment he has made of its impact; how he intends to monitor performance against the defined outputs of the exercise; what assessment he has made of the value for money of the exercise; and if he will make a statement. [48509]

Fiona Mactaggart: Performance testing was introduced as a mechanis, to improve performance in poorly performing establishments. The additional cost of the performance test process at Wandsworth prison was £200,000. This excludes any contribution made from within the establishment's existing resource.

Wandsworth was awarded a service level agreement as a result of their successful bid. The area manager and the regional offender manager monitor performance closely to ensure that performance levels are sustained. Performance testing has proved to be an extremely cost-effective mechanism for improving poorly performing establishments. A full report on progress made at Wandsworth since the performance test will be submitted to the interim chief executive of NOMS. This will highlight significant improvement against a range of indicators, including better basic conditions for prisoners, a more constructive regime and improved security and standards audit scores.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* prison governors, *(b)* prison officers and *(c)* other prison staff have been found with (i) controlled drugs and (ii) other contraband at each prison establishment in each of the last five years; how many cases in each category were referred to the police for investigation; and if he will make a statement. [48512]

Fiona Mactaggart: The investigations database does not record whether cases are referred to the police for investigation. Investigations are not categorised by grade making it impossible to distinguish between governors, prison officers and administrative grades who have been investigated for drug-related offences. The total in the table relates to the number of staff and not investigations. Whether every individual was found with items in their possession could be established only at proportionate cost.

Investigations regarding trafficking drugs or other prohibited articles into prison establishments

Establishment	Staff (Number)
Askham Grange	1
Bedford	1
Birmingham	4
Bristol	1
Brixton	4
Bullingdon	4
Bullwood Hall	1
Camp Hill	1
Chelmsford	1
Durham	1
Erlestoke	1
Feltham	2
Ford	1
Frankland	1
Grendon	1
Guys Marsh	2
Highdown	3
Huntercombe	1
Lancaster Castle	1
Leeds	1
Leicester	1
Lincoln	2
Liverpool	2
Nor Sea Camp	1
Onley	1
Parkhurst	1
Pentonville	3
Portland	1
Ranby	1
Reading	2
Risley	1
Send	1
Stoke Heath	2
Sudbury	1
Swaleside	2
Swansea	1
The Mount	2
Wakefield	2
Werrington	1
Whitemoor	1
Winchester	1
Wormwood Scrubs	1
Total	64

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners were reclassified by category in each of the last five years. [48793]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is not held centrally and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners in open conditions were returned to closed conditions during each of the last five years. [48794]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information requested is not routinely recorded and can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the capacity is of prisons in England and Wales; and how many prisoners were detained at the most recent date for which figures are available. [50155]

Fiona Mactaggart: As on 3 February 2006, the useable operational capacity of prisons in England and Wales was 78,712. The prison population was 76,070.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* Certified normal accommodation (CNA), *(b)* in use CNA and *(c)* prisoner unlock figure was for each prison establishment as of 28th October 2005. [51557]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 16 February 2006]:* The figures requested for 28 October 2005 are set out in the table. Certified normal accommodation (CNA) level is the uncrowded capacity of the establishment. All establishments operate within their operational capacity, which is the total number of prisoners that an establishment is certified to hold taking into account control, security and the proper operation of the planned regime.

Prison name	*Baseline CNA*	*In use CNA*	*Unlock*
Acklington	882	882	873
Albany	526	526	522
Altcourse	614	614	1,002
Ashfield	407	400	374
Ashwell	535	535	539
Askham Grange	151	129	99
Aylesbury	432	432	434
Bedford	324	324	475
Belmarsh	799	799	916
Birmingham	1,121	1,121	1,378
Blakenhurst	827	821	1,055
Blantyre House	122	122	110
Blundeston	420	420	460
Brinsford	477	477	470
Bristol	426	426	600
Brixton	606	606	799
Brockhill	164	145	147
Bronzefield	451	451	436
Buckley Hall	350	110	51
Bullingdon	759	759	960
Bullwood Hall	180	167	134
Camp Hill	513	513	584
Canterbury	196	196	306
Cardiff	524	524	747
Castington	400	400	381
Channings Wood	634	634	662
Chelmsford	441	437	574
Coldingley	370	370	386
Cookham Wood	137	137	175
Dartmoor	598	598	612
Deerbolt	513	453	357
Doncaster	771	771	1088
Dorchester	147	147	239
Dovegate	800	800	829
Dover	314	314	271
Downview	350	251	248
Drake Hall	315	315	287
Durham	574	555	870
East Sutton Park	94	94	95
Eastwood Park	310	310	300
Edmunds Hill	372	303	262
Elmley	753	753	984
Erlestoke	426	426	423
Everthorpe	603	603	651
Exeter	316	316	528
Featherstone	599	599	609
Feltham	764	764	624
Ford	541	541	525
Forest Bank	800	800	1057
Foston Hall	267	267	259
Frankland	733	718	707
Full Sutton	601	601	588
Garth	633	633	660
Gartree	651	471	474
Glen Parva	668	668	803
Gloucester	229	214	291
Grendon	254	241	228
Guys Marsh	519	519	568
Haslar	160	160	125
Haverigg	558	558	560
Hewell Grange	176	176	167
Highdown	643	627	735
Highpoint	792	792	803
Hindley	539	455	362
Hollesley Bay	330	330	314
Holloway	544	476	454
Holme House	857	857	986
Hull	820	721	960
Huntercombe	360	360	359
Kingston	194	193	193
Kirkham	590	570	446
Kirklevington	223	223	209
Lancaster	159	159	241
Lancaster Farms	480	480	485
Latchmere House	207	207	198
Leeds	806	806	1247
Leicester	206	206	348
Lewes	458	458	533
Leyhill	520	508	479
Lincoln	449	307	488
Lindholme	802	802	810
Littlehey	664	664	699
Liverpool	1,142	1,122	1,342
Long Lartin	599	444	448
Low Newton	343	278	247
Lowdham Grange	504	504	523
Maidstone	548	548	551
Manchester	961	954	1237
Moorland	740	740	765
Moorland Open	260	260	236
Morton Hall	392	392	253
Mount	704	704	703
New Hall	367	367	380
North Sea Camp	306	306	292
Northallerton	153	151	244
Norwich	587	587	757
Nottingham	385	385	507
Onley	640	520	543
Pare	839	839	1,028
Parkhurst	459	459	501
Pentonville	921	868	1,188
Peterborough	840	840	811
Portland	530	380	385
Prescoed	160	160	165

Prison name	Baseline CNA	In use CNA	Unlock
Preston	418	330	605
Ranby	912	912	1,011
Reading	190	190	284
Risley	1,038	1,038	1,064
Rochester	392	392	389
Rye Hill	600	600	594
Send	220	216	213
Shepton Mallet	163	160	184
Shrewsbury	182	168	298
Spring Hill	334	334	304
Stafford	680	680	673
Standford Hill	464	464	446
Stocken	595	595	616
Stoke Heath	574	574	648
Styal	428	405	439
Sudbury	563	563	546
Swaleside	756	756	768
Swansea	248	248	421
Swinfen Hall	600	600	603
Thorn Cross	316	316	240
Usk	150	150	248
Verne	552	552	581
Wakefield	746	566	562
Wandsworth	1,113	845	1,397
Warren Hill	222	222	214
Wayland	657	657	702
Wealstun	885	835	828
Wellingborough	638	572	572
Werrington	146	146	144
Wetherby	360	360	345
Whatton	319	319	358
Whitemoor	492	464	423
Winchester	476	476	695
Wolds	330	330	294
Woodhill	677	650	763
Wormwood Scrubs	1,172	1,156	1244
Wymott	1,021	997	1,043

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria are used for assessing the transfer of operation of prisons from the public to private sector. [51558]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 16 February 2006]:* The transfer of operational management of a prison from the public sector to the private sector, or vice versa, would normally occur under the terms of a market test. Under a market test of an existing establishment, an invitation to tender (ITT) is issued to potential bidders from all sectors, including the incumbent management.

The ITT contains the criteria against which tenders will be evaluated. The criteria for the evaluation of compliant bids for past market tests of prison management have been financial and operational deliverability and the consequent demonstration of comparative value for money.

Public Order

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions his Department held with the Metropolitan Police prior to the demonstrations on 3 February and 4 February to discuss response tactics; and if he will make a statement. [50461]

Hazel Blears: Operational tactics to deal with demonstrations are a matter for the police. There was no contact between the Home Office and the Metropolitan police before the protest outside the Danish Embassy on 3 February.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* Tyne and Wear, *(d)* the north east and *(e)* England and Wales in each year since their inception; and how many people have since broken the conditions of their order in each case. [51949]

Hazel Blears: Information on antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) issued at constituency level is not collected centrally. A table giving a breakdown by the local government authority area in which prohibitions are imposed within ASBOs is available on the crime reduction website at www.crimereduction.gov.uk. This table gives data by year since ASBOs were introduced up to 30 June 2005 (latest available). ASBO breach data held centrally only cover breach proceedings where there has been a conviction. These data, at criminal justice system area level only, are currently available from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003 for ASBOs issued since 1 June 2000. The available information is given in the table.

The number of antisocial behaviour orders breached, as reported to the Home Office, by period and area, from 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2003[1]

	Period June 2000 to December 2000	2001	2002	2003	June 2000 to December 2003
Northumbria criminal justice system area	—	1	10	13	15
The north east region[2]	1	12	30	44	58
England and Wales	14 118	118	240	609	793

[1] Breaches are counted in this table on a persons basis, i.e. where the order has been breached on more than one occasion within the same period, a person is counted once only within that period.
[2] Comprising Northumbria, Durham and Cleveland criminal justice system areas.

Student Visas

Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the members of the taskforce on student visa changes; and whether the taskforce will consider the residence reporting requirements which apply to a number of countries. [51359]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* In a statement on 1 November 2005 the Home Office, other Government Departments and stakeholders represented on the Joint Education Taskforce made a joint commitment to ensuring that the UK retains its position as a world leader in international education and maintains effective systems for regulating immigration.

This statement, available on the IND website, also listed the existing members of the taskforce. The requirement for students of certain nationalities to register with the police arises is not for immigration purposes and therefore the Home Office has no plans to discuss this at the taskforce.

Terrorism

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to teach *(a)* police and *(b)* civilians how to recognise improvised explosive devices. [50849]

Hazel Blears: Police training is primarily a matter for the relevant chief constable. However, there are national arrangements in place for the accreditation of police search advisers. This includes specialist training on the recognition of improvised explosive devices.

There are no plans specifically to teach civilians how to recognise improvised explosive devices. The focus is instead on raising public awareness about suspicious behaviour and suspect packages and alerting the relevant authorities as necessary.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what *(a)* purposes and *(b)* projects the (i) Metropolitan Police Service specific grant, (ii) regional specific counter-terrorism grant and (iii) specific counter-terrorism capital grant will be used. [50850]

Hazel Blears: The new specific CT grant will provide the police service with a dedicated and specific funding stream to ensure that it is effectively resourced to counter the international terrorist threat and domestic extremism. It will include a range of capabilities including intelligence and investigation and protective security. As you will appreciate we cannot comment on the specific projects and programmes undertaken by the police service on counter terrorism activity for security reasons.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the effects police force amalgamations and restructuring will have on counter-terrorism funding and its distribution to each police force. [50851]

Hazel Blears: The Government remain committed to ensuring that the police service has the necessary resources to meet its CT commitments. The creation of strategic forces will help free up resources to reinvest in counter-terrorism and other protective services.

Moreover, the additional police counter-terrorism funding, which amounts to £173 million over the next two years, announced on 25 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 57WS, will further strengthen the police service's intelligence and investigative capability both in the capital and across the rest of the service.

Counter terrorism and tackling domestic extremism will continue to be a priority under the new force structure and funding arrangements will be in place to reflect these priorities.

Traffic Wardens

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police forces in England and Wales employ traffic wardens. [51228]

Hazel Blears: 30 police forces in England and Wales employed a total of 1,291 traffic wardens on 30 September 2005. We do not maintain data on the number of parking attendants employed by local authorities.

Urination in Public

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will increase the penalty for urinating in public. [48359]

Fiona Mactaggart: There is no specific national offence of urinating in the street. Infringement of local authority byelaws can result in police caution or prosecution in the courts. Courts may impose a fine. Nationally, this behaviour may in appropriate circumstances be dealt with as an incident of being drunk and disorderly under section 91 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991, or behaviour likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress under section five of the Public Order Act 1986.

Both these offences are included in the penalty notice for disorder scheme which enables the police to issue fixed penalty notices for incidents of low level, nuisance crime. Under the scheme a person committing either of these offences may be issued with a fixed penalty of £80. The Respect Action Plan, launched by the Prime Minister on 10 January, stated that this higher tier penalty will be raised to £100 later this year.

Visas

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people from *(a)* the Democratic Republic of Congo, *(b)* Nigeria and *(c)* the US have been refused leave to enter the UK for the purpose of family reunion in each of the last five years. [50660]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

The figures requested are given in the table as follows:

	As at February:				
Nationality/ Year	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Democratic Republic of Congo	1	56	88	55	52
Nigeria	3	0	0	1	0
US	0	0	0	1	1

The statistics given represent the numbers of nationals of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria and the US who have been refused a visa to enter the UK for the purpose of family reunion in each of the last five years. UK visas, the department with responsibility for entry clearance matters arising overseas, does not hold statistics on the numbers of people who may have been refused entry by an Immigration Officer at a UK port of entry.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many successful appeals there were on visa refusal decisions by *(a)* Nigerian, *(b)* Pakistani, *(c)* Ghanaian, *(d)* Australian and *(e)* United States nationals in each of the last five years. [50662]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

The Department for Constitutional Affairs, which has responsibility for the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT), has provided the figures in the table for

the number of successful entry clearance appeals by Nigerian, Pakistani and Ghanaian nationals for the period 4 April—30 September 2005.

Nationality	*Successful appeals*
Nigerian	30
Pakistani	90
Ghanaian	44

Figures are only available for this period because prior to the AIT being created on 4 April 2005, the Immigration Appellate Authority (IAA) did not categorise figures for entry clearance appeals separately.

Figures for Australian and United States nationals are not available because the AIT's reports on promulgation by nationality of the appellant, only concentrates on the top 20 countries.

Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what average time an entry clearance officer took to make a decision on a visa application in the last period for which figures are available. [50670]

Dr. Howells: I have been asked to reply.

UKvisas does not calculate the average time it takes an Entry Clearance Officer (ECO) to make a decision on an entry clearance application. However, three of UKvisas' public service agreement (PSA) Targets indicating the length of time a Visa Section should aim to resolve an application, were met in financial year 2004–05. They are as follows:

90 per cent. of straightforward non-settlement visa applications to be processed and available for return to the applicant within 24 hours from the date of receipt by the Visa Section of the application and all supporting documents including the fee.

90 per cent. of non-settlement applications requiring further inquiries or interview to be decided within 15 working days from the date of receipt by a Visa Section of the application and all supporting documents including the fee.

90 per cent. of applicants for settlement visas to be interviewed within target times as follows:

12 weeks, except in four busy settlement posts (New Delhi, Bombay, Dhaka and Islamabad), where the following maximum waiting times for a settlement interview should apply:

Queue 1: (Right of Abode claims: dependent relatives over 65; special compassionate cases): 3 months maximum;

Queue 2: (Spouses, children under 18): 3 months maximum;

Queue 3: (Fiancé(e)s, other settlement categories): 6 months maximum;

Queue 4: (settlement re-applicants): 9 months maximum.

Young Offenders

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many young people of school age *(a)* found guilty of a crime and *(b)* placed in custody had a previous history of being in care in (i) Uxbridge constituency, (ii) the London borough of Hillingdon, (iii) Greater London and (iv) England in each year since 1997. [48523]

Fiona Mactaggart: The available information is shown in the table.

It is not possible from the statistics collected centrally to identify the Uxbridge constituency. The figures in the table relate to the petty sessional area of Hillingdon which sits at Uxbridge.

In relation to children in custody who have a previous history of being in care, the Social Exclusion Report "Reducing re-offending by ex prisoners", annex D, says (page 157 D10), quoting an HMIP survey, that

"over half of those under 18 in custody, have a history of being in care or social services involvement".

Number of persons sentenced and convicted aged 10 to 16 for indictable offences in Hillingdon[1], London[2] and England, 1997 to 2004

	Offenders		
	England	*London*	*Hillingdon*
1997			
Guilty	27,256	3,522	65
Immediate custody	2,832	475	10
1998			
Guilty	29,703	3,881	96
Immediate custody	2,804	426	5
1999			
Guilty	30,600	4,116	90
Immediate custody	2,863	407	4
2000			
Guilty	30,100	4,119	114
Immediate custody	3,070	472	15
2001			
Guilty	31,439	4,675	115
Immediate custody	3,368	490	5
2002			
Guilty	30,295	4,625	123
Immediate custody	3,320	560	2
2003			
Guilty	28,702	4,200	103
Immediate custody	2,657	414	10
2004			
Guilty	30,038	4,360	118
Immediate custody	2,653	440	6

[1] Comprises the Hillingdon petty sessional area with the Uxbridge magistrates court.
[2] Comprises the City of London and Metropolitan police force areas.
Source: RDS-NOMS 6/02/2006

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps have been taken to encourage Afghan farmers to move from growing poppies to other crops; and if he will make a statement. [51559]

Hilary Benn: Agriculture dominates the Afghan economy. Previously Afghanistan was a major exporter of horticulture and livestock products. However, 25 years of war and civil conflict and the recent drought have seriously affected Afghanistan's agriculture sector. Developing this sector is critical for economic growth, poverty reduction and for tackling opium poppy cultivation.

DFID leads the British Government's efforts to develop alternative livelihoods to opium production in Afghanistan. In financial year 2005–06, we are spending over £45 million for this purpose. This is an almost tenfold increase on the amount spent in 2003–04. In financial year 2006–07 spending is expected to continue at similar levels. A proportion of this funding will continue to be specifically targeted on improving agricultural opportunities for Afghan farmers. This includes research to help identify, test and implement new crops and technologies. Examples include improvements in health and husbandry for livestock, apricot drying, honey bee keeping, and the introduction of fruit tree nurseries and greenhouses for vegetable production. DFID has also jointly funded with United States Agency for International Development a $25 million nationwide programme to increase access to seeds and fertiliser for over 500,000 farmers for alternative crops.

At the same time as developing agricultural opportunities, DFID is also promoting the development of non-farm alternative livelihoods by supporting national programmes of the Government of Afghanistan which are helping to increase access to credit and improve infrastructure for farmers to transport their produce to markets.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the counter-narcotics trust fund in Afghanistan. [51574]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not yet carried out an assessment of the effectiveness of the Counter-Narcotics Trust Fund (CNTF). It is too early to do so, as the CNTF was launched at the end of October 2005. The Government are putting together CNTF spending proposals for its 2006–07 budget, which is expected to be passed in March 2006. There will be regular monitoring and reporting on the performance of the CNTF by UNDP and a Steering Committee of Government and donor representatives. DFID will undertake an annual review in early 2007 for its £20 million three-year commitment. An independent evaluation commissioned by UNDP covering the effectiveness of the CNTF is envisaged before October 2007.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department has provided in Direct Budgetary Support to Afghanistan in each year since 2001; how much will be given in each year until 2008; and if he will make a statement. [51607]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not yet provided any un-earmarked Direct Budgetary Support to Afghanistan. However, DFID is one of the largest contributors to the Government of Afghanistan's budget. We have contributed £135 million of un-earmarked support through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) since 2002. The ARTF is a multi-donor trust fund administered by the World Bank. It channels money through Government systems. However, there are independent monitoring agents that verify actual expenditures on the Government's recurrent budget. The ARTF operates on a reimbursement basis. Only eligible expenditures are reimbursed by the ARTF. It is therefore not Direct Budgetary Support.

The breakdown of this £135 million by Afghan fiscal years is:

	£ million
2002–03	15
2003–04	30
2004–05	45
2005–06	45

DFID plans to provide a further £50 million in 2006–07 and £55 million in 2007–08 in un-earmarked support to the Government, subject to effective use of the funds.

DFID has also financed several specific national programmes through the Government's budget. This includes £30 million since 2003–04 to the ARTF for alternative livelihoods activities to tackle the opium problem in Afghanistan. We intend to contribute at least a further £25 million for alternative livelihoods until 2008. DFID contributed £20 million in 2004 directly to the Government's Afghanistan Stabilisation Programme to help strengthen ties between provincial government and the central Administration. We have also agreed this year to a three-year commitment of £20 million for the Counter-Narcotics Trust Fund (CNTF). The CNTF will also channel money through the Government's budget to finance counter-narcotics activities.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* bilateral and *(b)* multilateral funding his Department has given to non-governmental organisations working in Afghanistan in each year since 2001. [51608]

Hilary Benn: The following table provides approximate figures for bilateral funding provided directly by DFID to non-governmental organisations for work in Afghanistan in each year since 2001:

	£ million
2001–02	22.5
2002–03	5.8
2003–04	2.5
2004–05	1.8
2005–06	4.7

A further significant portion of DFID's programme goes to NGOs indirectly through the Government of Afghanistan, which subcontracts implementation of many of its national programmes (to which DFID contributes funding) to national and international NGOs, as well as other implementing partners. Exact figures for NGOs are not easily available. Other direct recipients of DFID funding, such as UN agencies, also use NGOs as implementing partners.

DFID also provides global funds to NGOs through Partnership Programme Agreements (PPA). PPAs are long-term agreements of three to five years with civil society organisations which have a strong track record of work in international development and an ability to make a contribution to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The way PPA support is set out means that we cannot attribute DFID funding to any specific activity or country. OXFAM, ActionAid, Christian Aid, and Save the Children UK all have Partnership Programme Agreements with DFID, and work in Afghanistan.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* bilateral and *(b)* multilateral aid has been provided to Afghanistan by the UK in each year since 2001; and if he will make a statement. [51609]

Hilary Benn: The following table shows total bilateral aid provided to Afghanistan by the UK Government (including Departments other than DFID) in each financial year since 2001:

Total UK Government bilateral aid to Afghanistan

	£ million
2000–01	7.5
2001–02	50
2002–03	76
2003–04	99.6
2004–05	99

Total bilateral aid in 2005–06 is expected to be around £150 million. The Prime Minister announced on 31 January that the UK expects to spend some £500 million in Afghanistan in the three year period from 2006–09.

The second table shows figures available for the UK's estimated share of multilateral aid to Afghanistan in each financial year since 2001. Figures for 2004 and 2005 are yet to be published.

UK share of multilateral aid to Afghanistan

	£ million
2001	6.7
2002	16.5
2003	20.1

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much the UK has provided to Afghanistan for developing education facilities and increasing access to education in each year since 2001; and if he will make a statement. [51610]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not provided direct assistance to the education sector in Afghanistan, with the exception of very limited support (£47,000) for primary education of refugees in 2001–02. However, through our funding to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), DFID supports the Government of Afghanistan's budget, which finances significant expenditure in the education sector. Since 2002–03 the operating budget for education as a whole has risen by 250 per cent. Overall civil service numbers have remained stable, but there has been a major increase in the number of teachers, who constitute one of the largest portions of the civil service. DFID's contribution to the ARTF, to which we are the biggest donor, has thus played a big part in increasing the number of children in school since 2002.

Support to development projects in the education sector was budgeted to rise by 60 per cent. in 2005–06. Other donors have taken the lead in providing direct support to the education sector, including the World Bank, the United States Agency for International Development, Denmark, and United Nations Agencies. The UK is therefore also supporting the education sector in Afghanistan through its contributions to multilateral agencies such as the World Bank and the UN, but we do not have specific breakdowns. Through donor support to the education sector, over a thousand schools have been built or rehabilitated, which has enabled the enrolment of 5.6 million children, 37 per cent. of them girls.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much the UK has provided to Afghanistan for *(a)* the development of health capacity and *(b)* increasing access to treatments in each year since 2001; and if he will make a statement. [51611]

Hilary Benn: DFID support to the health sector is mostly through our funding to the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). The ARTF supports the Government's budget, including the health sector. This plays a big part in meeting recurrent costs such as wages and salaries of Government health workers and medical supplies. The Government's health programme was expanded to all 34 provinces, covering 70 per cent. of the population, and there has been a 60 per cent. increase in functioning health centres.

Other donors have been very active in the health sector, including the World Bank and United Nations Agencies such as the World Health Organisation. The UK is therefore also supporting the health sector in Afghanistan through its contributions to multilateral agencies, but we do not have specific breakdowns.

From 2002–05, DFID provided technical cooperation (£295,000 in total) to the Government of Afghanistan and the World Health Organisation to strengthen capacity for delivery of health services.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much the UK has provided to Afghanistan *(a)* for strengthening women's rights and *(b)* for improving access to clean water and sanitation in each year since 2001; and if he will make a statement. [51612]

Hilary Benn: The following table shows DFID's bilateral expenditure on projects that have targeted the strengthening of women's rights in Afghanistan. These figures reflect all projects that were recorded as having a significant focus on this policy objective, but it should be noted that these projects will also have targeted other policy objectives.

	Expenditure (£)
2000–01	1,289,682
2001–02	1,492,179
2002–03	4,505,407

	Expenditure (£)
2003–04	5,847,680
2003–05	5,970,913

Recording expenditure on water and sanitation presents a challenge due to the cross-cutting nature of many water and sanitation initiatives and the range of instruments used to channel development assistance, including budget support to Governments and via multilateral organisations.

Since much of our expenditure on water and sanitation is cross-cutting, for example as part of our health and education programmes, a detailed analysis is required to obtain more specific figures. DFID has commissioned a series of reports on financial support to the water sector; this analysis estimates that DFID bilateral expenditure on water and sanitation projects in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2004 is as follows:

	Expenditure (£)
2001–02	3,817,000
2002–03	1,597,000
2003–04	301,000

Analysis is currently being updated for 2004–05 and figures will be placed on DFID's website at www.dfid.gov.uk when available.

DFID also channels significant funds through multilateral organisations including the UN, EU and WB. A proportion of this spend also contributes to outcomes in water and sanitation and women's rights.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many staff from his Department have worked in Afghanistan in each year since 2001; what estimate he has made of the number who will work there in each year until 2008; and if he will make a statement. [51613]

Hilary Benn: The following table shows the number of DFID staff posts filled in Afghanistan from 2001 until now:

	UK staff posts	Afghan staff posts	Total
2001	4	0	4
2002	7	4	11
2003	9	7	16
2004	13	8	21
2005	16	10	26
2006	15	9	24

Estimates of staffing to 2008 are not available; plans are under review.

Figures include DFID staff working outside the DFID office on secondment to other organisations, or with Provincial Reconstruction Teams. They do not include DFID staff working on Afghanistan in Pakistan (in 2001–02) or the UK, staff from the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit on short-term assignment, Afghan drivers or guards, contracted consultants, or unfilled posts under recruitment. Some posts may have been filled by more than one person in any one year where staff changed mid-year. Others were vacant for part of the year.

Coercive Abortion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 20 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1639W, on coercive abortion, (1) if he will list the occasions when UK officials have raised the issue of coercive abortion bilaterally in appropriate circumstances; and if he will make a statement; [52534]

(2) how officials in his Department interpret appropriate circumstances in relation to raising the issue of coercive abortion bilaterally; and if he will make a statement. [52535]

Mr. Thomas: DFID interprets appropriate circumstances as those occasions judged to offer the best opportunity to seriously engage with senior officials. Under the UK presidency of the EU, we specifically raised the case of Chen Guangcheng, a lawyer who revealed information about forced abortions and sterilisations in Linyi City, Shandong Province, with the Chinese Government in October and November in 2005. We also raised our concerns more generally about the issue of coercive abortion with an unofficial delegation of senior Chinese policy-makers who visited the UK in August 2005.

Departmental Entertainment

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much was spent on entertainment by his Department in 2004–05; and how much of that sum is accounted for by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [50882]

Mr. Thomas: The total cost for entertainment in 2004–05 was £303,000.

This figure for entertainment includes working breakfasts and lunches, refreshments at meetings and official entertainment. It is not possible to disaggregate specific entertainment costs relating to food, alcohol, staff and accommodation without incurring disproportionate cost.

All entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in Government Accounting.

Departmental Recruitment

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many job advertisements were placed by his Department *(a)* in total, *(b)* in print newspapers and magazines and *(c)* on a recruitment website in each year since 1997; and at what (i) total and (ii) average cost in each case. [50742]

Mr. Thomas: All of DFID's external job advertisements are placed in the national press or specialised magazines in addition to appearing on DFID's own website. Since 2003 all of our vacancies

have also been placed on the civil service recruitment gateway website. There is no advertising cost associated with this facility.

Details of the number and cost of job advertisements placed by DFID for the five calendar years 2001–05 are as follows. Figures prior to 2001 are not available.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total number of advertisements	191	135	140	128	80
Total cost (£)	772,780	766,167	703,012	594,769	307,359
Average cost (£) >	4,046	5,675	5,022	4,647	3,842
Number placed in print newspapers and magazines	189	135	139	122	79
Cost (£)	772,233	766,167	702,871	593,336	307,171
Average cost (£)	4,086	5,675	5,057	4,863	3,888
Number placed on an external recruitment website	2	0	1	6	1
Cost (£)	546	0	141	1,434	188
Average cost (£)	273	0	141	239	188

Gabon

Daniel Kawczynski: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much international aid was given to Gabon in *(a)* 1980 and *(b)* 2005. [52085]

Hilary Benn: The amount of international aid given to Gabon from all donors was *(a)* £24.01 million in 1980 and *(b)* £20.62 million in 2004, which is the latest year for which figures are available.

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of the incidence of HIV/AIDS in *(a)* India, *(b)* Bangladesh and *(c)* Pakistan; and if he will make a statement. [51877]

Mr. Thomas: India remains a low prevalence country with overall HIV prevalence of 0.91 per cent. i.e. less than 1 per cent. of the population. However, the overall figures mask various sub epidemics in various groups in the country. These sub-national epidemics are evidenced by high prevalence of HIV among both STD clinic attendees and antenatal clinic attendees.

The higher prevalence States in India are Tamil Nadu, Maharastra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Manipur and Nagaland in the North.

As of 2004, India has an estimated 5,134,000 people living with HIV or AIDS. This represents an increase of 28,000 from 5,106,000 people in 2003. The balance between urban and rural prevalence is 41 per cent. urban, 59 per cent. rural. 61 per cent. of the infections are in men, 39 per cent. in women.

The consensus is that India has a window of opportunity to act decisively. We and partners are increasingly working with the Government of India to do so.

DFID is providing £123 million over seven years to the Government of India's National AIDS Control programme. This includes funding directly through the National AIDS Control Organisation and a package of technical assistance which funds, among other things, a resource centre, mass media campaigns, UN agency work and a challenge fund.

HIV/AIDS prevalence in Bangladesh is estimated at less than 0.2 per cent. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare estimated that 7,500 people in Bangladesh were living with HIV and AIDS at the end of 2004.

Nevertheless a number of factors mean that Bangladesh is vulnerable to a rapid spread of the HIV epidemic, including very high levels of behavioural risk in vulnerable groups and high levels of migration both within Bangladesh and from neighbouring countries with higher prevalence rates.

The most recent data on Bangladesh indicates that even among population groups with high risk behaviours, HIV prevalence remains less than 1 per cent. The exception to this is injecting drug users (IDUs) in central Bangladesh where HIV prevalence is 4.9 per cent., with pockets in Dhaka where levels are as high as 8.9 percent.

DFID has been providing support for HIV prevention work in Bangladesh since 1995. We are currently contributing £4 million to a programme of support for the Government of Bangladesh's response to the epidemic. This includes targeted HIV prevention services for groups with high risk behaviours and efforts to improve systems to ensure safe blood transfusion.

Data for Pakistan is scarce but HIV/AIDS prevalence is estimated at 0.2 per cent. of the population. There are however concerns that the country could be on the verge of a serious HIV problem. The combination of high levels of risk behaviour and limited knowledge about AIDS among drug injectors and sex workers are contributing to the rapid spread of HIV in high risk groups.

Knowledge of HIV among injectors (and sex workers) is extremely low. In Karachi, more than one quarter had never heard of AIDS and as transmitted infections rates are high. The extent of overlapping high risk practices and the mobility of sex workers and drug users poses the threat of a serious HIV epidemic in Pakistan.

DFID is working with both public sector programmes and public-private partnerships. DFID's current and recent direct support has amounted to £4 million. We are also contributing through budget support and technical assistance to seven national health programmes, which include the National Aids Control programme. This includes further support for the national AIDS strategy and promoting within this better integration of HIV and AIDS and reproductive health services.

Kenya

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken by his Department to address the food crisis in Kenya following the recent drought. [52192]

Hilary Benn: During my recent visit to Kenya I committed a further £3 million in response to the food crisis in Kenya. This brings the total UK contribution to £12.7 million since July 2004. A total of 3 million people mostly in the north eastern and eastern parts of Kenya are affected by the drought. The levels of malnutrition are unacceptably high and urgent action is needed by all parties—Government, donors, NGOs, and communities to help save the lives of those at risk.

DFID support is channelled through the UN system—specifically the World Food Programme (WFP) for support to food aid and UNICEF for emergency health and nutrition. We have also made substantial contributions through NGOs (OXFAM, Merlin and Action Against Hunger). The support is focused on the worst affected areas based on the needs assessment report conducted jointly by Government of Kenya, the UN and the NGOs. The support given includes food aid, emergency health support, feeding programmes for malnourished children and emergency water provision.

DFID is also working with the Government of Kenya, other donors and others to look at ways to break the cycle of dependency on relief and to find more effective ways to address the problems of those who suffer from predictable chronic hunger.

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with his counterparts at *(a)* the EU and *(b)* the UN regarding the speed of the response to the drought crisis in Kenya. [52193]

Hilary Benn: DFID has been in regular discussions with the EU, the UN system and with bilateral donors since the start of the current drought crisis in Kenya in 2004, and has been active in promoting stronger co-ordination of the response.

DFID has been responding to the current emergency since 2004, as has the EU (through its humanitarian response agency, ECHO), and the UN system through the World Food Programme (WFP) and UNICEF in particular. Early warning systems supported by the Government of Kenya with inputs from the WFP and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), have been indicating the growing vulnerability of people in various districts.

However, the situation has escalated rapidly following the poor short rains at the end of 2005. The Government of Kenya has provided a strong contribution to the overall relief efforts, and is now the biggest contributor of food aid, with a recent commitment of 60,000mt of food. DFID is urging the UN to play a stronger role in co-ordinating the emergency response, in particular in overseeing the analysis of priorities and gaps in the response effort.

Water Action Plan

Emily Thornberry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2398W, on the water action plan, what percentage of budget support from his Department was spent by each African country in receipt of such support on access to safe water and sanitation in 2004–05. [51672]

Hilary Benn: We do not yet have figures for the percentage of public expenditure (including budgetary support) spent on improving access to safe water and basic sanitation for 2004–05. The process of collecting and reconciling national figures is lengthy, and the methodology for analysis is still experimental. We expect to be able to publish figures for 2004–05 by the third quarter of 2006. In the meantime, we believe that the figures in the DFID report entitled "Financial Support to the Water Sector 2002–04" (copies of which are in the Library of the House and also on the DFID website: www.dfid.gov.uk) may provide a useful indicator for 2004–05, since budget allocations typically do not change sharply from year to year.

Yemen

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on Yemen's progress toward the Millennium Development Goals. [51428]

Mr. Thomas: There is very little reliable data on progress towards achieving the millennium development goals (MDGs) in Yemen. Much of the data which comes from surveys is now very old and new more reliable data is not expected until late 2006 at the earliest. The data which does exist shows that Yemen is unlikely to meet most of the MDGs. Poverty has probably doubled during the 1990s and the population has increased by about 3 per cent. a year over the same period. Child malnutrition figures are particularly worrying. Progress in reducing infant and child mortality has been much slower than required to meet the target. Access to health services is very limited in many parts of the country. Two surveys on maternal deaths conducted in 1997 and 2003 show no improvement over this period (the risk of pregnancy-related death is one in 19 women). HIV/AIDS appears to be spreading. TB remains highly prevalent although incidence is falling. In the 1990s malaria became more widespread, with epidemics in 1996 and 1998. Yemen is confronting a severe environmental crisis with rapidly depleting water reserves that will leave the capital city, Sana'a without water within a generation. Some progress has been made in increasing the proportion of the population with access to improved sanitation, but not at a rate rapid enough to meet the MDG target.

There has been a rapid increase in enrolment in primary school, particularly enrolment of children in the designated age groups, but this has been from a very low base. If the current rate of progress is maintained, the goal of universal primary education by 2015 could be attained. The rapid expansion of primary, and to some degree secondary enrolment has particularly favoured girls, and if the rate of change continues, this goal could possibly be met by 2015. Other indicators of gender equality however, do not indicate progress.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* bilateral aid and *(b)* multilateral aid the UK has given to Yemen in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [51429]

Mr. Thomas: The UK has provided the following amount of bilateral aid to Yemen in the last five financial years:

	Bilateral aid provided to Yemen (£ million)
2000–01	2.731
2001–02	2.582
2002–03	5.442
2003–04	3.875
2004–05	5.312

The most recent year for which DFID has multilateral aid figures is 2003. This is because information is drawn from a report compiled by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) which all multilateral donors provide information to, and there is a time lag before this is published. The UK contributes to several multilateral agencies which work in Yemen including the UN, EC and World Bank. The UK's multilateral aid contribution to Yemen between 1999 and 2003 was as follows:

	Multilateral aid contribution (£ million)
1999	4.3
2000	6.2
2001	12.4
2002	2.3
2003	11.2

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much bilateral aid from the UK has been used for improving health care facilities and tackling diseases in Yemen in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [51430]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has supported improvements to the health sector in Yemen since 2003, working with the Government of Yemen, UN agencies, and other bilateral donors. Funding has been provided to support polio eradication, and family planning and prevention of HIV/AIDS. Total spending on support to the health sector was £462,310 in 2003–04 and £210,740 in 2004–05.

DFID is now providing £3.1 million over four years to help the Government of Yemen improve maternal and neonatal health, working with the UN and the Dutch Government. The work involves improving services for maternal and neonatal health in five governorates, and helping the Ministry of Population and Health Policy to improve its planning and policy making capacity, including in undertaking a full health sector review during 2006.

DFID also provides funding to the Yemeni Social Fund for Development (SFD) which supports community level development, including improved health care services. DFID has provided approximately £10 million to the SFD since 2004–05. Approximately 7.5 per cent. of the fund's budget is allocated to health projects.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much aid the UK has given to Yemen in each of the last five years for projects to protect and promote the rights of women; and if he will make a statement. [51431]

Mr. Thomas: Poverty affects women more severely than men in Yemen as they have less access to health and education, employment opportunities, and resources such as land. Yemen is ranked 126th out of 144 countries in the UNDP gender-related development index, the worst performer among the Arab states.

All of DFID's support to Yemen prioritises the rights of girls and women, and the following projects particularly address this objective:

£15 million between 2005 and 2010 to help increase access to basic education, particularly for girls.

£13.9 million between 2004 and 2007 to support the Yemeni Social Fund for Development (SFD), which provides community based development, with a particular focus on improving women's lives. Programmes by the Social Fund for Development have directly served nearly five million women since 1997, slightly more than men (4.7 million). Some programmes, such as health and small and medium enterprises, involve far more women than men. As well as basic services, the SFD operates a range of programmes to fulfil the legal, social and political rights of women and girls.

Almost £500,000 between 2003 and 2006 to support work to bring women's development needs into Yemen's Five Year Development and Poverty Reduction plan so that women and men benefit equally for the Government of Yemen's development polices.

£3.1 million between 2005 and 2009 to help the Government of Yemen improve maternal and neonatal health and health policy making and planning.

£900,000 to support more transparent and inclusive democratic processes including greater participation by women.

Prior to 2003–04, DFID's bilateral programme in Yemen was focused only on strengthening economic and financial management, so there was no expenditure on promoting gender equality and empowering women. From 2003–04, the programme expanded into other areas. In 2003–04, nearly £2 million was spent on projects which had a primary or significant focus on promoting gender equality and empowering women; and in 2004–05, nearly £4 million.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has been funding a number of projects in this area including work to enhance women's role in local communities and a young women's leadership programme. The spend on these totalled £26,783 in 2003–04 and £73,221 in 2004–05. The FCO is committed to spend £181,882 in 2005–06, £179,657 in 2006–07 and £80,336 in 2007–08 on this programme of interventions.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much bilateral aid from the UK has been spent on education and education facilities in Yemen in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [51432]

Mr. Thomas: DFID has provided support to the Government of Yemen to improve basic education since 2003–04, and this is now one of DFID's main priorities in Yemen and accounts for approximately 25 per cent. of our annual spend. DFID is providing £15 million between 2005 and 2010 to help implement the Government of Yemen's Basic Education Strategy

through a World Bank project co-financed with other donors. The strategy aims to increase the percentage of school age children enrolled in basic education from 64 per cent. in 2005 to 84 per cent. by 2010, with the proportion of girls increasing from 38 per cent. to 47 per cent., and to improve the quality of basic education. DFID spent approximately £90,000 bilaterally on education in 2003–04 and approximately £500,000 in 2004–05, mainly on the development of the strategy and the design of the World Bank project.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to improve the operation of the judiciary in Yemen; what funds have been committed to projects to achieve this; and if he will make a statement. [51433]

Mr. Thomas: DFID together with other UK Government Departments is currently assessing how the UK could support judicial reform in Yemen, especially in the interests of women and the poor, who have little access to justice. The Government of Yemen is keen for international donors to support judicial reform. DFID has committed an initial £500,000 and is looking into options for longer-term programming.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what contribution his Department has made to the Social Fund for Development in Yemen in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [51434]

Mr. Thomas: DFID contributed £1.6 million to the Social Fund for Development (SFD) in 2003–04. DFID then committed an additional £12.3 million to a subsequent phase of the project between 2004 and 2008. £1.88 million was spent in 2004–05 and £6.5 million has been spent already in this financial year. The funds to the Social Fund for Development are used for community based development throughout Yemen.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what aid and resources the UK has contributed to tackling the recent poliomyelitis outbreak in Yemen; and if he will make a statement. [51435]

Mr. Thomas: The first case of polio in Yemen since 1996 occurred on 25 February 2005. As of 1 February 2006, 478 cases had been confirmed (source World Health Organisation (WHO)). The Government of Yemen completed a mass information campaign in April and eight nationwide immunisation campaigns have taken place since the outbreak last year. This strategy appears to be having results: the last new case was reported on 17 November 2005. Independent monitors now show that immunisation coverage overall is at 97.2 per cent. and the outbreak is coming under control.

DFID provided £250,000 to a UNICEF polio vaccination campaign in 2003–04. We did not provide bilateral funding in response to the polio outbreak in February 2005 because of the need to focus our programme on relatively few areas in order to have impact, and because other donors were better positioned to assist. However, DFID provides funding multilaterally for polio eradication via the WHO-led Global Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI). DFID contributed £34 million for the PEI in 2005–06, which helped close its funding gap for 2005 and ensured that all immunisation activities could go ahead in 2005. In addition DFID announced a further £40 million for 2006 to 2008 to eradicate polio in 2006 and ensure the world stays polio free thereafter. The funds we provide for the PEI are not earmarked, allowing the PEI to allocate resources according to their assessment of priority needs. The PEI provided at £7.6 million for polio eradication activities in Yemen in 2005.

Mark Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to tackle corruption in Yemen; what funds have been committed to projects to achieve this; and if he will make a statement. [51436]

Mr. Thomas: Corruption is a serious problem in Yemen. It holds back development and particularly harms the poor. The key to tackling corruption in Yemen is securing transparent and accountable public finances. DFID is helping the Government of Yemen develop its action plan for public financial management reform. This will include ways to improve control and accountability of public finances and develop a more transparent system for procuring goods and services with public funds. DFID has committed £200,000 for the development of the plan and is considering funding its implementation together with other donors.

DFID also provided £2.57 million between 1999 and 2005 to support the modernisation of customs services which will also help tackle corruption by providing more effective and transparent mechanisms for collecting revenue.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Leader of the House (1) how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by him in the last 12 months were answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* after 14 to 28 days, *(c)* after 28 days to two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if he will make a statement; [52136]

(2) how many parliamentary questions tabled in the last 12 months for answer by him on a named day *(a)* were transferred and *(b)* received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named. [52137]

Mr. Hoon: The information is as follows:

Procedure

Departments should ensure that Members receive a substantive response to their named day question on the date specified, and should endeavour to answer ordinary written questions within a working week of being tabled.

Transferring Questions

I expect Departments to act promptly in transferring questions. It is a discourtesy to the House and to hon. Members if they are not notified of the transfer within two sitting days of it appearing in the Notice Paper. However, an oral question should be transferred within 24 hours of it appearing in the Notice Paper and not on the day for answer.

Performance

From 1 January 2005 to 31 January 2006, the Office of the Leader of the House of Commons has answered 88 ordinary written parliamentary questions (100 per cent.) within 14 days of being tabled.

Over the past 12 months, no named day parliamentary questions have been transferred, and 37 (100 per cent.) received a substantive answer on the day named[1].

[1] This figure includes oral questions not reached on the day, or unstarred.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Equal Pay

22. **John Robertson:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what recent discussions she has had with employers and trade unions on promoting equal pay for work of equal value. [52018]

Meg Munn: Recently I met Baroness Prosser, Chair, Women and Work Commission and have met Commissioners including employers and trades unionists. Their report, due shortly, will provide a blueprint to close the gender pay gap. I look forward to discussing this with all the key stakeholders.

Women Entrepreneurs

23. **Ian Lucas:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what steps the Government are taking to assist women entrepreneurs. [52019]

Meg Munn: The Government have been working with providers of business support to ensure that women can access the women-friendly advice they need. Our key partners are the regional development agencies who are fully committed to incorporating women-friendly business support into mainstream provision. The Task Force on Women's Enterprise will be operational by spring 2006 and will work to increase the number of women entrepreneurs.

26. **Ben Chapman:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what recent assessment she has made of support services for women in enterprise in Merseyside. [52022]

Meg Munn: The Government have been working with partners within the business support arena to improve understanding of the support requirements of women entrepreneurs. In Merseyside our key partner the North West Development Agency has developed a clear plan to address the needs of women entrepreneurs.

Employment Equality (Age) Regulations

24. **Dr. Kumar:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what steps the Government have taken to publicise the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006. [52020]

Meg Munn: The Government's Age Partnership Group's 'Be Ready' campaign, publicises the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations. It targets employers, providing information on the draft regulations and age diversity.

Government also fund a capacity building programme whose aims include raising individuals' and employees' awareness of the forthcoming regulations.

Domestic Violence

25. **Lynda Waltho:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what steps the Government are taking to give young people the relationship skills needed to prevent domestic violence. [52021]

Meg Munn: Qualifications and Curriculum Authority has recently developed guidance for teachers which includes units of work covering relationships and healthy friendships. This provides the scope for schools to explore domestic violence and is supported by the Department's publication "Does Sex Make A Difference" which includes domestic violence lesson plans.

NORTHERN IRELAND

A6 (Derry to Dungiven)

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to upgrade the A6 Derry to Dungiven road. [52146]

Mr. Woodward: The chief executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 16 February 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about what plans there are to upgrade the A6 Derry to Dungiven Road. As this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service I have been asked to reply.

The Secretary of State announced on 13 December 2005 that a £250 million scheme to dual the A6 between Londonderry and Dungiven was being added to Roads Service's Major Road Works Forward Planning Schedule. The 30km of dualling, including a dual carriageway bypass of Dungiven, will be the biggest single road scheme ever built in Northern Ireland.

It is hoped that the scheme will commence on site in the latter half of the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015 period, subject to the availability of finance, and the completion of the relevant statutory procedures and economic appraisals.

Roads Service commissioned consultants in April 2005 to identify a corridor for the future dualling of the A6 between Castledawson and Londonderry. It is envisaged that this study will be completed in spring 2006 and will be taken forward through the development of the A6 Derry to Dungiven section.

I hope this information is helpful.

Civil Service Pay

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the average percentage increase in salary for Northern Ireland civil servants in 2006. [52516]

Angela E. Smith: No estimate has been made of the average percentage increase in salary for Northern Ireland civil servants in 2006. The 2006 settlement date is 1 August and consideration of the 2006 pay award is at a very early stage.

Decommissioning

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent discussions have taken place with *(a)* Loyalist paramilitaries and *(b)* Unionist political parties on the decommissioning of weapons; and if he will make a statement. [50498]

Mr. Woodward: Ministers and officials meet representatives of the Progressive Unionist Party and the Ulster Political Research Group on a regular basis. Among the matters discussed is how they can help the organisations they are associated with to make the transition from conflict to peace. This includes the need for full and verifiable decommissioning.

The IICD reports that the UDA and the LVF are in contact with it. The UVF has, however, yet to re-engage.

Departmental Assets

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the items of departmental property worth over £100 that have been reported as *(a)* lost and *(b)* broken in the last 12 months. [47678]

Mr. Hain: There have been no items of departmental property worth over £100 reported as *(a)* lost or *(b)* broken in the Northern Ireland Office during the last 12 months.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many staff in his Department are paid on a performance-related basis. [50489]

Mr. Woodward: All staff in the Northern Ireland Office are paid on a performance-related basis.

Pay and performance management for the senior civil service is based on a framework set by the Cabinet Office. This includes a mixture of consolidated base pay awards and non-consolidated bonuses both of which are linked to individual performance and delivery.

The NIO has delegation for pay and performance management for staff below the senior civil service. All staff with satisfactory performance receive a consolidated increase and exceptional performance is rewarded through the use of non-consolidated bonuses.

Disabled Parking Bays (Foyle)

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many people in Foyle constituency applied to the Roads Service for disabled parking bay outside their homes in each of the last five years; and how many such applications were *(a)* granted and *(b)* denied; [51692]

(2) how many applications from people resident in Foyle constituency to the Roads Service for a disabled parking bay outside their homes are awaiting assessment; and what the average time taken for processing such applications is. [51693]

Mr. Woodward: The chief executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin, dated 15 February 2006:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland two Parliamentary Questions regarding:

(i) How many people in Foyle constituency applied to the Roads Service for disabled parking bay outside their homes in each of the last five years; and how many of such applications were *(a)* granted and *(b)* denied; and

(ii) How many applications from people resident in Foyle constituency to the Roads Service for a disabled parking bay outside their homes are awaiting assessment; and what the average time taken for processing such applications is.

As this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service, I have been asked to reply.

The information on the number of applications dealt with in the Foyle Constituency in each of the last 5 years is as follows:

	Inquiries	*Number of applications*[1]	*Granted*	*Denied*
2001	41	24	1	23
2002	54	32	4	28
2003	64	37	9	28
2004	48	34	6	28
2005	55	34	4	30

[1] When an inquiry is received an application form is forwarded to the applicant. Not all application forms are returned.

Roads Service currently has six applications awaiting assessment.

Following receipt of a completed application form, it usually takes about 3 weeks for an assessment to be completed. If the application satisfies the assessment guidelines, approval is then required from the PSNI before the legislation process can begin. Roads Service cannot mark out the bay in the ground before the legislation process is completed. Subject to there being no objections, this usually takes about 6 months.

I hope this information is helpful.

Equality Commission

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people defined as *(a)* Protestant, *(b)* Roman Catholic and *(c)* non-determined have been offered support and assistance by the Equality Commission at fair employment tribunals in cases of alleged discrimination on the grounds of religion in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [51330]

Angela E. Smith: The Equality Commission has assisted the following numbers of people at Fair Employment Tribunals in their cases of alleged discrimination on the grounds of religion and/or political opinion in each of the last five years.

	Protestant	*Roman Catholic*	*Non-determined*
2000–01	—	1	—
2001–02	2	6	—
2002–03	3	2	—
2003–04	1	1	—
2004–05	4	5	—

Identity Cards

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1074W, on identity cards,

whether his Department has any plans to make use of the identity card scheme for the services which are its responsibilities. [50316]

Mr. Hain: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 5 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 1074W. No decisions have yet been taken.

Official Residences

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the official residences for which his Department is responsible; who occupies each one; what the annual cost is of running each property; what contribution the occupants of each make towards running costs; what the total capital and refurbishment expenditure was on those properties in 2004–05; how much was spent in each property on *(a)* flowers and plants, *(b)* wine and entertaining, *(c)* food, *(d)* telephone bills and *(e)* electricity and gas in 2004–05; how many (i) domestic and (ii) maintenance staff are employed at each property, broken down by post; and what the total cost of staff employment was in 2004–05. [50878]

Mr. Hain: When in Northern Ireland I reside at Hillsborough castle. The facilities at the castle are also used to provide official hospitality and overnight accommodation for members of the Royal Family, visiting dignitaries and diplomats. Other activities at the castle include departmental meetings, the Annual Garden Party and citizenship ceremonies. In addition to its use by the Northern Ireland Office and other Government Departments, charities and local community groups can request to use the facilities, generally for fund raising purposes, and the castle and grounds are open at certain times of the year for guided tours.

The total cost of running Hillsborough castle in the 2004–05 financial year was £1,426,105.94. This includes the maintenance of the listed building and grounds; the security of the castle and its grounds, and that of Ministers, officials and visitors while present at the castle. It also includes the cost of hosting the events listed above, as well as catering, hospitality and administration.

I am on duty while at Hillsborough castle and therefore my costs count as official expense. Records of expenditure on refurbishment are an integral part of the records that cover many other items of building maintenance and repair. It would be possible to identify only those items that relate specifically to refurbishment only at disproportionate cost.

During the 2004–05 year £18,180.12 was spent on flowers and plants. This included plants and flowers for the 100 acre listed estate surrounding the castle and flowers for functions.

A total £90,542.28 was spent on all catering and hospitality related items (the costs of food wine and entertaining not being separately available).

£19,798.82 was spent on telephone systems including calls, installations and maintenance.

£62,565.39 was spent on power, including electricity, gas, oil and other forms of fuel.

There were 25 staff employed at Hillsborough castle during the 2004–05 year providing administrative support, household and catering services, gardening services and 24 hour security. The total cost of employing these staff was £627,841.81.

There are currently the equivalent of 4 full-time domestic staff employed at Hillsborough castle but no maintenance staff.

Paediatric Gastroenterology Services

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what dedicated paediatric gastroenterology services are available in Northern Ireland; and where these are located. [51697]

Mr. Woodward: Children with gastroenterology problems in Northern Ireland are currently cared for by a range of staff including paediatricians, paediatric surgeons and dieticians. In recent years the service has been predominately provided by the Royal Belfast hospital for Sick Children with specialised input from visiting consultants from Great Britain. The establishment of a local dedicated service, specifically for the provision of paediatric gastroenterology, has been recognised as a priority by the Department and Commissioners; funding has been allocated for a paediatric gastroenterologist and appropriate support staff and recruitment is currently underway.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children are on the waiting list for upper gastro-intestinal endoscopy and colonoscopy procedures; how many additional referrals are added to that waiting list on average per month; how many procedures are carried out on average each month; and on what date the longest-waiting patient joined the list. [51702]

Mr. Woodward: There were 108 children on the in-patient/day case waiting list for upper gastro-intestinal endoscopy and colonoscopy procedures at 31 December 2005.

Over the period January 2005 to December 2005, there were approximately 13 additions to the in-patient/day case waiting list on average per month

Please note that the age group generally considered to be children by Trusts is the 0 to 16 years age group. Exceptions to this are Craigavon Area Hospital Health and Social Services Trust (0 to 14 years) and Causeway Health and Social Services Trust (0 to 17 years).

Over the period January 2003 to March 2005, the average number of endoscopies carried out on children aged under 16 years in Northern Ireland each month was 38. Over the same period, the average number of colonoscopies carried out on children aged under 16 years in Northern Ireland each month was 10. The procedures were carried out as either primary or secondary procedures.

The date that the currently longest-waiting patient joined the in-patient/day case waiting list was December 2004.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects paediatric gastroenterology services in Northern Ireland will attain

the service standards as set out in the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health Document, Commissioning Tertiary and Specialised Service for Children and Young People. [51705]

Mr. Woodward: It is not possible to be precise about the time scale within which these standards will all be obtained. However the recruitment of a dedicated paediatric gastroenterologist at the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children will be a significant step forward in improving the quality of care provided locally and in helping to achieve national standards.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many whole-time equivalent paediatric gastroenterologists are employed in the NHS in Northern Ireland; what support there is in terms of *(a)* nursing staff, *(b)* allied health professionals and *(c)* fully funded endoscopy theatre sessions; and what the plans are for each category for 2006–07. [51706]

Mr. Woodward: The information requested is not held centrally and will take some time to collate. I will write to the hon. Gentleman with the information as soon as it is available and place a copy in the Library.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children under the age of 16 years have had *(a)* gastro-intestinal endoscopy and *(b)* colonoscopy procedures carried out by non-paediatric consultants since 1 January 2003. [51707]

Mr. Woodward: Information on the number of procedures carried out on children under the age of 16 years in Northern Ireland, from 1 January 2003 until 31 March 2005, is available from the Hospital Inpatient System and is provided in the table. Details of individual consultants undertaking the procedures are not collected.

Procedure	*Total*
Endoscopy	1,023
Colonoscopy	274

Source:
Hospital Inpatient System

Any individual could have more than one operation or procedure undertaken during their stay in hospital and could also be admitted more than once over the course of a year or years. It should be noted that more than one consultant could be responsible for undertaking gastro-intestinal endoscopy and colonoscopy procedures at any one of these hospitals.

Mark Durkan: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether all children under the age of 16 years who have been referred for *(a)* upper gastro-intestinal endoscopy and *(b)* colonoscopy procedures will have their procedures performed by paediatric consultants. [51708]

Mr. Woodward: The majority of children under the age of 16 who have been referred for upper gastro-intestinal endoscopy or colonoscopy procedures will have them carried out by either a consultant paediatrician or a consultant paediatric surgeon. For children at the upper end of the age limit it is entirely appropriate for their treatment to be carried out by consultant gastroenterologists or consultant surgeons.

Parliamentary Questions

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many parliamentary questions tabled in the last 12 months for answer by him on a named day *(a)* were transferred and *(b)* received a substantive answer (i) on the day named and (ii) after the day named. [49877]

Mr. Hain: From 1 January 2005 to 21 December 2005 the Northern Ireland Office received 526 parliamentary questions tabled for answer on a named day. The information requested is contained in the following table.

	Number
Answered on day named	270
Answered after day named	242
Transfers	14

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many ordinary written parliamentary questions tabled for answer by him in the last 12 months have been answered *(a)* within 14 days, *(b)* between 14 and 28 days, *(c)* between 28 days and two months and *(d)* in excess of two months after the date of tabling; and if he will make a statement. [49891]

Mr. Hain: From 1 January 2005 to 21 December 2005 the Northern Ireland Office received 3,684 parliamentary questions from Members of the House of Commons. Written answers were provided within the following time scales.

Parliamentary questions

	Number
Within 14 days	2,835
After between 14 and 28 days	355
After between 28 days and two months	66
After in excess of 2 months	324
Transfers	89
Withdrawals	15

Of the 324 questions that were answered 'After in excess of 2 months' 130 were tabled in July prior to the summer recess. It was therefore not possible to provide the hon. Member with an answer until the House returned in October.

Departments aim to ensure that Members receive a substantive response to their named day question on the named day and to endeavour to answer ordinary written questions within a working week of being tabled. Unfortunately, this is not always possible but my Department makes every effort to achieve these time scales.

Poverty

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children living in the province are estimated to be living in poverty, broken down by *(a)* Northern Ireland local government district and *(b)* parliamentary constituency. [49390]

Angela E. Smith: The following tables show the numbers and percentages of children in Northern Ireland living in relative income poverty before housing costs and after housing costs across *(a)* local government districts (table 1) and *(b)* parliamentary constituencies (table 2). Due to small sample sizes in individual years, it was necessary to combine data for the years 2002–03 and 2003–04 to enable analysis. The figures presented in the tables are the most up to date currently held by Northern Ireland Government.

Table 1: Number and percentage of children in relative poverty by local government district for 2002–03 and 2003–04 combined

	Relative poverty before housing costs		Relative poverty after housing costs	
Local government district	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Ards	1,700	13	1,900	15
Armagh	1,300	9	2,000	14
Ballymena	4,400	23	4,800	25
Banbridge	2,400	17	2,400	17
Belfast	14,700	26	15,200	27
Castlereagh	2,100	14	3,500	23
Coleraine	6,500	37	6,300	36
Craigavon	7,100	24	7,100	24
Derry	9,200	32	9,100	32
Downpatrick	2,500	12	3,900	19
Dungannon	3,100	20	4,900	32
Fermanagh	4,300	23	5,200	28
Lisburn	3,400	15	4,100	18
Newry and Mourne	4,700	25	4,900	26
Newtownabbey	1,900	7	4,700	18
North Down	2,900	14	4,200	21
Cookstown and Magherafelt[1]	5,200	38	6,600	48
Larne and Moyle[1]	3,300	35	3,100	33
Omagh and Strabane[1]	6,600	30	8,400	38
Other[2]	7,400	18	7,800	19
All	95,00	22	110,500	25

[1] Local government districts combined due to sample size requirements.

[2] Remaining local government districts (of Antrim, Ballymoney, Carrickfergus, and Limavady) combined due to small sample sizes.

Source:

Households Below Average Income 2002–03 and 2003–04 Department for Social Development.

Table 2: Number and percentage of children in relative poverty by parliamentary constituency for 2002–03 and 2003–04 combined

	Relative poverty before housing costs		Relative poverty after housing costs	
Parliamentary constituency	Number	Constituency	Number	Constituency
Belfast East	3,500	23	4,200	29
Belfast North	5,300	29	5,200	28
Belfast South	2,100	17	2,900	24
Belfast West	5,900	24	6,900	28
East Antrim	2,900	16	3,700	20
East Londonderry	8,000	30	7,600	29
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	7,100	22	9,500	30
Foyle	9,200	32	9,200	32
Lagan Valley	2,900	13	3,300	15
Mid Ulster	5,600	34	7,300	44
Newry and Armagh	4,500	20	5,600	25
North Antrim	8,000	24	8,500	25
North Down	2,800	13	4,200	20
South Antrim	4,800	14	6,500	20
South Down	5,600	17	7,000	22
Strangford	2,400	12	2,600	13
Upper Bann	8,000	21	7,900	21
West Tyrone	6,600	30	8,500	38
All	95,000	22	110,500	25

Source:

Households Below Average Income 2002–03 and 2003–04 Department for Social Development.

Notes to tables:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred and percentages to the nearest whole number.

2. As with any sample survey the numbers and percentages quoted in the table above are subject to sampling error.

3. Data was sourced from Households Below Average Income Northern Ireland (HBAI NI). The HBAI NI is based on information collected from the Family Resources Survey (FRS). The FRS was first run in NI in 2002–03.

4. The HBAI is the main source of income poverty measures throughout the UK and is used to monitor the United Kingdom's child poverty targets.

5. Relative income poverty is defined as households who have an income less than 60 per cent. of the contemporary median income.

6. Income before housing costs (BHC) includes the following main components: usual net earnings from employment; profit or loss from self-employment (losses are treated as a negative income); all Social security benefits (including housing benefit, social fund, maternity, funeral and community care grants but excluding social fund loans) and tax credits; income from occupational and private pensions; investment income; maintenance payments, if a person receives them directly; income from educational grants and scholarships (including, for students, top up loans and parental contributions); the cash value of certain forms of income in kind (free school meals, free welfare milk, free school milk and free TV licence for those aged 75 and over).

7. Income is net of the following items: income tax payments; national insurance contributions; domestic rates (this includes water and sewerage charges for Northern Ireland); contributions to occupational pension schemes (including all additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) to occupational pension schemes, and any contributions to personal pensions); all maintenance and child support payments, which are deducted from the income of the person making the payment and parental contributions to students living away from home.

8. Income After Housing Costs (AHC) is derived by deducting a measure of housing costs from BHC income measure. Housing costs include the following: rent (gross of housing benefit); domestic rates; mortgage interest payments (net of tax relief); structural insurance premiums (for owner occupiers); ground rent and service charges.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public funding was spent during 2005 in Northern Ireland on research into renewable energy provided by wave power. [52514]

Angela E. Smith: In 2005 £149,697 of public funding was spent in Northern Ireland on research into wave power.

Sperrin Lakeland Trust

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the costs were to the Sperrin Lakeland Trust associated with the appointment of *(a)* an interim chief executive and *(b)* an interim director of nursing in 2004–05. [51182]

Mr. Woodward: Sperrin Lakeland Trust appointed an interim Chief Executive and an interim Director of Nursing for the period June to September 2005.

The gross costs associated with the appointment of the Chief Executive post were £47,000 and with the Director of Nursing post were £20,000.

PRIME MINISTER

Departmental Information

Mr. Gale: To ask the Prime Minister how much was spent on his Office's public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [48953]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes my office forms part of the Cabinet Office. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office (Mr. Murphy) today.

Mittal Steel

Adam Price: To ask the Prime Minister what representations he has made on behalf of Mittal Steel or its predecessor companies since 2001. [52510]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the right hon. Member for Chingford and Woodford Green (Mr. Duncan Smith) on 13 February 2002, *Official Report*, columns 198–99.

SCOTLAND

Departmental Staff

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether any *(a)* employee of his Department, *(b)* person engaged by his Department as a consultant and *(c)* paid advisor to his Department is a member of the House of Lords; and if he will make a statement. [52901]

David Cairns: None are members of the House of Lords.

Departmental Websites

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what websites come under his Department's responsibility; and what the *(a)* cost and *(b)* number of visitors to those sites was in the last year for which figures were available. [40794]

David Cairns: For the period 1 January-31 December 2005, there were two websites for which the Scotland Office was responsible.

Website	*Overall costs (£)*	*Number of unique visitors*
www.scotlandoffice.gov.uk	4,640	40,359
www.arbuthnottcommission.gov.uk	176	3,567

The overall costs are based on the fees for hosting the site, and if appropriate include any additional fees eg updates, design revisions.

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many departmental employees have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46775]

David Cairns: None.

Identity Cards

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Scottish Executive regarding identity cards. [48568]

David Cairns: My right hon. Friend and I meet regularly with Scottish Executive Ministers to discuss a range of issues.

Jewish Festivals

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what his office did to *(a)* celebrate Hanukkah and *(b)* mark Yom Kippur in 2005. [46764]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office did not host or organise any specific events to mark Hanukkah or Yom Kippur. However, management in the office gives sympathetic consideration to requests for time off to mark religious festivals.

Pension Liabilities

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will estimate the net present value of accrued pension liabilities in respect of *(a)* present and *(b)* former employees of his Department and its predecessor. [52110]

David Cairns: The principal civil service pension scheme is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme and individual departments' pension liabilities are not available. The Cabinet Office: civil superannuation resource accounts for 2004–05 showed that the total pension liability at 31 March 2005 was £84.1 billion. The value of pension liabilities was assessed as follows:

Liabilities for current members still contributing to the scheme—£37 billion

deferred pensions and contingent pensions for dependants in respect of members no longer contributing—£12.7 billion

current pensions for members and contingent pensions for dependants—£34.4 billion

As a result of a change in the discount rate used for calculating pension liabilities with effect from 1 April 2005, the total pension liability at 1 April 2005 increased by £10.6 billion to £94.7 billion.

Statutory Instruments

John Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the statutory instruments introduced by his Department since 6 May 2005. [46200]

David Cairns: The Scotland Office has introduced 12 statutory instruments since 6 May 2005. They are:

1. SI 2005/1467—The Scottish Administration (Offices) Order 2005

2. SI 2005/866—The Scotland Act 1998 (Modifications of Schedule 5)(No.2) Order 2005

3. SI 2005/1790—The Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 (Consequential Modifications) (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) Order 2005

4. SI 2005/1791—The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (Consequential Modifications) Order 2005

5. SI 2005/2060—The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 (Consequential Provisions and Modifications) Order 2005

6. SI 2005/2077—The Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005 (Consequential Modifications) Order 2005

7. SI 2005/2078—The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 (Consequential Provisions) Order 2005

8. SI 2005/3172—The Water Services etc. (Scotland) Act 2005 (Consequential Provisions and Modifications) Order 2005

9. SI 2006/241—The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 (Consequential Modifications) Order 2006

10. SI 2006/242—The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (Consequential Provisions and Modifications) Order 2006

11. SI 2006/304—The Scotland Act 1998 (Transfer of Functions to the Scottish Ministers etc.) Order 2006

12. The draft Representation of the People (Scotland) (Amendment) Regulations 2006

The last instrument was laid on 6 February and is awaiting approval by each House.

Vandalism

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the acts of vandalism which have been perpetrated *(a)* inside and *(b)* on the outside of his Department's buildings in the last 12 months. [49499]

David Cairns: There has been no reported acts of vandalism, either inside or outside, to any Scotland Office building in the last 12 months.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Complaints

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to his reply of 2 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 699W, on complaints, how many copies of the complaints leaflet were sent to members of the public in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and how many copies of the complaints leaflet were requested *(a)* by telephone, *(b)* by post and *(c)* using his Department's website in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [52493]

The Solicitor-General: The figures requested are not available as they are not recorded centrally and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

If a member of the public wants a complaints leaflet, it can be obtained by telephoning or emailing the CPS communications branch or by contacting any of the CPS areas. The leaflet can also be downloaded from the CPS internet and is available in both Welsh and in large print format.

CPS (Staff Bonuses)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General what criteria are used to determine whether staff employed by the Crown Prosecution Service receive a bonus; and if he will make a statement. [52492]

The Solicitor-General: The criteria used for staff in the senior civil service (SCS) to receive a bonus are set by the Cabinet Office.

Staff below the SCS level do not receive a bonus unless it is paid via the special bonus scheme.

The special bonus scheme aims to reward exceptional individual or team performance. This may be particularly appropriate where an individual's efforts have made a valuable contribution that falls outside his/her normal areas or scope areas of work.

Departmental Information

Mr. Gale: To ask the Solicitor-General how much was spent on the Department's public relations and information services in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [48966]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) expenditure on information services is shown in the following table. It covers expenditure on the provision of information booklets for the public, CPS area annual reports, the code for Crown Prosecutors and translations of information into Welsh and other languages. CPS has not engaged external public relations services, having in-house communications staff.

Financial year	*Crown Prosecution Service (£)*
2000–01	120,532
2001–02	86,706
2002–03	99,144
2003–04	126,672
2004–05	121,288

The Serious Fraud Office, Treasury Solicitor's Department, HMCPS Inspectorate and the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers have not incurred expenditure and, where appropriate, their communications staff are also in-house. Expenditure details are not separately available for communications staff and it would be difficult to identify them. For example most of the time the Attorney General's media relations are handled by his Private Secretary.

Law Officers' Departments include the Revenue and Customs Prosecutions Office but this office was not set up until 18 April 2005.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Poland

10. **Daniel Kawczynski:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps his Department takes to encourage UK trade with Poland; and if he will make a statement. [52006]

Ian Pearson: UK companies looking to trade with Poland are able to take advantage of the whole range of trade services offered by UK Trade and Investment. It supported 219 UK companies at 29 trade events in Poland in 2005. The UKTI regional network is also assisting 300 new exporters who have expressed an interest in exporting to Poland.

Pressure Selling

11. **Ben Chapman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on Government measures to increase consumer protection against pressure selling. [52007]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Unfair Commercial Practices Directive prohibits aggressive commercial practices including high-pressure selling techniques that involve lengthy or persistent visits. Legislation implementing this directive will come into force in December 2007. I am currently consulting on implementation options, and am confident that this will help considerably in tackling high-pressure selling practices.

Energy Review

12. **Stephen Hammond:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on energy policy. [52008]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government launched the Energy Review last November. As part of the Energy Review, in January the Government published a consultation document "Our Energy Challenge: securing clean, affordable energy for the long term". The consultation has a broad scope and considers all aspects of the energy system including energy supply and demand. The Review is looking at what further measures might be needed to tackle climate change, and to ensure secure and affordable energy supplies in the UK beyond 2010.

13. **Mr. Vaizey:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the Energy Review. [52009]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Wimbledon (Stephen Hammond) today.

UK Trade

14. **Michael Fabricant:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on his Department's policy of increasing UK trade outside the single market. [52010]

Ian Pearson: UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) is actively involved in helping UK companies maximise the opportunities for business worldwide in markets such as China and India. For example, through the Asia Task Force UKTI is working to identify barriers to trade, and proposing Government initiatives to overcome them. And of course the USA remains the UK's most important market. UKTI has completely overhauled its delivery structure there so as to further enhance service delivery to UK business.

Post Offices

15. **Tim Loughton:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many post office branches have closed since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [52011]

Barry Gardiner: To date, this Government have committed some £2.35 billion of investment in the post office network. This includes £480 million for the Horizon IT project to automate the network, £450 million to support the rural network for the three years 2003–06 and, subject to state aid clearance, £300 million to support the rural network for the 2 years 2006–08, £726 million to repay historic debt and £210 million to fund the urban reinvention programme. Under Post Office Ltd.'s urban reinvention programme, 2,475 sub post offices closed on a wholly voluntary basis thereby strengthening the viability of the remaining urban network while ensuring that at the end of the programme over 99 per cent. of the urban population nationally still lives within one mile of their nearest post office. Outside of the urban reinvention programme, 2,248 post offices closed between April 1997 and December 2005.

Mark Pritchard: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the rural post office network in the West Midlands. [52012]

Barry Gardiner: Government remain committed to ensuring that those living in rural communities have reasonable access to the services they need. Rural communities in the West Midlands are benefiting from our unprecedented nationwide programme of investment in the post office network, which includes £450 million over the period 2003–06 as a transitional measure to help maintain the rural network. A two-year extension of the annual support of £150 million, subject to state aid clearance, was announced in September 2004.

Work and Families Bill

17. **Martin Linton:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment he has made of the impact on business of the extension of family friendly policies contained in the Work and Families Bill. [52013]

Meg Munn: A full assessment of the impact on business of the extension of family friendly policies contained in the Work and Families Bill was made in the final regulatory impact assessment produced by the DTI in October 2005. The RIA is available from the DTI website and the Libraries of the House.

Sunset Regulation

18. **John Bercow:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the use of sunset regulation in legislation sponsored by his Department. [52014]

Alan Johnson: DTI policy makers are advised to consider, at an early stage of policy development, whether it is appropriate to include sunset clauses in legislation. Where a sunset clause is not considered to be appropriate, policy makers are expected to consider an alternative mechanism such as a post implementation review of the legislation.

Belvedere Waste Incinerator

Mr. Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects to make a decision on the proposed Belvedere waste to energy incinerator. [51658]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* A decision will be made as soon as possible.

Companies (Public Interest)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will seek to introduce legislation under which every company would be required to serve the public interest. [51508]

Alun Michael: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 13 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1635W.

Data Sharing

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps he is taking to facilitate data sharing between lenders and credit card operators relating to older accounts to improve lending decisions. [52886]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government have been in discussion with industry about the case for the legislative change that would be necessary to enable the industry to share data between lenders and credit card operators relating to older accounts, without first seeking the consumers consent. However the benefits gained from sharing this data, in terms of improved lending decisions, has to be balanced against an individual's right to privacy. We intend to consult on this issue in the spring.

Defence Contracts

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate he has made of the value of defence contracts to British manufacturing in each year between 1997 and 2005. [51305]

Alun Michael: DTI does not collate data on the value of defence contracts to British manufacturing. Through the Defence Analytical Services Agency, The Ministry of Defence publishes estimates on the direct value to UK industry of defence expenditure by year and by industrial sector. The latest date of estimates published is 2002–03 and is available from MOD's website at www.dasa.mod.uk/natstats/ukds/2004/ukds.html.

Departmental Consultants

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much was spent on external consultants and advisers by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* each (i) non-departmental public body and (ii) Executive Agency for which his Department is responsible and *(c)* each independent statutory body, organisation and body financially sponsored by his Department in each of the last five years. [51196]

Alan Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Angus on 13 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1638W.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each of the English regions and (4) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case. [40109]

Alan Johnson: Expenditure on rent, rates and building insurance during the last three years on the DTI HQ estate where the DTI has lead responsibility in Government for the building is shown in the following tables (£ million ex VAT). The DTI HQ estate does not contain any buildings in Wales and Northern Ireland where it has lead responsibility for the payment of rent, rates and building insurance.

Rent

Area	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
London	27.3	28.3	29.9
Yorkshire and Humberside	0.15	0.15	0.15
NE Region	0.06	0.06	0.06
SW Region			0.38
E Midlands			0.03
Scotland	1.09	1.09	1.09

Rates

Area	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
London	8.6	9.5	8.2
Yorkshire and Humberside	0.06	0.06	0.06
NE Region	0.02	0.02	0.02
SW Region	—	—	0.01
E Midlands	—	—	0.004
Scotland	0.25	0.30	0.27

Insurance

Area	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
London	0.21	0.23	0.25
Yorkshire and Humberside	—	—	—
NE Region	—	—	—
SW Region	—	—	—
E Midlands	—	—	—
Scotland	0.015	0.016	0.018

Similar information on non departmental public bodies and other public bodies is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Letter from Dr. Jeff Llewellyn, dated 15 February 2006:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question on what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* Insurance of buildings and staff was of (i) his

Department and (II) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) Executive Agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case.

NWML occupies a Department of Trade & Industry building at Teddington, Middlesex. The total expenditure on buildings for the period 2002–2008 is as follows:

£000

	Facilities management	Rent	Rates
2002–03	72	341	60
2003–04	94	247	61
2004–05	110	223	63
2005–06[1]	95	200	74

[1] Forecast.

There has been no expenditure on insurance of buildings and staff in the period 2002–2006.

Letter from Jeanne Spinks, dated 15 February 2006:

You asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, what the expenditure on *(a)* buildings and *(b)* insurance of buildings and staff was of (i) his Department and (ii) each (A) non-departmental public body, (B) executive agency and (C) other public body for which his Department is responsible in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, (3) each of the English regions and (4) Northern Ireland in each of the last three financial years; and what the planned expenditure is for 2005–06 in each case.

The table below shows the breakdown of expenditure on buildings and insurance of buildings and staff of the Employment Tribunals Service (ETS). Please note that ETS is only able to provide the total for 2002/03. We are unable to breakdown the expenditure per English region as we do not record information on a regional basis; however we are able to provide the total expenditure for England.

Financial year	Expenditure	Scotland	Wales	England	Total
2002–03	Building expenditure	—	—	—	6,103,200
	Insurance	—	—	—	—
2003–04	Building expenditure	1,637,595	240,867	4,176,538	6,055,000
	Insurance	4,131	—	1,018,69	1,060,00
2004–05	Building expenditure	64,6335	230,433	5,678,232	6,555,000
	Insurance	11,838	—	127,162	139,000
2005–06	Building expenditure	736,121	244,192	8,313,016	9,293,329
	Insurance	12,423	—	137,515	149,938

We are unable to supply information for Northern Ireland.

Letter from Claire Clancy, dated 15 February 2006:

I am responding to your recently tabled Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTI.

Expenditure on our buildings in Wales in the last three financial years and the amount planned for 2005/6 is as follows:

£ million

2002–03	1.5
2003–04	1.9
2004–05	2.8
2005–06	1.9

There has been no expenditure on buildings in Scotland, England or Northern Ireland.

There has been no expenditure on insurance of buildings and staff due to Crown indemnity.

Letter from Ron Marchant, dated 15 February 2006:

I am responding to this parliamentary question, tabled on 20 December 2005. The Patent Office expenditure on buildings and insurance in each of the last three financial years and planned expenditure in 2005–06 is as follows:

£

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
Rent	712,648	716,455	659,449	614,156
Rates	596,201	667,752	674,354	738,784
Insurance	15,060	12,516	13,905	15,000
	1,323,910	1,396,723	1,347,707	1,367,940

Letter from Desmond Flynn, dated 15 February 2006:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of the Insolvency Service in respect of you question (2005/2568) requesting information on money spent on buildings over the last three years and also the planned expenditure for 2005–06. Insurance costs are included in some buildings' service charges but they are not separately identifiable, there is no provision for the insurance of staff.

The Insolvency Service Executive Agency of the Department of Trade and Industry spent the following amounts on accommodation:

Planned

£

Region	2005–06	2004–05	2003–04	2002–03
East Midlands	438,478.51	433,908.15	359,543.02	376,303.30
Eastern	1,097,189.33	1,042,339.70	1,050,641.58	874,196.42
London	4,291,245.88	4,027,242.19	3,993,256.85	5,318,156.54
North East	850,624.23	603,811.50	792,740.97	885,594.76
North West	838,403.42	814,829.39	652,822.94	545,107.61
Scotland	196,254.31	184,074.49	150,823.25	52,011.51
South East	884,183.02	753,192.42	792,518.76	971,880.74
South West	940,627.79	996,563.21	831,692.69	900,675.25
Wales	201,607.40	165,193.62	145,371.91	141,059.69
West Midlands	3,148,578.50	2,863,158.13	2,342,621.14	1,897,368.49
Total	12,887,192.40	11,884,312.80	11,112,033.11	11,962,354.32

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff in his Department are paid on a performance-related basis. [50485]

Alan Johnson: All DTI staff are paid on a performance related basis. Those employed as consultants or as agency staff may or may not be paid on a performance related basis, dependent on their

individual contractual arrangements. As at 1 February 2006 there were 3,177.5 full time equivalent members of staff in DTI, excluding contractors and agency staff.

Directors (Voting Rights)

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will seek to introduce legislation under which directors of large companies as defined in the Companies Act 1985 would not be able to cast any vote on any annual general meeting resolution relating to their remuneration. [51512]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government have no plans to do so. Directors' remuneration is a matter for companies and their shareholders.

The Directors' Remuneration Report Regulations 2002 have improved transparency, accountability and the quality of shareholder engagement.

The Government look to boards and shareholders to exercise their responsibilities in this area fully and constructively both at the annual general meeting and at other times.

Education and Enterprise Campus (Burnley)

Kitty Ussher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on his plans for an education and enterprise campus in Burnley; what work has been done by the North West Regional Development Agency in relation to the project; and if he will make a statement. [51933]

Alun Michael: The Department of Trade and Industry has no plans for an education and enterprise campus in Burnley. However, over the past few months, the North West Regional Development Agency has met partners in Burnley to discuss the concept in the context of the revised Regional Economic Strategy. Proposals are at the earliest stage of development and are based on a relocation of Burnley College from its existing site to a new town centre site that will provide a new FE/HE campus and Enterprise Park.

Energy Costs

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much was spent by his Department on *(a)* gas and *(b)* electricity in 2004–05. [51771]

Alan Johnson: The Departmental expenditure in the year 2004 to 2005 on the Headquarters estate was:

Period: 2004–05

Gas: £120,000

Electricity: £1,050,000

Iron and Steel Employees Re-adaptation Benefits Scheme

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will make a statement on the implementation of the Iron and Steel Employees Re-adaptation Benefits Scheme. [53264]

Alun Michael: The Iron and Steel Employees Re-adaptation Benefit Scheme (ISERBS) announced in May 2001 was part of a package of measures implemented to alleviate the impact of large-scale redundancies in the steel industry. The scheme was derived from the European Coal and Steel Community Treaty which made specific provision for social aid to workers affected by restructuring in the steel industry. ISERBS provided a single lump sum payment of £2,480 to workers who lost their jobs in the period 1 January 2000 to 23 July 2002 (when the ECSC Treaty terminated) or as a result of a restructuring announcement made in that period. 13,156 individuals have benefited from the scheme.

New Technology (Investment)

Mrs. Maria Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures are in place to support small business investment in new technology; and if he will make a statement. [51361]

Alun Michael: The Grant for Research and Development was introduced in England on 1 June 2003, replacing the earlier Smart scheme. It provides grants to help individuals and small and medium-sized businesses research and develop new, technologically innovative products and processes and is delivered, by the Regional Development Agencies on behalf of the DTI. In 2004–05 grants worth just over £30 million were offered to 357 new projects.

The Government have also introduced R&D tax credits to help companies of all sizes carry out research and development (R&D) projects. R&D tax credits are part of the range of government support made available for innovative UK companies embarking on R&D. The tax credits are expected to provide support for companies worth around £600 million a year.

In addition, Enhanced capital allowances were first introduced in 2001 and now allow businesses of any size to claim 100 per cent. first year allowances on capital expenditure on a range of energy saving technologies, allowing them to write off the whole of the capital cost of these investments. The first year allowances allow small and medium sized firms to claim 40 per cent. on all types of expenditure on plant and machinery in the period the expenditure is incurred, to accelerate the normal rate of relief. PBR 2005 announced introduction of increase to 50 per cent. for one year for small companies.

Newspapers/Magazines (Distribution)

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he expects the final opinion from the Office of Fair Trading on newspaper and magazine distribution. [52307]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I understand that OFT intend to outline the next steps in this case in the near future.

Non-executive Directors

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will introduce legislation under which company employees would be able to vote on the election of all non-executive directors. [51505]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government have no plans to do so. The election of company directors is a matter for shareholders.

It is a main principle of the Financial Reporting Council's Combined Code on Corporate Governance that there should be a formal, rigorous and transparent procedure for the appointment of new directors to the board.

It is also a provision of the Combined Code that non-executive directors should be appointed for specified terms subject to re-election and to Companies Acts provisions relating to the removal of a director.

Non-fossil fuel obligation

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* the proceeds of the non-fossil fuel obligation and *(b)* the expenditure on supporting renewables were in each year since 1999. [52523]

Malcolm Wicks: When the Renewables Obligation (RO) was introduced in 2002 projects under the Non-Fossil Fuel Obligation (NFFO), the previous support mechanism, were included to ensure that from the outset there was liquidity in the ROC market. An indirect consequence of including in the RO those sites that received funding through the NFFO is that the income received from suppliers for the electricity exceeds payments made to generators. The surplus is paid to the levy fund on a monthly basis.

The size of the fund administered by Ofgem, resulting from surplus revenue collected by the Non Fossil Fuel Purchasing Agency (NFPA), in each year since 2001 is as follows:

Year ending March	*£ million*
2001	63.8
2002	28.6
2003	87.1
2004	146.5
2005	169.1

With regard to expenditure on supporting renewables in each year since 1999 I refer my hon. Friend to my reply to the hon. Member for Leominster (Bill Wiggin) on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2262W.

Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what information he has received from the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) on *(a)* the matters discussed and *(b)* decisions taken in the NDA MOX Commission. [48829]

Malcolm Wicks: None. The MOX Commission was a group chaired by BNFL which they stood down upon the formation of the NDA in April 2005.

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what information he has received from the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) on its plans for publishing the full Life-Cycle Baselines for NDA-owned sites. [48831]

Malcolm Wicks: The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority expects to publish the Life Cycle Baseline 2005–06 in respect of its sites by end March subject to the completion of internal review and the approval of its Board.

Nuclear Power Plants

Jenny Willott: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost to public funds was of building the *(a)* Trawsfynydd and *(b)* Wylfa nuclear power plants; and if he will make a statement. [49741]

Malcolm Wicks: The Trawsfynydd and Wylfa Magnox nuclear power stations were originally built and owned by the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB). Magnox Electric Limited now operates the plant under contract to the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority. The cost of building the power stations was at the time funded by the electricity market and there should, therefore, have been no cost to public funds in respect of the building of Trawsfynydd and Wylfa.

Operating and Financial Review

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans he has to meet businesses that supported the proposals in the operating and financial review. [51703]

Alun Michael: We are currently consulting on possible amendments to narrative reporting requirements in the Company Law Reform Bill. The deadline for responses is 24 March 2006. The department would be happy to receive views from any interested parties and to consider any request for a meeting.

Power Generation Technologies

Mr. Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding his Department has allocated to clean coal technologies in each year since 1997. [51864]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Leominster on 12 September 2005, *Official Report*, column 2262W.

Research and Development Grants

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what training is provided for assessment of applications for research and development grants; and what methods are used to assess their knowledge of business, commerce and technical innovation. [51493]

Barry Gardiner: The Technology Programme, managed by DTI, offers grant support for Collaborative Research and Development projects undertaken by Industry and the Science Base in prescribed high technology areas. Prior to undertaking any assessment, the status, technical qualifications, and business experience of Assessors is obtained and used to associate them to the applications that they may subsequently be asked to assess. In addition, prior to any Assessor being offered an assessment, unless they have had previous recognised experience in assessing applications to similar programme, all Assessors are required to attend a one-day briefing session that addresses all aspects of the process programme and an explanation of the criteria used for assessment. All the Assessors are recognised domain specialists and drawn from business, academia and/or from government research establishments and they are required to abide to strict confidentiality and non-conflict of interest agreements.

Grant for Research and Development, which helps individuals and small and medium sized businesses with the costs of researching and developing new, technologically innovative products and processes, has been delivered by the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) since 1 April 2005. On transferring the scheme, DTI undertook a programme of training and provided RDAs with extensive guidance on the framework within which applications should be appraised.

In appraising the technical and commercial aspects of applications RDAs take advice, in confidence, from qualified accountants, the Patent Office and internationally-renowned external organisations that are well qualified to judge the merits of a proposals. As an additional safeguard, RDAs will normally seek advice from two different external organisations when appraising an application.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what proportion of funds allocated for research and development grants for each regional development agency for 2005–06 had been offered to project applicants by 31 January 2006; and what proportion of the funds allocated were offered in 2004–05. [51495]

Alun Michael: I have asked each regional development agency to provide me with the relevant information about the region's activities. I will write to the hon. Member when I have the necessary information and place a copy of the letter in the Libraries of the House.

Sellafield

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what quantities of plutonium scrap have been produced from the present manufacturing regime for MOX nuclear fuel pellets at the MOX plant at Sellafield. [48830]

Malcolm Wicks: Material rejected from the Sellafield MOX Plant comes from two sources: pellets that are either out of specification or rejected from inspection, and residues that arise principally from grinder dust.

Material that is out of specification or rejected can be recycled and reintroduced into the production process. Due to chemical contamination, residues cannot be reintroduced into the production process. The main residue is grinder dust and typically accounts for up to 2.5 per cent. of throughput.

Student bankruptcies

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many students have been declared bankrupt in each of the last five years. [52602]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible from the information currently held centrally by the Insolvency Service to quantify how many students have been declared bankrupt.

US Government/Department of Defense Contracts

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many manufacturing companies in the UK have had contracts with *(a)* the US government and *(b)* the US Department of Defense in the last five years; and what the total value has been of such contracts in each case. [51306]

Alun Michael: DTI does not collate information in a way that shows how many manufacturing companies in the UK have had contracts with the US Government or the US Department of Defense but it is a significant figure.

WarnTone System

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 13 October 2005, *Official Report*, column 561W, on WarnTone system, when he expects Ofcom to respond to the request for a test licence for the WarnTone system. [49301]

Alun Michael: The Chief Executive responded to my hon. Friend on 13 February. A copy of the letter has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Wind Farms

Mr. David Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when he will announce his decision on the application by NPower renewables for consent under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 for the development of the Gwynt y Mor wind farm. [51642]

Malcolm Wicks: I cannot give a firm indication of when I will be in a position to reach a decision on the Gwynt Y Mor consent application. The application requires careful consideration and is currently being processed.

TRANSPORT

Aviation Policy

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps have been taken towards producing an evaluation strategy to assess the effectiveness of the Government's aviation policy; what the proposed timetable is for the production of this strategy; and what processes will be used to formulate it. [51649]

Ms Buck: I refer to my reply to the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green on 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1471W. The Government are committed to the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of the policies of the Air Transport White Paper. We will report by the end of 2006 on progress.

John Hemming: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the 2006 Aviation White Paper Progress Review will be published; whether it will include revised passenger forecasts to take account of the increased cost of oil; whether his Department will seek the views of *(a)* other Government departments and *(b)* external stakeholders on progress made; and whether it will include an assessment of the role reductions in aviation emissions will play in the target to cut overall emissions by 60 per cent. by 2050. [51650]

Ms Buck: The Department for Transport (DfT) expects to publish a Progress Report on the policies and proposals set out in the Air Transport White Paper (ATWP), by the end of 2006. Paragraph 12.29 of the Air Transport White Paper says that we will continue to regularly publish data on air travel and to update traffic forecasts in the light of trends. Movement in oil price is one of several explanatory factors in air transport forecasts.

The DfT is currently seeking the views of other Government departments. It also engages with external stakeholders on progress made, in a range of fora including the ATWP External Advisory Group.

The support paper to the Air Transport White paper, Aviation and Global Warming, includes forecasts of aviation emissions relative to other emissions. These forecasts are kept under review. However, the Energy White Paper 60 per cent. reduction target focuses on domestic emissions, and does not include international aviation. This is because emissions from international flights do not currently count in the national inventories of greenhouse gas emissions, there being no international agreement yet on ways of allocating such emissions.

Body Scanners (Paddington Station)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the use of body scanners at Paddington Station in relation to provisions of the Protection of Children Act 1978. [51759]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* No assessment has been made, as children were not asked to participate in the trial of screening equipment at Paddington Station.

Bus Travel

Paul Rowen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people were using buses outside London in the last period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [52438]

Ms Buck: I refer the hon. Member to Table C of the Public Transport Statistics Bulletin GB: 2005 Edition, a copy of which is in the House of Commons Library.

Buses

Mr. Harper: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether concessionary bus fare schemes operate between local authority areas on the borders of England and Wales. [51630]

Ms Buck: The English local authorities have the discretion to offer concessionary public transport into Wales subject to their judgment of local needs and their overall financial priorities. The Welsh scheme, funded by the Welsh Assembly, currently offers some travel into England along selected bus routes.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many bus services have been *(a)* withdrawn and *(b)* added to service in each financial year since 1 April 1998 (i) in total and (ii) in each traffic area region. [51654]

Ms Buck: The following tables show the number of bus services added and withdrawn in each traffic area since 1 April 1998. Over the period, 34,519 were added and 29,058 withdrawn.

	1998–99		*1999–2000*		*2000–01*		*2001–02*	
	New	*Cancelled*	*New*	*Cancelled*	*New*	*Cancelled*	*New*	*Cancelled*
North Eastern Traffic Area	1,127	1,058	669	674	843	697	971	637
North Western Traffic Area	1,243	790	1,077	842	1,147	1,048	933	666
West Midlands Traffic Area	525	495	398	335	482	404	347	307
Welsh Traffic Area	199	111	281	251	278	224	270	202
Eastern Traffic Area	1,117	784	690	727	710	941	767	725
Western Traffic Area	592	394	622	2,518	520	456	568	334
South Eastern & Metropolitan Traffic Area	398	273	256	195	218	222	370	206
Scottish Traffic Area	673	509	763	704	572	578	901	870
Total	5,874	4,414	4,756	6,246	4,770	4,570	5,127	3,947

	2002-03		*2003–04*		*2004–05*	
	New	*Cancelled*	*New*	*Cancelled*	*New*	*Cancelled*
North Eastern Traffic Area	926	477	772	601	842	589
North Western Traffic Area	1,042	578	990	584	1,066	652
West Midlands Traffic Area	371	510	587	475	561	459
Welsh Traffic Area	313	208	236	162	293	175
Eastern Traffic Area	571	499	670	585	663	542
Western Traffic Area	532	422	652	425	553	404
South Eastern & Metropolitan Traffic Area	275	210	205	121	196	111
Scottish Traffic Area	675	516	540	318	441	258
Total	4,725	3,420	4,652	3,271	4,615	3,190

Grand Totals:	
New Services	34,519
Cancelled Services	29,058

Catering/Entertainment Contracts

Mr. MacNeil: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total value is of *(a)* catering and *(b)* entertainment contracts let by his Department; and what value of such contracts has been let in each nation and region of the UK, including London. [37457]

Ms Buck: Catering services in the Department's official staff restaurants are provided by the Department's facilities management contractors. The cost of meals and refreshments etc. provided to staff are recovered through sales and are not a charge to public funds.

The total cost of catering and entertainment charged to public funds in 2004–05 (including working breakfasts or lunches, refreshments at meetings and official entertainment) was £698,000.

Expenditure figures for each nation and UK region are not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Civil Servants (Overseas Visits)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what costs were incurred by his Department as a result of sending civil servants on overseas visits in each of the last 10 years. [46279]

Ms Buck: The Department for Transport came into existence in May 2002 as a result of machinery of Government changes, and its accounts were only fully separated from those of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister at the beginning of financial year 2003–04. Information for previous years could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Three of the Departments agencies, DVLA, HA, and VOSA, do not record details of overseas travel separately from other travel and subsistence costs, and the information could be obtained only at disproportionate costs. Figures for the Department and its remaining agencies are contained in the following table:

	2003–04 (£)	*2004–05 (£)*
DfT *(c)*	1,682,041	2,102,746
DSA	33,000	29,000
DVLA	—	—
HA	—	—
MCA	931,875	1,278,135
VCA	277,000	245,000
VOSA	—	—
GCDA	157.00	186.00

All travel in the Department and its agencies complied with the requirements of the 'Civil Service Management Code'.

Coach Crashes (School Children)

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many coach crashes involving school children took place in *(a)* 2000–01, *(b)* 2001–02, *(c)* 2002–03, *(d)* 2003–04 and *(e)* 2004–05; how many have taken place in 2006; how many of those accidents occurred when children were travelling on school holiday trips; and if he will seek to implement a ban on overnight travel by school coach parties as a matter of urgency. [52303]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of personal injury road accidents in Great Britain where one or more child bus or coach passengers were killed or injured (all severities), by the light conditions in which the accident occurred, are shown in the table. The numbers are shown for the years 2000 to 2004, the latest year for which figures are available.

Personal injury road accidents involving one or more child (aged 0–15) bus or coach[1] casualties: by light condition, 2000 to 2004

	Year of accident				
Light conditions	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Daylight	893	923	732	778	727
Darkness	78	87	99	77	69
Total accidents	971	1,010	831	855	796

[1] Buses and coaches with 17 or more passenger seats.

The 2004 accidents included 57 child fatalities or serious injuries (KSI), 11 of those in hours of darkness. These amount to 0.3 per cent. of all child KSI road casualties.

No information is available on the number of non-injury coach crashes, or on whether the vehicles involved were being used for the purpose of a school holiday trip.

We have no plans to implement a ban on overnight travel by school coach parties.

Crescent Link Scheme

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will instruct his Department's Rail Group to consult *(a)* RailWorld, *(b)* Peterborough city council, *(c)* the East of England Development Agency and *(d)* other local stakeholders on developing the Crescent Link scheme connecting the Nene Valley Railway with Peterborough main railway station. [50731]

Derek Twigg: It is for scheme promoters to work with Network Rail to establish the feasibility and a business case for projects of this sort. Peterborough city council and Network Rail are jointly developing a scheme for a major redevelopment of the station area but it is too soon to say whether it will include proposals for the Crescent Link.

Crossrail

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact of the increase in estimated costs of the Crossrail project on funding available for infrastructure upgrading, maintenance and development in other parts of the country; and if he will make a statement. [51219]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* The estimated cost of the Crossrail project remains as set out in the Parliamentary Estimate of Expense accompanying the Crossrail hybrid Bill. The Government will continue to invest significant resources in the rail network.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact of extending the Crossrail project between Reading and Ebbsfleet rather than between Shenfield and Abbey Wood; and if he will make a statement. [51220]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* The Department for Transport has considered the Crossrail scheme in conjunction with Cross London Rail Links Ltd. (CLRL), the company taking forward the development of Crossrail. CLRL has examined the scope for serving Ebbsfleet and Reading. Their work shows that, in order to serve Ebbsfleet, Crossrail services would need to share tracks with other rail services on the North Kent Line between Abbey Wood and Ebbsfleet. This would involve complex scheduling with an unacceptable risk of disruption to Crossrail's planned high-frequency service pattern. In the case of Reading, significant additional costs and risks would be involved, including line electrification and associated bridge raising. As a result, neither extension was included in the route put forward in the Crossrail hybrid Bill.

My right hon. Friend recognises, however, that such extensions may fall to be reconsidered at some future date and has therefore agreed to safeguard the extension to Ebbsfleet and to consider revisions to the safeguarding Direction in due course; and he is also considering safeguarding the extension to Reading.

Cycling

Mr. Andy Reed: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of his Department's expenditure for 2012 has been committed to projects designed to encourage cycling. [51130]

Derek Twigg: Approx £6 million is included in the Olympic transport budget for cycling measures supporting the 2012 Olympic games. This includes about 50kms of new cycle lanes to connect the London cycling network up to the Olympic venues. This is funded from the £2.375 billion public sector funding package for the Olympics rather than any specific departmental budget.

In addition, TfL have their own plans to expand the London cycle network to 900km of 'fast, safe, comfortable' cycle routes by 2009.

Departmental Entertainment

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was spent on entertainment by his Department in 2004–05; and how of this sum is accounted for by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [50881]

Ms Buck: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I have given today to the hon. Member for Na h-Eileanan an Ir (Mr. MacNeil). The costs of *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation are not recorded separately and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many staff in his Department are paid on a performance-related basis. [50484]

Ms Buck: The pay of staff within the senior civil service includes a mixture of consolidated base pay awards and non-consolidated bonuses both of which are linked to individual performance and delivery.

For staff outside the senior civil service it is a requirement of pay delegation that reward systems must reflect a close and effective link between pay and performance. This is applicable to all staff and applied within the Department for Transport.

Early Retirement

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many departmental employees have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each of the past five years for which figures are available. [46773]

Ms Buck: The Department was created on 29 May 2002 and the numbers of employees who have taken early retirement due to ill-health in each year since then are shown in the table:

	Total
2002	46
2003	31
2004	30
2005	27
Total	134

Free Travel (Greater Manchester)

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate his Department has made of the likely change in bus and Metrolink passenger numbers in the county of Greater Manchester resulting from the introduction of free off-peak travel for pensioners. [51741]

Ms Buck: The Government's initial estimate is that between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2007, bus patronage in England will grow by 5.6 per cent. This has not been disaggregated to individual local authority or Passenger Transport Executives. The estimate does not include tram patronage, as this is not part of the statutory minimum entitlement. Any extension to tram services is at the discretion of the local authority based on their judgment of local needs and their overall financial priorities.

Fuel Efficiency

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage change there has been in the fuel efficiency of cars sold in the UK in each year since 1997. [52583]

Dr. Ladyman: Figures relating to two methods of measuring fuel efficiency and the annual change in those figures, are set out in the following table. From 1997 until 2000, the percentage changes in new car fuel efficiency are based on data collected by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). From 2001, the calculations are based new car emissions data collected by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

	Average miles per gallon (MPG)	*MPG percentage improvement*	*Average carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions (g/km)*	*CO_2 percentage improvement*	*Diesel car penetration*
1997	35.45	—	189.8	—	17
1998	35.66	0.6	188.4	0.7	16
1999	36.22	1.6	185.0	1.8	14
2000	37.01	2.2	181.0	2.2	14
2001	37.78	2.1	178.0	1.7	18
2002	38.72	2.5	174.8	1.8	24
2003	39.40	1.8	172.7	1.2	27
2004	39.96	1.4	171.3	0.8	32
2005	40.37	1.0	169.7	0.9	36

Diesel fuel contains more carbon per litre than petrol. Thus the increase in diesel car sales over the later periods leads to a greater rate of improvement in MPG (fuel efficiency) than in the more commonly reported measure of grammes per kilometre CO_2.

Network Rail

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what incentives are in place to encourage Network Rail *(a)* to improve its efficiency and *(b)* to complete renewals expeditiously. [49809]

Derek Twigg: The Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) has determined, the outputs that Network Rail must deliver in the five-year control period to March 2009, and the associated revenue allowance. This revenue allowance is based on estimates of the expenditure required by a competent and well-managed company to deliver the stated outputs, including an allowance for efficiency savings. As part of this, Network Rail must deliver an efficiency saving of 31 per cent.

This approach provides strong incentives on Network Rail to improve cost efficiency, as they benefit from reducing expenditure below that assumed in setting its allowed revenues, provided that it delivers its required outputs and does not compromise long-term asset condition and serviceability of the network.

These incentives for cost efficiency are also reflected in the remuneration arrangements for Network Rail's senior management.

The main incentive on Network Rail to complete its renewals expeditiously are the conditions of the track access contracts that it enters into with train operating companies. These contracts include a mechanism whereby Network Rail makes compensation payments to train operating companies for changes to train timetables that result from the need for engineering works.

Official Cars

Mr. Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many former Ministers, apart from Prime Ministers, have official cars provided for their use; from which administrations; and if he will make a statement. [50795]

Ms Buck *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* In addition to both former Prime Ministers the GCS provides cars and drivers to three former Ministers, two from Labour administrations and one from a Conservative administration.

Park and Ride Schemes

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the viability of a park and ride scheme in *(a)* Tameside metropolitan borough and *(b)* Stockport metropolitan borough. [51745]

Ms Buck: It is for individual local authorities to determine the public transport needs in their region and to match available funding against these requirements.

At this time there are no planned park and ride sites in either Tameside or Stockport.

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* financial and *(b)* other support his Department is giving to develop park and ride schemes in the Greater Peterborough area. [50725]

Ms Buck: The funding support for integrated transport provision provided to Peterborough city council through the local transport capital settlement for each year is shown in the following table. It has been for Peterborough city council to decide how that allocation was spent in line with its local transport plans and its priorities, including provision of park and ride.

Peterborough city council unitary authority (integrated transport block)

	£ million
2006–07	1.867
2005–06	1.900
2004–05	2.187
2003–04	2.196
2002–03	2.000
2001–02	2.000

Peterborough Local Transport Plan

Mr. Stewart Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding the Government will provide to support the delivery of the Peterborough local transport plan for 2006–07 to 2010–11; and if he will make a statement. [52506]

Ms Buck: The Government have made firm allocations for some of the funding support for the Peterborough local transport plan for 2006–07 and set guidelines for 2007–08 to 2010–11. It has allocated a total of £4.076 million for local transport capital works in 2006–07 and set out planning guidelines totalling £10.614 million for 2007–08 to 2010–11. No final allocations of funding support for any major transport schemes in Peterborough for 2006–07 to 2010–11 have yet been made.

The figures do not include any allowance for the continuation of an exceptionally large capital maintenance scheme, the case for which is currently being considered.

Public Transport (Late Night Provision)

Anne Snelgrove: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to ensure local authorities provide late night public transport for young people. [51287]

Ms Buck: Local public transport services are mainly provided by buses. Individual local authorities are responsible for their own decisions on spending on support for local bus services in their area, including those providing late night services. The majority of this expenditure is provided by local authorities from their Revenue Support Grant allocations. Over £300 million was spent by local authorities in support of bus services in 2004–05.

We recognise the importance to children and young people of a transport system that meets their needs. We commissioned a project to improve our understanding of this issue and to help local authorities when making their spending decisions. A summary of this research will be published shortly on the Department's website.

Railways

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the impact on *(a)* rail fare prices and *(b)* rail usage of the abolition of saver fares; and if he will make a statement. [49025]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 8 February 2006]:* The Strategic Rail Authority's fares review, published in June 2003, concluded that the regulation of saver returns (a leisure fare introduced by British Rail in the 1980s) had caused overcrowding on many long-distance trains and had constrained the introduction of more innovative, customer-focused fares structures. It proposed further work on saver regulation with a view to replacing it in due course with a more appropriate regime. Work is ongoing, but no decision on the future of saver regulation has yet been made.

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what priority he plans to give to seating capacity on trains when awarding rail franchises. [51790]

Derek Twigg: The invitation to tender for each franchise includes a specification setting out the rail services the Government propose to buy through the franchise. This includes service frequency, stopping patterns, journey times and seating capacity. This is particularly important for franchises which have a high proportion of commuter traffic flows. Bidders' proposals have to show how they will meet this specification and delivery of seating capacity is monitored throughout the life of the franchise.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of railway fare income has been derived from *(a)* regulated and *(b)* unregulated fares for each year since 1994. [49565]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 8 February 2006]:* The proportion of fares income from regulated and unregulated fares from 2002 is shown in the following table. Data covering 1994–2001 is not available and can only be provided at a disproportionate cost.

Fare type (percentage)

	Regulated	*Unregulated*
2002	44	56
2003	44	56
2004	44	56
2005	44	56

The proportion of rail fare income from different ticket types has been included in "National Rail Trends" (published by Office of Rail Regulation) since January 2002, as part of the rail fares index.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what plans he has to introduce double-deck rolling stock on the rail network; and if he will make a statement; [50510]

(2) what assessment he has made of the suitability of the present railway infrastructure to accommodate double-deck rolling stock; which routes would require the least adaption work to accommodate such rolling stock; and if he will make a statement. [50511]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* The Department for Transport is considering the options for increasing the capacity of the railway network to meet future needs. Double deck trains are being considered as one of the possible long term solutions.

Work undertaken by the Department for Transport to assess the suitability of UK main lines for double deck trains confirms that a significant number of major structural changes would be needed to accommodate them.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether domestic use of Waterloo International terminal is included in the invitation to tender for the South West Trains franchise. [51853]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 14 February 2006]:* The specification for the new South Western franchise has not yet been finalised, but my right hon. Friend confirmed on 11 October 2005 that the Waterloo International platforms would be used for domestic services when Eurostar services have moved to St. Pancras.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many incidents of crime and disorder were reported at each railway station in England between 1997 and 2005; and how much was spent on anti-crime measures for each station over the same period. [47999]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 2 February 2006]:* The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Thameslink 2000

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the timetable is for the Thameslink 2000

programme; whether there are plans to divide the project into phases; what the timetable is for the provision of a new station at Kings Cross/St Pancras under the programme; what decisions have been made about funding; and if he will make a statement. [46907]

Derek Twigg: The public inquiry into the Thameslink 2000 project was re-opened between 6 September and 7 December 2005, following the submission of fresh applications by Network Rail to address deficiencies in the scheme identified by the original inquiry.

The Inspector is currently preparing his report on the re-opened inquiry for submission to the Secretary of State for Transport and the Deputy Prime Minister, who are jointly and severally responsible for determining the various consent applications required to implement the project. We expect to receive the Inspector's report in March. We also expect to receive in the spring a report from London TravelWatch on the railway closures required to implement the project. I cannot at this stage comment on the merits of the scheme, in order not to prejudice the eventual decisions.

The construction of the Midland Road station at Kings Cross/St Pancras was approved under the CTRL Act. The Secretary of State announced in a written statement on 8 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 50WS the decision to fit out this station, which should be ready to take its first passengers at the end of 2007.

Transport 2010

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will update Table A3 of the Transport 2010 document *(a)* in the same format and *(b)* at current prices. [51655]

Ms Buck: The Department for Transport no longer records or plans spending in the same way as presented in Table A3 of 'Transport 2010'.

Transport Research

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research he has commissioned into the likely effects on the environment of encouraging people to use trains instead of short-haul flights. [51605]

Ms Buck: The Future of Air Transport white paper studied the scope for rail-air substitution when assessing the need for additional airport capacity. At present rail competes well with air on city centre journeys of two to three hours.

The Government have also produced estimates of the per passenger kilometre emissions factors for rail and short haul flights, for use by companies to report their greenhouse gas emissions. These are 0.04 $kgCO_2$ per pass km for rail and 0.15 $kgCO_2$ per pass km for short haul air. However, these are very sensitive to the assumptions made for passenger occupancy, further details of which are available at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/business/envrp/gas/index.htm

TREASURY

Child Trust Fund Accounts

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many children in the care of Lancashire county council have had Child Trust Fund accounts opened for them. [52600]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Figures for accounts opened by HMRC for looked after children by county council could only be produced at disproportionate cost. Details of the total number of Child Trust Fund accounts opened by HMRC for all looked after children will be published along with other annual Child Trust Fund statistics later this year.

EDS

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what information the Office of Government Commerce holds on the total value of contracts awarded to EDS since 14 December 2005. [51699]

Dawn Primarolo: The Office of Government Commerce is not aware of any Central Civil Government or public sector contracts being awarded to EDS since 14 December 2005 and therefore does not hold any information on this subject.

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many payments HM Revenue and Customs has received from EDS since 14 December 2005 which are pursuant to its compensation agreement with EDS relating to the IT systems developed to support the launch of tax credits; and what the value is of each of these payments. [51700]

Dawn Primarolo: The terms of the agreement between HMRC and EDS to settle HMRC's claim for compensation are commercially sensitive and it would be inappropriate to disclose them. Details were provided to the Public Accounts Committee in a recent closed session and further information will be provided by HMRC to the Chairman of the Committee at regular intervals.

HM Revenue and Customs Estate

Mr. Francois: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the oral answer of 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1505, on HM Revenue and Customs Estate, if he will list the properties which were sold to Mapeley in 2001 by his Department. [46916]

Dawn Primarolo: The following freehold properties were sold to Mapeley under the terms of the STEPS contract in April 2001. The price for the sale was determined by independent valuation advice.

1Barrack Street, Hamilton, Strathclyde
1/3 Water Vennel, Perth, Tayside
11 Chepstow Road, Newport, Gwent
11–21 Millgate, Newark, Nottinghamshire
161 Brooms Road, Dumfries, Dumfries and Galloway
2 Muiryhall Street, Coatbridge, Strathclyde
20 Priory Road, Wells, Somerset
23 Piccadilly, York, North Yorkshire
24 West Argyle Street, Ullapool, Highland

34 Southway, Colchester, Essex
34–36 Wellesley Road, Ashford, Kent
63 College Street, St. Helens, Merseyside
8 Ogle Road, Southampton, Hampshire
9 King Street, Rothesay, Strathclyde
Newton Road, Sudbury, Suffolk
Abbey House, Head Street, Enniskillen, County Fermanagh
Accounts Office, St. Mungo's Road, Cumbernauld, Strathclyde
Albert Bridge House, 1 Bridge Street, Manchester, Greater Manchester
Albion House, Northway, Scarborough, North Yorkshire
Anchorage House, High Street, Chatham, Kent
Auchincraig, Argyll Road, Dunoon, Strathclyde
Bennfield House, 12 Corporation Street, Rugby, Warwickshire
Birchen House, 1 Canning Street, Birkenhead, Merseyside
Bondgate Hall, Bondgate Without, Alnwick, Northumberland
Boundary House, Cheadle Point, Stockport Road, Cheadle, Cheshire
Bowback House, 299 Silbury Boulevard, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire
Broadway House, 32/35 Broad Street, Hereford, Hereford and Worcester
Car Park, Portman Road, Ipswich, Suffolk
Castle Meadow Campus, Castle Meadow Road, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire
Charnwood House, Charnwood Road, Dumfries, Dumfries and Galloway
Chaucer House, 12 Viking Way, Erith, Kent
Chaucer House, Commercial Street, Off Station Street, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire
Computer Complex, Campfield Road, Shoeburyness, Essex
Council House, Wagonway Road, Alnwick, Northumberland
Crown Building, 41–55 Windmill Hill, Ruislip, Greater London
Crown Building, 47 Clarendon Road, Watford, Hertfordshire
Crown Building, 51 North Bridge Street, Hawick, Borders
Crown Building, Alcester Road, Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire
Crown House, 50–52 Scalford Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire
Crown House, Birch Street, Wolverhampton, West Midlands
Crown House, Heaton Street, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire
Custom House, Gravesend, The Terrace, Gravesend, Kent
Custom House, 10 Harbour Terrace, Wick, Highland
Custom House, 18 Quay Walls, Berwick, Northumberland
Custom House, 90–100 Albion Street, Shoreham, East Sussex
Custom House, Carnbane Way, Newry, County Down
Custom House, Main Road, Harwich, Essex
Custom House, Orchard Place, Southampton, Hampshire
Custom House, Queens Quay, Londonderry, County Derry
Custom House, The Parade, Plymouth, Devon
Custom House, The Strand, Isles of Scilly, Cornwall
Custom House, View Point Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk
Customs House, Chaucers Walk, Furthergate Industrial Estate, Blackburn, Lancashire
Dencora Court, Tylers House, Southend on Sea, Essex
Dolanog House, 24 Severn Road, Welshpool, Powys
Dorchester House, 52–58 Great Victoria Street, Belfast, County Antrim
Downshire House, Merchants Quay, Newry, County Down
Dukes House, 34 Hoghton Street, Southport, Merseyside
Durrington Bridge House, Barrington Road, Worthing, West Sussex
Eaton Court, 104–112 Oxford Road, Reading, Berkshire
Eskdale House, Shap Road, Kendal, Cumbria
Fern House, 1a Adelaide Avenue, Coleraine, County Derry,
Foyle House, Duncreggan Road, Londonderry, County Derry
Garage, 60 Inchinnan Road, Paisley, Strathclyde
Garage, Portline House, London, Greater London,
Garrison Point, Sheerness Docks, Sheerness, Kent
Government Buildings, 1 Cherry Grove, Haverfordwest, Dyfed
Government Buildings, 48 Free Street, Brecon, Powys
Government Buildings, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, Mid-Glamorgan
Government Buildings, Holland Road, Spalding, Lincolnshire
Gracemead House, Woods Avenue, Hatfield, Hertfordshire
Grayfield House, 5 Bankhead Ave, Edinburgh, Lothian
Gss Garage, 61–63 Great Suffolk Street, London, Greater London
Holland House, 17 High St, Spalding, Lincolnshire
Horsefair House, 35 King Street, Alfreton, Derbyshire
Huntingdon Court, 90–94 Mansfield Road, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire
Iceni House, Newland Street, Witham, Essex
Inland Revenue Accounts Office, Victoria Street, Shipley, West Yorkshire
Inland Revenue House, Parabola Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire
Iro Durrington, Barrington Road, Worthing, West Sussex
Jephson House, Newbold Terrace, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire
Joseph Locke House, Heelis Street, Barnsley, South Yorkshire
Kew Sorting Centre, Ruskin Avenue, Richmond, Surrey
Lower Leys, Burford Road, Evesham, Hereford and Worcester
Lyndhurst House, 120 Bunns Lane, London/Greater London
Lysnoweth, Infirmary Hill, Truro, Cornwall
Marress House, Friars Croft, Irvine, Strathclyde
Meadowbank Street, 15 Meadowbank Street, Dumbarton, Strathclyde
Medvale House, Mote Road, Maidstone, Kent
Meldrum House, 15 Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh, Lothian
Merrywalks House, 2 The Hill, Stroud, Gloucestershire
Moray House, 17 East Cathcart Street, Buckie, Grampian
North Star House, Great North Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne
Northbank House, North Road, Bideford, Devon
Old Meb Buildings, Riddings Road, Ludlow, Shropshire
Penhaligon House, Trinity Street, St Austell, Cornwall
Penlowarth, St. Marys Terrace, Penzance, Cornwall
Phoenix House, 1 Wards Road, Elgin, Grampian
Piran House, Nettles Hill, Redruth, Cornwall
Plas Ffynnon, 12/14 Middleton Road, Oswestry, Shropshire
Pontoon Pier and Jetties, Custom House, Gravesend, Kent
Portcullis House, 27 Victoria Avenue, Southend, Essex
Portcullis House, No 4 Gate, Platform Road, Southampton, Hampshire
Powell House, Church Street, Nuneaton, Warwickshire
Priory Court, St. John's Road, Dover, Kent
Queens Dock, Kings Dock (Off Chaloner Street), Liverpool, Merseyside
Queensway House, Stewartsfield Way, East Kilbride, Strathclyde

Revenue Buildings, 13 Chequergate, Louth, Lincolnshire

Ruby House, 8 Ruby Place, Aberdeen, Grampian

Saltire House, Pentland Park, Glenrothes, Fife

Saxon House, 1 Causeway Lane, Leicester, Leicestershire

Sherborne House, Kingsteignton Road, Newton Abbot, Devon

Stone Cross House, 21/27 Churchgate, Bolton, Greater Manchester

Symons House, Belgrave Street, Leeds, West Yorkshire

The Apex, 2 Brest Road, Plymouth, Devon

The Watch House, Watch House Lane, Cowes, Isle of Wight

Towergate Car Park/Garage, 2–16 Pope Street, London, Greater London

Towergate, 163 Towerbridge Road, London, Greater London

Towneley House, Kingsway, Burnley, Lancashire

Ty Glas, Ty Glas Road, Cardiff, South Glamorgan

Ty Glyn, High Street, Bangor, Gwynedd

Ty Moelwyn, Britannia Terrace, Porthmadog, Gwynedd

Ty Nant, 180 High Street, Swansea, West Glamorgan

Vespasian House, Bridport Road, Dorchester, Dorset

Warwick House, Grantham Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear

Westgate House, North Street, Bridgwater, Somerset

Woolwich Crown Building, 48 Woolwich New Road, London, Greater London

York Place, 44 York Place, Edinburgh, Lothian

Insurance Premium Tax

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether he plans to bring forward reforms of insurance premium tax to reduce fraud; [52454]

(2) how much money has been spent on investigating cases of alleged fraud in connection with insurance premium tax; and how much he expects will be spent in each of the next three years. [52456]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: There is no evidence of continuing or growing levels of fraud relating to insurance premium tax. The Government keeps all taxes under review with any changes being announced as part of the normal Budget process.

Investigations into alleged insurance premium tax (IPT) fraud are carried out as part of HM Revenue and Customs' risk-based compliance strategy. The cost of investigating alleged IPT fraud is not separately identified.

Iraq

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answers of 7 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 119W, and 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 2260W, on Iraq and the Ministry of Defence press release of 28 September 2005, entitled 2005 UK Defence Statistics, if he will update the figures provided on 26 January 2006 to include the cost of combat operations; and if he will make a statement. [51714]

Mr. Des Browne: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 26 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 2260–61W, which includes the net additional costs of all operations in Iraq.

Tax Credits

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families have received child and working tax credits awards of *(a)* less than £1,000, *(b)* £1,000 to £2,499, *(c)* £2,500 to £4,999, *(d)* £5,000 to £9,999 and *(e)* over £10,000, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [51031]

Dawn Primarolo: The number of in-work families with average level of entitlement above the family element and at the family element or below in 2003–04 are published in "Child and Working Tax Credits Statistics. Finalised Annual Awards 2003–04". Estimates of awards by entitlement by constituency, which are particularly subject to sampling uncertainty, have been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff in his Department have been working on fraud in the tax credit system in each month since April 2003. [44994]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 24 January 2006]:* I refer the hon. Gentleman to my reply to the hon. Member for Northavon, *Official Report*, 24 February 2005, column 766W. It would be inappropriate to disclose detailed information relating to staff engaged in working on fraud on the tax credit system as to do so could provide assistance to those engaged in criminal activity.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in how many of the total number of cases of tax credit overpayments where recovery has been disputed since October 2005, recovery was suspended pending the result of the dispute; and in what proportion suspension took place *(a)* one week, *(b)* two weeks, *(c)* three weeks, *(d)* four weeks, *(e)* five weeks and *(f)* six weeks and over after notice of the dispute was first received by HM Revenue and Customs. [45859]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 26 January]:* HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) does not keep management information at the level requested by my right hon. Friend.

Following the introduction of the new procedures, referred to in my written answer of 2 December 2005, *Official Report*, column 805W, HMRC suspended around 32,000 disputed overpayment cases by the end of November 2005. The number of cases suspended in December is not yet available.

Where HMRC cannot resolve a dispute straight away, it will suspend recovery in all cases in around five-10 working days.

The tax credit office is making progress towards its target of making decisions on disputed cases within four weeks.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Denton and Reddish constituency receive the *(a)* child tax credit and *(b)* working tax credit. [51139]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates for 2003–04 of the numbers of in-work families with tax credits awards by constituency, including information on overpayments and underpayments, based on final family circumstances and incomes for 2003–04 are published in "Child and Working

Tax Credits. Finalised Awards 2003–04 Geographical Analysis." This publication and provisional estimates for the number of in-work families by constituency with tax credit awards as at selected dates in 2004–05 are available on the HMRC website at:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/cwtc-geog-stats.htm.

Temporary Migrant Workers

Hywel Williams: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what account is taken in the calculation of mid-year population estimates for Government statistical purposes of the arrival of temporary migrant workers *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* in each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK. [52472]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 16 February 2006:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your question concerning what account is taken in the calculation of mid-year population estimates, of the arrival of temporary migrant workers in the UK (52472).

The mid-year population estimates (mid-2001 onward) for the UK are based on the 2001 Census, and relate to the usually resident population. Thus they are estimates of people where they usually live, which does not always coincide with the number of persons to be found in an area at a particular point in time.

The mid-year population estimates include an international migration component, estimated using data mainly from the International Passenger Survey (IPS), together with other data sources. A person is defined as an in-migrant, and therefore usually resident, if they intend to stay in the UK for 12 months or more. This conforms to the UN definition of a long-term migrant, the requirement for which is a stay of at least 12 months. Therefore, temporary migrant workers, who intend to stay in the UK for under one year, are not included in the mid-year resident population estimates.

Population estimates are calculated using an internationally respected methodology. Further information can be found in the detailed methodology guide 'Making a population estimate in England and Wales'. This is published here: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk = 575

Similar definitions to that used in England and Wales are used for Scotland and Northern Ireland. Details on their methods can be obtained by contacting the General Register Office for Scotland or the Northern Ireland Statistical and Research Agency.

Terrorist Activities (Financing)

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will announce the terms of reference of his review of measures to stop exemptions available to charities being abused by those financing terrorist activities; who will carry out the review; who will be consulted on the measures proposed; what safeguards will be included to protect bona fide charities from vexatious allegations; and whether the conclusions of the review will be presented to Parliament. [52033]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The structure, focus and membership of a review to safeguard the charitable sector from terrorist finance will be established in consultation with other Government Departments in order to deliver proposals in advance of the Financial Action Task Force's evaluation of UK anti-money laundering and terrorist finance measures scheduled for 2007.

The review and any subsequent recommendations will be developed in line with Government's Code of Practice on Consultation available through Cabinet Office.

WALES

Citizens Juries

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales on how many occasions his Department consulted citizens' juries on departmental policies in the last five years; in how many of those consultations the recommendations of the citizens' jury differed from existing departmental policy; and on how many occasions departmental policy was changed to reflect the recommendations of the citizens' jury. [46239]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office has not used citizens' juries.

Dentistry

Mr. Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the Health Minister in the National Assembly for Wales Government on the impact of the new dental contract on NHS dentistry in Wales. [51792]

Mr. Hain: The new Personal Dental Service scheme already has had a significantly positive impact on NHS Dental provision; securing NHS provision for 507,613 existing patients and providing additional access for 153,764 new NHS patients.

The number of PDS schemes being rolled out across Wales has been increasing every day and these figures will continue to grow as more dental practices take up the PDS schemes.

Departmental Energy Costs

Mrs. Villiers: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much was spent by his Department on *(a)* gas and *(b)* electricity in 2004–05. [51768]

Mr. Hain: In 2004–05 the Wales Office expenditure incurred was:

Gas: £43,199

Electricity: £30,498

Departmental Entertainment

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much was spent on entertainment by his Department in 2004–05; and how much of that sum is accounted for by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [50891]

Mr. Hain: Total expenditure on ministerial receptions for the Wales Office in 2004–05 was £7,241.00.

Records for 2004–05 do not allow the costs to be split into categories and this information can be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Departmental Staff

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many staff in his Department are paid on a performance-related basis. [50482]

Mr. Hain: Wales Office staff are employed on either National Assembly for Wales or Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) conditions.

Staff on loan from the National Assembly for Wales are not subject to performance related pay.

Staff who are employed on DCA terms and conditions are all subject to performance related pay. New pay, grading and benefit arrangements are due to be introduced for all DCA staff later this year, and performance related pay is likely to be a feature of the new system.

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales whether any *(a)* employee of his Department, *(b)* person engaged by his Department as a consultant and *(c)* paid advisor to his Department is a member of the House of Lords; and if he will make a statement. [52902]

Mr. Hain: None.

Devolution

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will include in any referendums under Government of Wales legislation a question asking whether the devolution process should be stopped. [52306]

Mr. Hain: The Government of Wales Bill aims to develop the current devolution settlement and to make it work better in the interests of the people of Wales. It also provides for the Assembly to acquire primary law-making powers, subject to a referendum. The Government have no plans for putting questions other than this in a referendum.

Fair Trade

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales (1) how much and what proportion of his Department's catering budget was spent on fair trade produce in the last period for which figures are available; [49965]

(2) what his Department's policy is on the procurement of fair trade produce for consumption on its premises. [49980]

Mr. Hain: My office does not have a refreshment facility in which it could stock and sell fair trade products.

The Wales Office procurement policy is linked to the Department of Constitutional Affairs. I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. and learned Friend the Minister of State for Constitutional Affairs (Ms Harman) on 13 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 1595W.

Freedom of Information Act

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what total sum has been received by his Department for the provision of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its first year of operation. [48486]

Mr. Hain: The Wales Office has not received any monies for providing information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Statistics about requests received under the Freedom of Information Act are published by the Department of Constitutional Affairs on a quarterly basis.

Hill Farming

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has had with the First Secretary of the National Assembly for Wales Government on hill farming in Wales. [50987]

Mr. Hain: I have regular meetings with the First Minister to discuss a variety of issues, including farming in Wales.

In Wales, 80 per cent. of agricultural land is designated as Less Favoured Area (LFA) and the net farm income in real terms for LFA farms for 2004–05 is forecast to be £16,400 compared to £1,600 in 2001–02.

The Assembly Government is currently consulting on future options for the Tir Mynydd scheme, which is the dedicated financial support scheme that applies to hill farmers. Between 2001 and 2006, it is estimated that payments under Tir Mynydd will have totalled some £230 million.

Pension Liabilities

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will estimate the net present value of accrued pension liabilities in respect of *(a)* present and *(b)* former employees of his Department and its predecessor. [52107]

Mr. Hain: The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme and individual departments' pension liabilities are not available. The Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation Resource Accounts for 2004–05 showed that the total pension liability at 31 March 2005 was £84.1 billion. The value of pension liabilities was assessed as follows:

Liabilities for current members still contributing to the scheme—£37 billion

deferred pensions and contingent pensions for dependants in respect of members no longer contributing—£12.7 billion

current pensions for members and contingent pensions for dependants—£34.4 billion

As a result of a change in the discount rate used for calculating pension liabilities with effect from 1 April 2005, the total pension liability at 1 April 2005 increased by £10.6 billion to £94.7 billion.

Police Reorganisation

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what public opinion surveys have been conducted in Wales on the proposals to merge police authorities. [52603]

Mr. Hain: None. The current proposals for force restructuring in Wales follow recommendations from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary that the current 43 force structure in England and Wales is no longer fit for purpose, and their conclusion that there is no acceptable alternative to a single Welsh force if the provision of protective services is to be brought up to the required standard.

My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary and I have held wide ranging discussions with hon. Members, key stakeholders and members of the public across Wales about the implications of restructuring. However, my right hon. Friend has made clear that our efforts to close the gap in protective services should not be put at risk by an unnecessarily protracted period of deliberation.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Audible Fire Alarms

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of the premises occupied by his Department is fitted with audible fire alarms. [42867]

Mrs. McGuire: DWP currently occupy 1,648 buildings. With the exception of two sites every building is fitted with an audible fire alarm. The Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) for these sites identified the anomalies, remedial work is in hand and expected to be completed by end of February 2006.

Benefit

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 19 January 2006, *Official Report*, column 1550W, on benefit, what information his Department does not hold which would be required to estimate the annual cost of raising all housing benefit and council tax benefit earned income disregards to levels commensurate with the real terms value of the disregards in 1988. [51488]

Mr. Plaskitt: We do not have available the information on the characteristics of individual claims or claimants that would allow us to calculate this figure on that historical basis.

If the earnings disregards were raised in 2006 to a level that is commensurate with the real term value of the disregards in 1988, we estimate that the annual cost for 2006 would be £60 million.

Benefit Advice

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will assess the merits of seconding his Department's staff to benefit advice voluntary organisations. [36875]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions undertakes outward secondments to the private, voluntary and public sectors. The decision to consider this type of secondment falls directly to each of the Department's business areas and consideration of such secondment opportunities will be for the HR and Work Force Planning Directors of the Department and its agencies.

Benefit Claims

Gwyn Prosser: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the unit cost to the Department is per benefit claim processed. [48237]

Mr. Plaskitt: This information is currently not available, however, we anticipate the work to provide unit costs per benefit claim processed to be concluded by March 2006.

Benefit Fraud

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the cost of benefit fraud in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* the UK in each year between 1997 and 2005. [50440]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department produces estimates for the amount overpaid through fraud across the benefits system. Previously published results are in the table.

	Estimate of benefit fraud	*Comment*
Pre-1998	No overall estimate available.	A few isolated reviews of fraud and error in individual benefits were carried out, but there was no systematic attempt to estimate the level of fraud across the whole benefit system.
1998	£2 billion to £7 billion	Published in the Green Paper, "Beating Fraud is Everyone's Business". Around £2 billion was considered confirmed fraud, with the remaining £5 billion coming from cases where there was a suspicion of fraud.
1998–99 to 2002–03	£2 billion per annum	A change in methodology in the ongoing measurement system meant that cases were investigated in more detail, and it was no longer appropriate to include cases where fraud was suspected in the headline estimates. Figure rounded to nearest £1.0 billion.
2003–04 initial estimate	£1.5 billion	Figure rounded to nearest £0.5 billion.
2003–04 revised estimate	£1.0 billion	Figure rounded to nearest £0.1 billion. Development work to improve the quality of the estimate suggested that the original figure was an overstatement.
2004–05	£0.9 billion	Figure rounded to nearest £0.1 billion.

It is not possible to provide a breakdown for Leicester due to the sampling methodologies used to produce fraud and error estimates. The sample sizes for individual areas are too small to produce meaningful results.

In recent years, benefit fraud has been reducing and now stands at £0.9 billion per year—less than one per cent of total benefit expenditure.

On 13 October 2005, the Department published our achievements in reducing levels of fraud in the benefit system and plans to reduce it further in 'Reducing fraud in the benefit system: Achievements and ambitions'. Copies are available in the Library.

Civil Rights (Disabled People)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps the Government have taken in the last five years to improve civil rights for people with disabilities. [47105]

Mrs. McGuire: Over the last five years, the Government have significantly extended and improved the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 which provides the basic legislative framework for civil rights for disabled people.

In 2000 we established the Disability Rights Commission, an independent body charged with promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people.

From September 2002, we introduced new duties under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001, which amended Part 4 of the DDA to cover all aspects of education.

In October 2004, we significantly extended the employment provisions of the Act. These changes mean that the employment provisions now apply to small employers and all previously excluded forms of employment, except service in the armed forces.
They brought an additional 1 million employers and 7 million more jobs within the coverage of the Act. They also extended protection in a number of additional areas, such as outlawing discriminatory job advertisements and disability-related harassment.

From the same date, we introduced additional protection against disability discrimination in the provisions of goods, services and facilities. Service providers are now under a duty to take reasonable steps to remove, alter, or provide a reasonable means of avoiding, any physical features that make access to their services impossible or unreasonably difficult.

The passage of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 fulfilled our commitment to provide comprehensive and enforceable civil rights for disabled people. The 2005 Act extended the protection of the 1995 Act to more people with HIV infection, cancer and multiple sclerosis and conferred important new rights in areas such as the use of transport, education, public authority functions, rented and leased premises and community participation. The 2005 Act also introduced a new duty on public authorities to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. This Disability Equality Duty will apply to the public sector from December this year, and requires authorities ranging from local councils, police forces and health trusts to Government Departments to take the needs of disabled people into account when making decisions. Larger, more significant authorities must publish a Disability Equality Scheme by 4 December 2006 that sets out the steps the authority will take to implement the Disability Equality Duty.

Civil Servants (Overseas Visits)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what costs were incurred by his Department as a result of sending civil servants on overseas visits in each of the last 10 years. [46277]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the Department of Social Security and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment including the Employment Service. The available information is in the table. All travel complied with the requirements of the Civil Service Management Code.

	Cost of foreign travel (£)
2002–03	702,767
2003–04	851,841
2004–05	968,779

Council Tax Benefit

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many applicants have had the level of their council tax benefit payments affected by having savings over £3,000 in each year since 1999. [51565]

Mr. Plaskitt: For council tax benefit, tariff income applies to all capital held above a prescribed limit. The prescribed limit was increased from £3,000 to £6,000 in April 2001. With the introduction of pension credit in October 2003, local authorities no longer record capital or tariff income amounts for council tax benefit claimants in receipt of pension credit, but rely on assessed income figures provided by the Pension Service.

The available information is in the table.

Council tax benefit recipients with a tariff income: Great Britain

	Number of recipients
May 1999	430,000
May 2000	440,000
May2001[1]	209,000
May 2002	237,000
May 2003	257,000
May 2004[2]	164,000

[1] In April 2001 the lower capital limit for council tax benefit recipients increased from £3,000 to £6,000.
[2] Information on the amount of capital for council tax benefit claimants also in receipt of pension credit is not available from this data source, so it is not possible to calculate how many of these claimants will be affected by tariff income; this figure is an undercount of the actual number subject to tariff income.
Notes:
1. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.
2. Figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
3. Council tax benefit totals exclude any second adult rebate cases.
Source:
Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System, Annual 1 per cent. sample, taken in May 1999 to May 2004.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many applicants have been refused council tax benefit because they had savings over £16,000 in each year since 1999. [51566]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available.

Andrew Gwynne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many children in *(a)* Denton and Reddish constituency, *(b)* Tameside metropolitan borough and *(c)* Stockport metropolitan borough are (i) entitled to and (ii) receiving council tax benefit. [51747]

Mr. Plaskitt: None; nobody under the age of 18 can be a liable person in relation to council tax and council tax benefit can only be paid to a liable person.

Customer Management System

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average time taken for claimants to receive the first payment of benefits has been since the introduction of the Customer Management System computer system. [38385]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 20 December 2005]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to my hon. Friend.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning the average time taken for claimants to receive the first payment of benefits since the introduction of the Customer Management System (CMS). This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Jobcentre Plus measures how long it takes to clear a benefit claim to the date a decision is taken, and not to when the first payment is received. This is expressed as the Actual Average Clearance Time (AACT). The target clearance times for each of the main benefits are:

Benefit	*Target AACT (days)*
Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)	12
Income Support (IS)	12
Incapacity Benefit (IB)	19

In 2003/2004, the AACT for JSA was 11 days, and for IS it was10.5 days. In 2004/2005, the respective figures were 12.1 days and 10.8 days.

For the current year, the latest information on average clearance times of benefits is in the table below:

	AACT		
	October 2005	*November 2005*	*December 2005*
Jobseekers Allowance	15.4	15.6	14.7
Income Support	11.6	11.7	11.6
Incapacity Benefit	15.7	16.1	15.5

I hope this is helpful.

Mr. Anthony Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many planned job reductions in his Department depend on the successful implementation of the Customer Management computer system. [46828]

Margaret Hodge: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, Lesley Strathie. She will write to my hon. Friend.

Letter from Lesley Strathie:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question asking how many planned job reductions in his Department depend on the successful implementation of the Customer Management computer system. This is something that falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The Customer Management System business case, recently given to the Department for Work and Pensions Parliamentary Select Committee, shows a total headcount saving of 1,076 full-time equivalent staff by 2008.

I hope this is helpful.

Departmental Estate

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what *(a)* land and *(b)* property his Department (i) owns and (ii) rents in each constituency; and if he will make a statement. [33250]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions does not own or rent any land.

The Department for Work and Pensions does not own any property, with the exception of one building in Hull where contracts have been exchanged and are due to be completed in February 2006.

The remainder of the Department's estate has been sold or transferred under a PFI partnership deal to Land Securities Trillium (LST) and in return for the payment of a unitary charge, LST is responsible for providing a full facilities management service across the estate. Therefore, the Department does not rent any properties.

A list of the estate sold or transferred to LST is not maintained by constituency but by Government office region and it has been placed in the Library.

This response excludes the Health and Safety Executive, an Executive non- departmental public body and the Rent Service, an Executive agency, as their records are not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was paid by his Department in 2004–05 in rent for properties in *(a)* total, *(b)* each (i) region and (ii) nation of the UK and *(c)* London. [35947]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department's estate has been sold or transferred under a PFI partnership deal to Land Securities Trillium (LST) and in return for the payment of a unitary charge LST is responsible for providing a full facilities management service across the estate. Therefore, the Department did not pay any rent for properties in 2004–05.

This response excludes The Health and Safety Executive, an Executive non-departmental public body and The Rent Service, an Executive Agency, as their records are not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the former *(a)* buildings and *(b)* land of (i) his Department and (ii) (A) non-departmental public bodies, (B) agencies and (C) independent statutory bodies for which his Department is responsible which have been sold since 7 May 1997; what the sale price of each (1) was at the time of sale and (2) is at current prices; and whether the money accrued was (x) retained by his Department and *(y)* claimed by the Treasury. [40143]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department's estate was sold or transferred under a PFI partnership deal to Land Securities Trillium (1ST) in 1998 and extended in 2003. The buildings and their base value are listed in a table that has been placed in the Library. HM Treasury, on behalf of the Department, received a total cash consideration of £350 million for the assets sold or transferred. The additional value of £105 million is being recovered through discounted facilities prices for the serviced accommodation.

The Department does not hold current market values for the properties and these could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

The Department has sold two buildings outside of the PFI:

Ranmoor Hall, Sheffield sold for £4.5 million retained by the Department in November 2005

For completion in February 2006, Storey Street, Hull for £575,000 to be retained by the Department.

The Department sold one piece of land, at Alvaston Raynesway, which was transferred to LST under the PFI partnership deal for £947,671 in 1998. The Department does not hold a current market value for the land.

The vast majority of NDPB, agencies and independent statutory bodies are accommodated in the Department's own buildings and separate information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The exception is Remploy Ltd. (a NDPB) and The Rent Service and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) (which are agencies).

Remploy Ltd. has sold buildings and land but they are not able to provide a breakdown in the format requested without incurring disproportionate cost. The information in the table shows all year end disposals of all property and have been inflated using Retail Price Index (RPI) from March in the respective year of disposal. All proceeds have been retained by Remploy.

Property disposals(Total proceeds to)	*Date*	*Retail Price Index @ disposal*	*Proceeds received*	*Retail Price Index indexed proceeds*	*Current price*
Y.E. 31 March 1998	March 1998	160.8	432,000	88,000	520,000
Y.E. 31 March 1999	March 1999	164.1	2,034,000	366,000	2,400,000
Y.E. 31 March 2000	March 2000	168.4	1,556,000	233,000	1,789,000
Y.E. 31 March 2001	March 2001	172.2	503,000	63,000	566,000
Y.E. 31 March 2002	March 2002	174.5	2,975,000	326,000	3,301,000
Y.E. 31 March 2003	March 2003	179.9	2,583,000	197,000	2,780,000
Y.E. 31 March 2004	March 2004	184.6	1,130,000	55,000	1,185,000
Y.E. 31 March 2005	March 2005	190.5	2,571,000	42,000	2,613,000
30 November 2005	—	193.6	—	—	—

The Rent Service has provided a nil return.

In January 2005, HSE sold the land and buildings of the Health & Safety Laboratory (HSL) site at Broad Lane Sheffield as part of the PFI arrangements for a new site for the laboratory at Harpur Hill, Buxton. Receipts, of approximately £6 million, were recycled back into the scheme. HSE does not track property prices and is therefore unable to assess the current value.

In July 2005, HSE sold a Crown freehold building known as Royal Exchange Building, Sheffield for £530,000, the same as the net book value of the property. There was therefore no gain or loss on disposal. The cash sale provided additional capital spending for HSE. HSE does not track property prices and is therefore unable to assess the current value. HSE has not sold any land.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what *(a)* land and *(b)* property his Department owns in Southend West constituency. [41759]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department's estate has been sold or transferred under a PFI partnership deal to Land Securities Trillium (LST) and in return for the payment of a unitary charge LST is responsible for providing a full facilities management service across the estate. Therefore the Department does not own any *(a)* land or *(b)* property in the Southend West constituency.

This response excludes The Health and Safety Executive, an Executive non-departmental public body, and the Rent Service, an Executive agency, as their records are not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what *(a)* land and *(b)* property is owned by his Department in Castle Point. [42901]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department's estate has been sold or transferred under a PFI partnership deal to Land Securities Trillium (LST) and in return for the payment of a unitary charge LST is responsible for providing a full facilities management service across the estate. Therefore the Department does not own any *(a)* land or *(b)* property in the Castle Point constituency.

This response excludes The Health and Safety Executive, an executive non- departmental public body, and the Rent Service, an Executive agency, as their records are not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what budget his Department has allocated to *(a)* press and *(b)* communications in 2005–06; and how much has been spent in each case. [29986]

Mrs. McGuire: The main communications budget allocation for 2005–06 is £47,692,000 of which £3,561,000 is for press. These figures include both staff and non-staff costs, including all major marketing campaigns. The year to date spend figures to January 2006 are £26,506,000, and £2,497,000 respectively.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department spent on end-of-year bonus pay awards for staff in each year since 1997. [39180]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the Department of Social Security and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment including the Employment Service. Information is therefore only available for the Department from 2002 onwards.

Performance bonus payments are awarded to employees on the basis of their individual performance. They are paid after the completion of the performance year. The expenditure incurred is as follows:

£ million

	Expenditure incurred on individual bonus payments
2002	20.9
2003	24.7
2004	37.9
2005	41.9

In addition to individual performance bonus payments, DWP also paid team bonuses to selected units within the Department. The expenditure incurred is as follows:

£ million

	Expenditure incurred on team bonus payments
2002	7.8
2003	29.4
2004	3.3

No team bonus schemes are currently running.

Departmental Skills Development Plan

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library a copy of his Department's Skills Development Plan. [23857]

Mrs. McGuire: A copy of the Department for Work and Pensions Skills Development Plan will be placed in the Library.

Departmental Staff

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff have been employed by his central Department in each year since 1996–97 *(a)* in total, *(b)* on press and publicity work and *(c)* on policy work; and if he will make a statement. [41329]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the Department of Social Security and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment including the Employment Service. Comparable historical staffing information prior to this date is not available.

Information on the number of staff in the central Department, excluding the Department's agencies is in the following table. The figures include staff engaged on policy development and those employed in corporate and shared services, such as human resources, finance and debt management. The table also includes information on the number of staff employed in the central department on press and publicity work.

The number of staff currently employed on policy work is 1,233. The number of staff employed on policy work is not available historically.

	Total central staff	*Press and publicity staff (included in total staff numbers)*
30 April 2002	14,118	75
31 March 2003	13,898	78
31 March 2004	12,068	90
31 March 2005	11,874	92

Notes:

1. Figures are point in time at the stated dates, are full-time equivalent and include temporary staff.
2. Figures for 2002 are given as at 30 April, because this is the first point at which data is available for the Department in a form comparable to its current structure.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many people worked for his Department in *(a)* January 1997 and *(b)* January 2006; [41896]

(2) how many people were employed by *(a)* the Child Support Agency, *(b)* Jobcentre Plus and *(c)* other agencies of his Department in (i) January 1997 and (ii) January 2006. [41897]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed in June 2001 from the Department of Social Security and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment including the Employment Service. Information on the average number of staff in the Department in each year from 2000–01 to 2005–06 can be found in table 6 of the Department for Work and Pensions departmental report 2005.

Information on the average number of staff in the former Department of Social Security in each year from 1997–98 until its incorporation into the Department for Work and Pensions can be found in table 10 of the social security departmental report 2001.

Information on the average number of staff in the former Employment Service in each year from 1997–98 until its incorporation into the Department for Work and Pensions can be found in annex J of the Department for Education and Skills departmental report 2001.

Each of the reports is available in the Library.

Information on staffing in the Department's agencies as at 30 November 2005 is in the following table.

Agency	*Staff*
Jobcentre Plus	73,363
The Pension Service	14,686
Child Support Agency	10,672
Disability and Carers Service	6,490
Appeals Service	763
The Rent Service	682

Note:
These figures include staff on maternity and other paid leave and are full-time equivalent.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many disciplinary actions against civil servants employed in his Department *(a)* were commenced and *(b)* resulted in a sanction being applied in each of the last five years. [43483]

Mrs. McGuire: On the number of disciplinary actions commenced against Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) employees.

Information on the number of disciplinary actions for serious or gross misconduct against DWP employees that resulted in a sanction for the period July 2003 to September 2005 is as follows:

From July to December 2003 there were 426 cases.

For the 2004 calendar year there were 920 cases.

From January to September 2005 there were 603 cases.

Disabled Children

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what action his Department has taken to place disabled children and their families on equal terms with non-disabled children and their families in the 10-year Strategy for Childcare, as recommended by the report by the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People. [49790]

Maria Eagle: I have been asked to reply.

The Government are committed to ensuring that disabled children benefit from early years support which maximises their outcomes in later life. The Childcare Bill, currently going through Parliament, will help implement key aspects of the 10 year Childcare Strategy. It introduces a new duty for local authorities to provide sufficient child care to meet the needs of working parents, or those making the transition to work. Child care will not be judged as sufficient unless it meets the needs of two groups in particular: disabled children and lower income families. Local authorities will be required to consult parents, providers and the local community to ensure that the needs of all families are taken into account when developing and planning child care services locally.

The Bill places a duty to improve the outcomes of all young children, and to reduce inequalities between them. When local authorities are considering how to narrow gaps in achievement, they will need to identify the disadvantaged groups relevant to their area. Disabled children are very likely to be among the groups on whom local authorities will need to target resources.

These new duties will ensure that services for families with disabled children are prioritised and that they are given equal access to high quality and appropriate care.

Guidance on the inclusion of disabled children in the Sure Start Children's Centres programme was issued in November 2005. It focuses on: the need to consult the parents and carers of disabled children when developing services; mainstreaming the successful Early Support Pilot programme across England, including the use of 'key workers'; the need to provide appropriate family support services including the development of Portage and other home visiting services.

European Court of Human Rights

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many of the 340 widowers who have cases lodged in the European Court of Human Rights have cashed the cheques which the Department sent to them for back payment of benefit. [50675]

Mr. Plaskitt: Of the 340 widowers' cases, 95 payments have been issued.

49 of these payments have been cashed, six have been returned, and 40 remain with the widower or widower's representative awaiting a decision on acceptance.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment the Department has made of the merits of mediation as a way of settling the dispute with the 340 widowers who have cases lodged with the European Court of Human Rights. [50676]

Mr. Plaskitt: The House of Lords has already dealt with the cases and has provided a judgment. The Department does not consider mediation appropriate to the 340 widowers where such a clear decision has been established. Furthermore, the offer of friendly settlements is based on a previous European Court of Human Rights judgment in the case of Willis, providing an established policy for both parties.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many of the 340 widowers with cases against his Department lodged within the European Court of Human Rights have settled their dispute prior to court proceedings. [50698]

Mr. Plaskitt: 58 of the 340 widowers have settled their dispute prior to any court proceedings. This includes nine cases settled before the European Court of Human Rights judgment in the case of Willis *v.* UK

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department advised those widowers to whom they sent cheques for back payments that they should consult a *(a)* solicitor, *(b)* Citizen's Advice Bureau and *(c)* trade union official prior to settling with his Department. [50699]

Mr. Plaskitt: The vast majority of widowers who have an admissible case for discrimination do have a solicitor, legal representative or other representative already in place and acting on their behalf. In these cases, the Department corresponds with the nominated representative and issues the payment in settlement directly to that representative.

In the cases where a widower is acting on his own behalf, including making a claim to the European Court of Human Rights without any representative, the Department corresponds directly with the widower and issues the payment directly to them. There is no specific note that a widower should consult with a solicitor, Citizens Advice Bureau or trade union official prior to settling with the Department in either case.

Fair Trade

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much and what proportion of his Department's catering budget was spent on fair trade produce in the last period for which figures are available. [49973]

Mrs. McGuire: The information is not available. The Department's estate is managed through a facilities management contract including, where premises allow, catering, and therefore DWP has no direct responsibility for the procurement of catering except on a local level for receptions and meetings. Information systems do not allow us to analyse expenditure on fair trade commodities separately and data could be obtained only by a special exercise to examine both the Department's and our supplier's purchasing transactions. This would incur disproportionate costs.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his Department's policy is on the procurement of fair trade produce for consumption on its premises. [49974]

Mrs. McGuire: In line with Government policy the Department is committed to fair trade and ethical supply routes. Where practicable, the Department aims to purchase sustainable produce for sale on departmental premises and for receptions and meetings wherever such produce meets our business requirements and gives at least as good value for money. The Department is working with its facilities management contractor, who provides in house catering services, to consider the feasibility of introducing a target to increase the supply of fair trade goods.

Freedom of Information

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on how many occasions since May 2005 officials in his Department have consulted their Freedom of Information Officer on answers to parliamentary Questions from *(a)* the hon. Member for Yeovil and *(b)* all hon. Members. [41853]

Mrs. McGuire: Answers to parliamentary questions are drafted in accordance with Guidance to Officials on Drafting Answers to Parliamentary Questions.

Information is not held centrally on the number of occasions that officials may have sought advice from the Department's Freedom of Information practitioners.

Housing Benefit

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will publish proposals for housing benefit reform in the social rented sector. [51962]

Mr. Plaskitt: There are significant differences between the private rental market and social housing, and between the social housing sectors of the UK devolved administrations. Many complex factors will need to be taken into account before a decision is made on exactly how we take forward reform of housing benefit in this sector.

This why we are consulting on the direction that any reforms would take in our green paper "A New Deal for Welfare: Empowering People to Work" published on 24 January. The consultation period will run until 21 April and a Government response will follow in due course.

Identity Fraud

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what training the Department has provided for *(a)* front desk and *(b)* administrative staff in relation to identity fraud. [41276]

Mr. Plaskitt: We provide training for staff in relation to identity fraud according to the needs of the role they undertake within the Department. New entrant induction training covers identity issues and security specific training instruction.

Specialist training is provided for fraud officers and for staff involved in national insurance number allocation work according to their role in the process. In particular, front line staff receive training to provide them with the necessary skills to carry out interviews effectively and to check documents, and specialist identity fraud training is specifically targeted at the needs of fraud officers.

In addition to training courses, generalist fraud awareness sessions targeted at all staff are provided by the National Identity Fraud Unit.

Incapacity Benefit

Peter Law: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what representations he has received on the proposals to integrate individuals' visits to doctors' surgeries in connection with incapacity to work and evaluation of individuals' ability to work by officials from employment offices based in doctors' surgeries. [50230]

Margaret Hodge: Arrangements to pilot employment advisers in GPs' surgeries announced in a new deal for welfare are currently being put in place. This service is being introduced with the full agreement of participating GPs and all referrals are on a voluntary basis. We have made it clear that this service is not about deciding a person's work capability but to provide GPs' with an additional non-medical intervention for their patients. Those representations we have received recognise that employment advice services not only improve an individual's ability to achieve a return to work, but can also have a positive impact on their health and well being.

Mr. Philip Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of lone parents claiming incapacity benefit moved to incapacity benefit from Jobseeker's Allowance in each year since 1997. [51963]

Mr. Plaskitt: The information is not available.

Maternity Pay

David T.C. Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will introduce proposals to amend legislation to enable women who return to work immediately after giving birth on a part-time basis to claim a full-time salary or full-time maternity pay. [44765]

Mrs. McGuire: There are no plans to introduce a proposal to allow women who return to work on a part-time basis immediately after giving birth, to claim a full-time salary or to claim a full-time maternity pay.

New Deal/Workstep

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many people in Beverley and Holderness registered on the new deal for disabled people programme found work in the last five years; [44313]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the new deal for disabled people programme. [44315]

Margaret Hodge: The new deal for disabled people (NDDP) programme is designed to support disabled people and people with health conditions in finding and sustaining paid employment. The programme has been extended to 2007, and, so far, it has been successful in helping more than 83,000 people into work, of whom 65 per cent. have enjoyed sustained employment. Information on the numbers of people helped into work through the programme is not available at constituency level.

The majority of disabled people who move into work through NDDP do so in the first few months of registering on the programme, almost half in the first month, and 70 per cent. in the first three months. People participating on the programme, and those moving into work, have a wide range of health conditions and disabilities, which demonstrates the flexibility and responsiveness of this programme. The majority of participants have positive views about the services they receive through the programme and of working with NDDP Job Brokers.

We know that the benefits to the economy and society as a whole from more disabled people being helped into work outweigh the costs of running the programme. We are currently evaluating the effectiveness of NDDP and will publish results in the autumn. We have placed in the Library those reports on the programme listed which have already been published.

Employers and the New Deal for Disabled People: Qualitative Research: First Wave (2003) J. Aston et al, DWP Research Report WAE 145, March 2003

Employers and the New Deal for Disabled People: Qualitative Research Wave 2 (2005). J Aston et al, DWP Research Report 231, February 2005

New Deal for Disabled People National Extension: Findings from the First Wave of Qualitative Research with Clients, Job Brokers and Jobcentre Plus Staff. A. Corden et al. DWP Research Report W169, October 2003

New Deal for Disabled People Evaluation: Eligible Population Survey Wave 1. Woodward, C, Kazimirski, A, Shaw, A and Pires, C. DWP Research Report W170, October 2003

New Deal for Disabled People National Extension: First Wave of the First Cohort of the Survey of Registrants, (2003) K. Ashworth et al. DWP Research Report W180: December 2003

New Deal for Disabled People: Survey of Registrants—Cohort 1, Waves 1 and 2 (2004). L Adelman et al, DWP Research Report W213: December 2004

New Deal for Disabled People Evaluation: Registrants' Survey—Merged Cohorts (cohorts one and two) (2005). A Kazimirski et al. DWP Research Report 260 (July 2005)

New Deal for Disabled People: First Synthesis Report, Bruce Stafford et al., DWP Research Report August 2004

New Deal for Disabled People: Report of the Survey of Job Brokers, Siobhan McDonald, Abigail Davis and Bruce Stafford, DWP Research Report W197, August 2004

Tests of Nonexperimental Methods for Evaluating the Impact of the New Deal for Disabled People, Larry Orr, Steve Bell and Robert Kornfeld, DWP In House Research Report W198, August 2004

New Deal for Disabled People: An in-depth study of Job Broker service delivery (2005). J. Lewis et al. DWP Research Report 246, February 2005

New Deal for Disabled People: Survey of Employers (2005) N. Meagher et al. DWP Research Report 301, November 2005

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have been assisted by the new deal for musicians; and if he will make a statement. [51922]

Margaret Hodge: New deal for musicians is intended to help unemployed aspiring musicians into a sustainable career in the music industry, either as artists under contract or self-employed artists within the music industry. It is available to jobseekers who are eligible for either new deal for young people or new deal 25 plus. Up to the end of November, new deal for musicians had helped 3,880 people into unsubsidised employment.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to extend *(a)* the new deal for disabled people and *(b)* Workstep to help people back into work in Tamworth; and if he will make a statement. [48650]

Margaret Hodge: Contracts for the new deal for disabled people and Workstep are now being extended, where necessary, to 31 March 2007. We are currently considering the future of this provision alongside the range of disability employment programmes to ensure they continue to meet the needs of disabled people, including those in Tamworth.

As outlined in Chapter 5 of our Welfare Reform Green Paper 'A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work', we are reviewing our employment services for disabled people and intend to consult with key stakeholders on our proposals later in the year.

Our proposals in the Green Paper are based on our successful Pathways to Work pilots which we will be extending across the country by 2008, and in Tamworth in October of this year. The Pathways pilots have achieved over 21,000 job entries in total with very positive feedback from claimants, advisers and partners. We are already seeing an eight percentage points increase in off-flows from incapacity benefit at six months compared with non-Pathways areas.

Occupational Pension Schemes (Beverley and Holderness)

Mr. Graham Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many occupational pension schemes in Beverley and Holderness have fully wound up since 1997; and how many are in the process of winding up. [51520]

Mr. Timms: The information is not available.

Overpayments

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the amount of overpayments made owing to official error in each social security benefit paid by his Department in each of the last six years; and if he will make a statement. [42549]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department publishes National Statistics reports including estimates of overpayments through official error. Estimates for income support (IS), jobseeker's allowance (JSA), pension credit and housing benefit (HB) are published every year so these are the benefits where we have most information on changes over time.

IS/JSA/Pension credit official error overpayments from National Statistics reports

	IS[1]	*JSA*	*IS for pensioners/ Pension credit*
October 1997 to September 1998			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.6	4.2	1.6
Overpaid (£ million)	130	150	60
April 1998 to March 1999			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.6	5.6	1.3
Overpaid (£ million)	130	200	50
April 1999 to March 2000			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.5	4.0	1.5
Overpaid (£ million)	130	130	60
April 2000 to March 2001			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.3	2.8	1.2
Overpaid (£ million)	120	80	50
April 2001 to March 2002			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.3	3.5	0.8
Overpaid (£ million)	130	90	40
April 2002 to March 2003			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.4	4.2	1.0
Overpaid (£ million)	140	110	50
April 2003 to March 2004			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.8	3.8	2.1
Overpaid (£ million)	190	100	100
April 2004 to March 2005			
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.9	2.3	2.1
Overpaid (£ million)	200	50	130

[1] Not including pensioners.

Notes:

The figures for April 2003 to March 2004 and April 2004 to March 2005 in the table have been adjusted for data quality problems found. Previous figures have not been adjusted in this way as there is not enough information available to do so. The tables therefore are not all suitable for making reliable comparisons over time but give a reference of our best estimate of these overpayment figures in each year. Confidence intervals are not provided in these tables although are typically around +—20 to 30 per cent. of the central estimates.

Housing benefit (HB) official error overpayments from National Statistics reports

	Percentage/£ million
April 2002 to March 2003	1.1
Percentage of benefit overpaid	
Overpaid (£ million)	140
April 2003 to March 2004	
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.2
Overpaid (£ million)	150
April 2004 to March 2005	
Percentage of benefit overpaid	1.1
Overpaid (£ million)	150

Notes:

1. The continuous measurement system for fraud and error in housing benefit began in 2001, so earlier comparable results are not available.

2. Note that these figures are made up of reviews of around 85 per cent. of HB expenditure (used for measuring performance against the relevant PSA target to reduce fraud and error in HB) combined with more approximate estimates of error in the remaining 15 per cent. of expenditure. For further details on this, please see the relevant National Statistics reports.

The Second National Housing Benefit Accuracy Review, in 1997–98 gave an estimate of £60 million for Official Error, but was based on a different methodology, so the results are not considered comparable with more recent estimates.

The Department also publishes one to off snapshot reviews. The most recent report covered disability living allowance (DLA) and the official error figures from these are as follows:

2004–05 DLA official error overpayments from National Statistics report

	Amount of money overpaid (£ million)	*Percentage benefit overpaid*
Official Error	60 (20–110)	0.8 (0.3–1.4)

In addition, annual estimates of official error only are made for Short to Term Benefit overpayments (Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance) and Long to Term Benefit overpayments (Retirement Pension, Widow's Benefit and Bereavement Benefit). Previous results were carried out using a different methodology and are not comparable. The most recent results are shown in the following tables.

Short to term benefits Official Error overpayments

As at April to March each year:	*Monetary value (£ million)*
2001–02	43
2002–03	43
2003–04	53
2004–05	[1]104

[1] These estimates are subject to wide margins of error. Our best estimate of STB overpayments for 2004–05 includes a further amount of around £20 million due to incorrectness types not captured under methodology in earlier years.

Long-term benefits Official Error overpayments

As at April to March each year:	*Monetary value (£ million)*
2001–02	43
2002–03	14
2003–04	26
2004–05	27

Notes:
1. The sample for long-term benefits is a small one and excludes some types of cases. It provides reassurance that official error on these benefits is a very low proportion of expenditure, but the estimate is only a broad indicator.
2. As a result of the wide margins of error, the changes over time are not statistically significant.

Pathways to Work

Danny Alexander: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the nationwide roll-out of Pathways to Work proposed in the recent Green Paper will apply only to new claimants; and what the estimated cost is of rolling out the scheme nationwide to all existing claimants over the same period. [50185]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 13 February 2006]:* We have secured £360 million to complete the national roll-out of Pathways to Work. This is in addition to the £147 million already allocated to complete roll-out to the 21 pilots.

The support provided through Pathways to Work will, as now in pilot areas, be available to new claimants and existing claimants, but will not be mandatory for existing claimants. In Pathways to Work pilot areas, nearly 10 per cent. of all new participants are voluntary existing claimants.

All the evidence suggests that the best time to offer advice and support is before an individual loses their job and as quickly as possible after an individual has made a claim to incapacity benefits. But no-one will be left behind and we intend to invite all existing claimants to an interview with an adviser over the next two to three years to ensure they are made fully aware of the support available to them.

Pension Protection Fund

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the estimated liability is for the benefits that will be paid by the Pension Protection Fund if all the pension schemes now in an assessment period are admitted to the Fund. [42530]

Mr. Timms: Calculating the value of the various assets and liabilities of the schemes currently in an assessment period is a major part of the ongoing work for the PPF. It is difficult to provide exact figures at this time, since the full valuation information contained within the section 143 valuation is not yet available for those schemes

However, the PPF have provided the following information:

As at December 31 there were 40 schemes in assessment. These schemes had approximately 21,575 members. Assets in the schemes totalled £1,027 million, with estimated Pension Protection Fund liabilities of £1,417 million providing an estimated deficit of £389 million. Clearer figures will emerge as those schemes complete the assessment period.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what representations he has received from the European Commission on the compatibility of the provisions of the Pensions Protection Fund with Article 8 of the European Insolvency Rights Directive. [51449]

Mr. Timms: None.

The Commission is, however, in the process of reviewing how the complete regulatory framework of all member states complies with the Directive. The Commission has asked member states for information on how they comply with the Directive, before it can establish an opinion about the overall compliance with the Directive. It plans to issue a report on the implementation of Article 8 of the Directive in all member states, in the first half of 2006. This report will also include an evaluation of the UK regulatory system in force at present.

Pensions

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average percentage increase in the standard single pension for senior citizens is in 2006. [52471]

Mr. Timms: The draft Social Security Benefit Up-rating Order 2006 laid before Parliament on 25 January 2006 provides for State Pensions to be increased by 2.7 per cent. from 10 April 2006 in line with the growth in the Retail Prices Index in the year to September 2005. We expect similar provisions to be made for Northern Ireland.

Pensions Regulator

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what evaluation he has made of the work of the new pensions regulator. [47103]

Mr. Timms: I would refer the hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 6 February 2006, *Official Report*, column 857W.

Post Office Card Account

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the future of the Post Office card account. [51996]

Mr. Plaskitt: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Yeovil (Mr. Laws) on 31 January 2006, *Official Report*, columns 443–44W.

Print/Broadcast Media

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library copies of *(a)* print and *(b)* broadcast media reports undertaken for his Department since 2002. [37030]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department is committed to the publication of evaluation data and will ensure that all existing media analysis data is placed in the DWP catalogue by April 2006.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department has *(a)* undertaken and *(b)* commissioned research into the presence and reporting in the (i) broadcast and (ii) print media of the hon. Member for Yeovil since 5 May. [37032]

Mrs. McGuire: We do not currently evaluate broadcast media coverage.

Departmental analysis of print media activity monitors coverage of departmental policies and services. Only comments made by the hon. Member in his capacity as Front-Bench spokesman will be included in that analysis.

Rates

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much was paid by his Department in rates to each local authority in the UK in 2004–05; and how much was paid in *(a)* each (i) nation and (ii) region of the UK and *(b)* London. [35990]

Mrs. McGuire: The Department's estate has been sold or transferred under a PFI partnership deal to Land Securities Trillium (LST) and in return for the payment of a unitary charge LST is responsible for providing a full facilities management service across the estate. Therefore, the Department is not liable for any business rates.

However, in a few sites, the Department has an agreement to pay rates in lieu of reduced accommodation charges, where the Department has a tenancy on estate managed by another Government Department. The Department has paid the following amounts to rateable authorities on the general ledger for 2004–05:

	£
England	1,701,009
of which:	
Paid within London	91,200
Wales	24,920
Scotland	34,024

Please note that this response excludes the Health and Safety Executive, an Executive non-departmental public body and the Rent Service, an Executive agency, as their records are not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Returning to Work

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions he has had with representatives of general practitioners regarding developing their role in supporting patients' return to work; whether these discussions have included proposals for general practitioners to monitor patients' suitability for incapacity benefit; and when he expects to publish the range of initiatives to provide the support to general practitioners necessary to assist patients in returning to work as described in paragraph 2.19 of the White Paper, "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say". [49534]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is working closely with representatives of General Practitioners in the development of initiatives designed to help GPs support patients with health conditions or disabilities so that they can remain in or return to work.

Discussions have been held with the General Practitioner Committee of the British Medical Association (BMA) and with the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP). Discussions have included the role of the GP in providing basic fitness for work advice for patients and in helping more patients manage health conditions so that they can remain in work.

The White Paper referred to was published by the Secretary of State for Health and in this context the reference on page 29 to initiatives to support GPs was intentionally brief. Our proposed initiatives are set out in greater detail in our recently published Green Paper: A New Deal for Welfare: empowering people to work; at page 34 paragraph 43.

Voice Stress Analysis

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what *(a)* discussions and *(b)* contract negotiations his Department has held in the last two years with Capita on the use of voice stress software in processing telephone benefit claims; [49975]

(2) what research his Department has carried out into voice stress analysis in processing benefit claims over the telephone following publication of the report in October 2005 entitled Reducing Fraud in the Benefit System; [49990]

(3) what payments have been made to *(a)* Capita and *(b)* other firms for undertaking trials of voice stress software in his Department for processing telephone benefit claims; [49991]

(4) what plans he has to trial voice stress software for the processing of telephone benefit claims; and what the likely date is of the *(a)* commencement and *(b)* termination of such trials; [49993]

(5) what trials *(a)* have been and *(b)* are being undertaken on the use of voice stress software in processing telephone benefit claims. [49994]

Mr. Plaskitt: The Department has not entered into negotiations with, or made payments to, any organisation in relation to voice stress software. The Department is currently considering how the technology might be piloted in order to establish its effectiveness in relation to DWP business. To date no trials have been undertaken and any pilot undertaken will be run in line with DWP procurement guidelines and procedures.

Welfare Reform Green Paper

Mr. Hunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how the £360 million announced in his statement on the Welfare Reform Green Paper is to be spent; from which budgets this sum has been drawn; and over what period of time it is to be allocated. [49799]

Margaret Hodge: The funding for welfare reform has been drawn from the budgets provided to the Department through the 2004 Spending Review

settlement which covered the financial years 2005–06 to 2007–08. Details are available in The departmental report 2005 (Cm 6539) published in June 2005. The £360 million funding is largely to be spent extending the pathways to work programme beyond the pilot areas, and covers 2006–07 and 2007–08.

Winter Fuel Payments

Lynne Featherstone: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many individuals received winter fuel payments in each London borough in the last year for which figures are available. [52302]

Mr. Timms: The information is in the table.

London GOR	*Number of individuals receiving a winter fuel payment in winter 2004–05*
Inner London-West	
Camden	25,645
City of London	1,090
Hammersmith and Fulham	19,550
Kensington and Chelsea	19,065
Wandsworth	33,025
Westminster	25,830
Inner London-East	
Hackney	21,380
Haringey	26,785
Islington	22,055
Lambeth	29,355
Lewisham	33,060
Newham	25,775
Southwark	28,255
Tower Hamlets	21,010
Outer London-East and North East	
Barking and Dagenham	25,535
Bexley	43,760
Enfield	45,825
Greenwich	32,125
Havering	49,010
Redbridge	39,780
Waltham Forest	31,465
Outer London-South	
Bromley	61,845
Croydon	53,205
Kingston upon Thames	23,750
Merton	27,895
Sutton	32,430
Outer London-West and North West	
Barnet	53,560
Brent	36,840
Ealing	42,350
Harrow	37,625
Hillingdon	41,785
Hounslow	31,190
Richmond upon Thames	29,255

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Local authorities are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant ONS postcode directory.

Source:
Information Directorate, 100 per cent. Sample.